

The Dallas Post

Sports Week

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A Question of Authority

About the Series...

This three-part series is not intended to be an indictment of today's young people, especially the students of Dallas and Lake-Lehman High Schools. Instead, it means to take a closer look at the behavior of today's youth, especially high school athletes. In part one, we will take a look at how the athletics of today are different from those who played sports in previous generations. Part two will examine the reasons for the changes and part three will discuss where the trend is going and what we can expect in the future.

I have spent the majority of the last decade writing about, speaking to, and encouraging high school athletes. I truly believe the young people of today are our nation's greatest asset and although I have tried to do my share, I don't believe enough has been written about the positive way many of them handle the intense pressures they face each day.

But today's adolescents are different from those of the 1940's, '50's, '60's and '70's. They no longer simply follow orders or instructions, they constantly question authority. Many times, that questioning is interpreted as a lack of respect for authority, including their coaches, teachers and parents.

This has carried over to the athletic field, which was once considered hallowed ground where discipline and blind devotion to the coach were not only present, but expected. It was the only place in America where a dictatorship not only existed, it was thought necessary.

Perhaps this series will give you a better understanding, not only of the changes, but the reasons for them. The youth of today need to be understood and supported. We don't have to dwell on the negatives of young people, but for us as a society to turn our heads and pretend these changes haven't taken place is not only being naive, it is perhaps irresponsible.

Student athletes in the '90's

BY DAVE KONOPKI
Sports Writer

The demands had been set. There were to be no negotiations explained the people who set them. Failing to meet the demands, they said, would mean their threats would be carried out.

This may seem like the start of a story from the files of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, but it's not. It's the story of a college football team, a team whose players held the remainder of its 1992 season hostage, demanding the immediate resignation of their coach.

Welcome to the world of sports, 1993 style.

The school was the University of South Carolina. The coach was Sparky Woods. But, it could have been any school. On any level. It involved college athletes. It could have involved your child.

Similar events have taken place at other colleges and universities during the last three years. Last year at the University of California, head basketball coach Lou Campanelli was fired in mid-season after the administration received pressure from many of the players who complained about Campanelli's excessive use of profanity.

Maybe even more disturbing is the expansion of this trend into the realm of high school sports. Two weeks ago, *Sports Illustrated* ran a story about a high school in Michigan where the football season was cancelled when large numbers of players started quitting the team. The head coach "demanded too much of them," they complained, forcing them to do extra wind sprints and push-ups as a form of punishment. The season officially ended when players "demanded" that the coach confront an over-zealous father. The coach said he would talk to the father at a later date. The players quit.

But you don't have to go to Michigan for an illustration of how things have changed. Last year at Dallas, the coaching staff learned of a group of players who attended a party where alcoholic beverages were served. In the days of legendary Green Bay Packer coach Vince Lombardi and Chicago Bears coach George Halas, those players probably would have received a kick in the butt on the way out the door for violating a strict team rule.

But Dallas head coach Ted Jackson decided to give the players a second chance. In order to return to the team, the players had to do an extra amount of physical training. Accept the punishment and all would be forgiven. But instead of being grateful for a second chance, a group of those players, including several starters, said Jackson had no right to punish them and they refused. Needless to say, their football careers at Dallas were over.

"When I was in school it used to be that you took a whack on the behind or you were sent to the office," said Jackson. Most of the time, I didn't want my parents to find out, so I took my punishment like a man. But today, kids don't seem to have to accept punishment. They always look for an alternative."

Jackson has seen other changes in today's kids.

"Certainly they've changed. I think their whole lifestyles have changed."

Ted Jackson
Dallas High football coach

"Certainly they've changed," said Jackson. "I think their whole lifestyles have changed. I think things are handed to the kids more today than they were years ago. But I think it depends on the individual situations. Kids are kids and they take advantage of whatever they can get away with."

The stories about the Dallas, South Carolina and California teams are just a few examples of how today's young people, including athletes, are different from their counterparts of generations past. The days of the "Yes sir, no sir" young person may not be over, but if this trend continues, they are certainly limited.

In order to obtain a first-hand look at the behavior of today's young people, especially athletes, we solicited the opinions of six adults who deal with the youth of today on a daily basis. Each of the participants is either a high school principal or teacher with at least 10 years coaching experience. The following people offered their insight for this series: John Oliver, Lake-Lehman Senior High School principal; Roger Bearde, teacher, athletic director and head basketball coach, Lake-Lehman; Rich Gorgone, teacher and head football coach, Lake-Lehman; Frank Galicki, Dallas Senior High School principal; Ted Jackson, teacher at Plains Jr. High and head football coach at Dallas; and Jack Wolensky, teacher, guidance counselor and head baseball coach at Dallas.

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Mounts triumph in playoff

By DAVE KONOPKI
Sports Writer

For the second consecutive year, Lake-Lehman had a better field hockey team than Dallas during the regular season.

And, for the consecutive year, Lake-Lehman and Dallas met for the District 2 Class AA field hockey championship with the Black Knights holding the better regular-season record and a win over Dallas under their belts.

But again, it is the Mountaineers which are advancing to the state playoffs.

Kelly Janosky stroked a penalty shot into the goal with just over four minutes remaining in the contest to break a 2-2 tie and send the Mounts to inter-district play. Dallas, 14-3, will play the number three seed from District 3 (Lancaster area) on Tuesday, November 9, at a site and time to be determined. The loss ends the Black Knights' season at 14-2-1.

It was an incredible finish for a team that looked like anything but champions during the first two games of the season. Dallas opened the season with two straight losses, including a 3-0 setback to Lehman.

After that loss, the playoffs and a district final, were the furthest thing from coach Ron Moran's mind.

"I was worried about the attitude of the team, especially the younger players," said Moran, who has just three seniors on his roster. "I never could have believed we would be in this situation. But all season long I've been telling the girls that if you stay focused and work hard, good things can happen. It won't guarantee success, but without it, you don't have a chance."

It was the leadership, on and off the field, of those three seniors (Janosky, Cindy Maier and Abbey Russin) that was the launching pad for Dallas's success.

"I'm so proud of the three seniors," said Moran, who got two goals from Janosky, one from Maier and an outstanding effort from goalkeeper Russin. "I told them when we were 0-2 that they would have to be the leaders of the team, they had to be role models. That's exactly what they were."

With the loss, the Black Knights become victims of the system; a system that needs a complete overhaul. Despite the outstanding play by District 2 teams year in and year out in the state playoffs, the PIAA allows just one Class AA team to advance to state's each season. They say District 2 is not big enough to warrant two Class AA teams. In essence what they are saying is they look for quantity rather than quality.

With a 14-2-1 record, an outstanding team led by 10 fantastic field hockey players and an equally outstanding coach, the Black Knights deserve to be in the playoffs. Nobody knows that better than Moran.

"I just feel so bad for those kids," said Moran of Lehman. "Any

"I just feel so bad for those kids (Lake-Lehman). Any team with 14 wins and two losses should be going to the state playoffs."

Ron Moran
Dallas field hockey coach



POST PHOTO/RON BARTIZEK

INTENSITY - That quality was apparent in the field hockey playoff match between Back Mountain rivals Dallas and Lake-Lehman last week. Above, a trio of Lake-Lehman players await the ball. Foreground, Gretchen Dersheimer, background, Christina Jones, left, and Christa Shamus.

team with 14 wins and two losses should be going to the state playoffs. Having a bad game in the state playoffs and being eliminated is understandable, but a team shouldn't worry about having one bad game before that and not being allowed to advance. They are well-coached, have great kids and would have been a great representative of our district."

But instead, the Mounts, who are not strangers to the state playoffs, will be the lone representative and will be looking to advance to the state quarter-finals for the fourth time in the last five years.

"We're taking the approach that it will be a great learning experience to play in the state playoff," said Moran, who has won two district titles in each of his two years as head coach. "District 3 is a very competitive district. Even their third seed will probably be a conference champion. We want to build up our intensity as the game gets closer. We now represent the Wyoming Valley and we have a responsibility to show the rest of the state we are in a very strong conference."



SENIOR LEADERS - Dallas captains Abby Russin, foreground, Cindy Maier, left, and Kelly Janosky led the Mount field hockey team to victory after a disastrous season start.

Team effort runs down district crown

By DAVE KONOPKI
Sports Writer

For the first time in five years the Dallas High School cross-country team completed the District 2 Class AA championships without a runner finishing in the top three positions.

But in doing so, the Mountaineers proved what coaches have been telling their athletes for generations: individuals don't win championships, teams do.

Dallas, whose runners had captured the individual district championship in four of the past five years, won their first District 2 team title since 1988 last Thursday at Kirby Park. The Mounts, under head coach Bill Kvashay, finished with 72 points to top second-place Bishop Hoban by 9 points. Lake-Lehman finished seventh.

Senior Brian Crispell and his

sophomore brother John finished in fifth and sixth place, respectively, for Dallas. It was a change of pace for the Mountaineers who watched Hugh Mundy (1988), Steve Oliver (1989 and 1990) and Matt Samuel (1992) run to D-2 titles in recent years.

But this year the Mounts got an entire team effort on the way to capturing the title. In addition to the Crispell brothers, first-year runner Bill Appel broke into the top 10 with a tenth place finish and sophomores Mike Tomasura and Doug Myers each played key roles in pushing the Mounts over the top.

"This was a great example of a great team effort," said Kvashay, who guided the Mountaineers to a second-place finish in the state meet in 1988. "The kids had the incentive to run over their heads and they did it. I knew we were capable of winning (the title). Even

though we lost to Hoban during the regular season, I would have been disappointed if the kids didn't run well. They did a great job."

Kvashay also praised the efforts of backup runners Tom Keating and Don Hartshorne and "B" race participants Jared Rutt and Steve Roosa. But the highly successful Dallas coach had special praise for the elder Crispell and Appel.

"Brian did a great job in leading this team," said Kvashay of his senior. "We were counting on him to provide leadership this year. He's been running great all year. We knew that we needed him to finish in the top five and that's just what he did."

Appel, a fine musician who plays in the Dallas marching band, had never run cross-country before this year. But after watching him run during indoor track last winter, Kvashay was willing to share him with the band.

"Bill was the surprise of the meet," said the Dallas coach. "He had some injuries early in the year and up until that point, had not proven he could run that way over a long distance. He was in 28th place three-quarters of a mile into the race and was 20th at the mile and one-half mark. But he had something left and finished strong. He really helped save the day."

Dallas will now compete in the state meet on Nov. 6 at Lehigh University in Bethlehem. Kvashay is looking forward to a strong effort.

"I think a top 10 finish is a great possibility," he said. "But in order to do that, I think we have to go out there and take some chances. We indicated during districts that we might be able to go out hard and hold on. I think we can improve even more. The kids will always give everything they have."