MARCH 10

HighSchool TODAY™

THE VOICE OF EDUCATION-BASED ATHLETIC AND FINE ARTS ACTIVITIES



Strategies for Hiring

The Best Coach for Your School

Legal Issues
Athletes suspended for MySpace pictures, school sued

Above and Beyond
Wrestlers leave mats to clear snowy driveways

Administration
Conducting an emergency plan drill

A PUBLICATION OF THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF STATE HIGH SCHOOL ASSOCIATIONS




Bob Gardner Named NFHS Executive Director

BY ROBERT F. KANABY, NFHS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, AND ENNIS PROCTOR, NFHS PRESIDENT



It is indeed our pleasure to announce that Bob Gardner has been chosen by the NFHS Board of Directors as the next executive director of the National Federation of State High School Associations. As many of you know, Bob has served as chief operating officer of the NFHS for the past 10 years and has done a superb job in that position.

In addition to his 10 years with the NFHS, Bob has a long and successful background with our member state associations. He was a member of the Indiana High School Athletic Association (IHSAA) staff for 15 years, including the final five years as commissioner.

At the IHSAA, Bob led the change in the football playoffs to permit participation by all schools, negotiated the association's largest corporate sponsorship agreement in history with Farm Bureau Insurance and led the transition to multiple classes in team sports. He also was instrumental in the IHSAA winning a landmark Supreme Court case affirming the restitution rule and a Federal Court case protecting the state's right to enforce eligibility standards.

During his 40 years in secondary education – all in the state of Indiana – Bob has served at every level. He started as a teacher and coach for eight years at three Indiana high schools, including Milan High School, which won the 1954 state basketball title and led to the movie, *Hoosiers*. He coached football, basketball, baseball and track, and he also was athletic director at one of his stops.

Bob also was a high school principal for seven years at Milan Junior-Senior High School. He had been selected to serve as superintendent of the Milan Schools as well in 1985 before he accepted the assistant commissioner's position with the IHSAA. During his years at Milan, Bob also was a member of the IHSAA Board of Directors.

Before he joined the NFHS staff in 2000, Bob served in a variety of volunteer roles with the organization. He was a voting member of the NFHS Football Rules Committee and served on the NFHS Football Officials Manual Committee. He also chaired the Fiscal/Funding Subcommittee for the 1999-2002 NFHS Strategic Plan.

As chief operating officer of the NFHS, Bob has chaired the NFHS Rules Review Committee, the NFHS internal committee composed of all NFHS rules editors. He has been responsible for NFHS insurance programs and the NFHS committee nomination process. Bob represented the NFHS on the NCAA Anti-Gambling Task Force, has been a presenter at numerous state and national meetings, and has served on the USA Football Board of Directors.

With his varied background in teaching, coaching and administration at the local, state and national levels, we believe Bob is the ideal candidate to continue to move this organization forward in the years to come.

Although these are challenging times right now as many schools deal with severe budget cuts, we believe there are bright spots on the horizon as Bob takes over this spring.

The NFHS Coach Education Program is among the brightest stars as more and more coaches are receiving education-based training and becoming certified as accredited interscholastic coaches. With the launching of Fundamentals of Coaching Softball this month, there are now six sport-specific courses available. Since the start of the Coach Education Program in 2007, more than 140,000 coaches have taken the core course – Fundamentals of Coaching. And, 46 of the 51 member state associations have adopted the course. Assistant Director Tim Flannery has done an outstanding job in championing this program.

Certainly, the troubled financial status of school districts will be among the topics of discussion as the next NFHS Strategic Plan is formulated during the coming school year. This will be the sixth three-year plan developed by the membership and will provide direction through 2014.

March is a great time of year as schools participate in winter championships across the country. We wish you the best as you continue your daily work with the millions of students involved in athletic and fine arts activities. ◉

Great Shot

Making a Splash

A golfer from Scottsdale (Arizona) Saguaro High School plays a shot from the water at the 2008 Arizona Interscholastic Association Golf Championships.

Photograph provided by Paynter Pics, Arizona Interscholastic Association.





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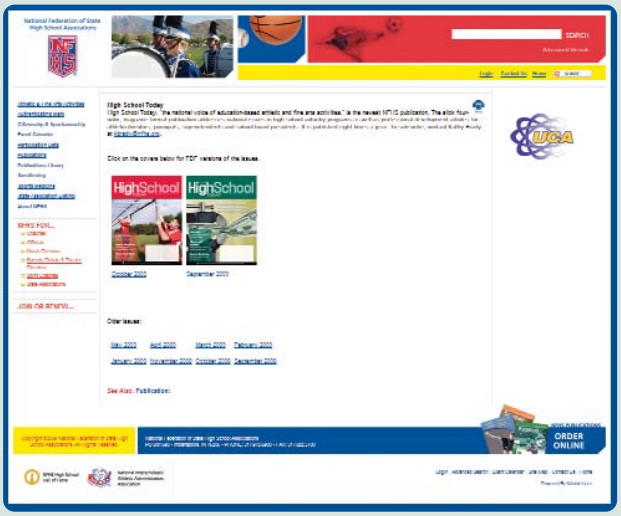


You can read all articles – and more not published in this issue – online at **www.nfhs.org/hstoday**.



For the Record

Girls Basketball
Most Points Scored, Career



5,424

Adrian McGowen
Goodrich, Texas
(2003-06)

Source: 2010 National High School Sports Record Book. To order, call toll-free 1-800-776-3462, or order online at **www.nfhs.com**.

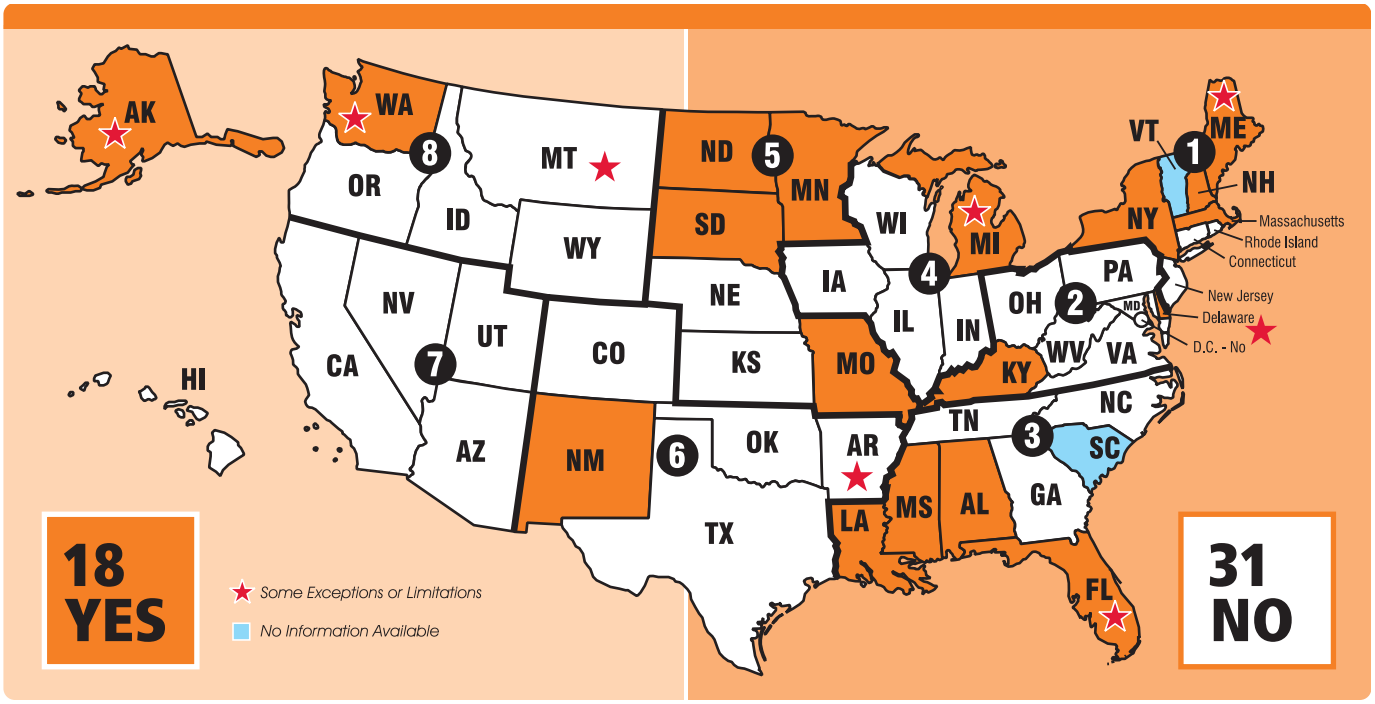
Unusual Nicknames



Poca (West Virginia) High School's mascot is, fittingly, the Dot. Yes, they are the **Poca Dots**. What better a nickname for a team from a town called Poca could there be? That's what a newswriter from Charleston, West Virginia, thought in 1928 when he suggested it. And the name has been in style ever since. The Dot has been transformed over the years, changing from a simple logo to the fierce and fighting Dot. ⦿

Around the Nation

Question: Do you allow students below the 9th grade to play on the varsity in state competition?







Ndamukong Suh

BY EMILY NEWELL

➲ Before Ndamukong Suh was a college football standout at the University of Nebraska and a top National Football League (NFL) prospect, he was a three-sport, high school scholar-athlete.

Suh was born and raised in Portland, Oregon, where he attended Grant High School.

When Suh decided he wanted to play football his freshman year of high school, his mother told him if he maintained a grade-point average of 3.0 or higher, he could try out as a sophomore.

The rest is history.

Suh earned his 3.0 average and tried out for football, initially starting as an offensive lineman before eventually playing on both sides of the ball.

By his junior season, Suh earned first-team all-league honors on offense and defense and was a state honorable-mention.

His senior football season, Suh earned Parade All-America honors, was voted the 2004 Portland Interscholastic League (PIL) Defensive Player of the Year and the state Class 4A Defensive Player of the Year, earned first-team all-league honors on offense and defense, and made the first-team all-state offense.

Besides football, Suh was a track standout in shot put. He was the district shot put champion in 2004, and won the Oregon School Activities Association Class 4A shot put title in 2005, throwing for a school-record 61-feet-4.

Suh also received honors as a basketball player at Grant, earning honorable-mention all-league honors both his junior and senior years.

As a senior, Suh was a finalist for the Portland Tribune's Athlete of the Year.

He went on to play football at the University of Nebraska in 2005 where he earned various honors, including becoming a 2009 Heisman Trophy finalist and 2009 Associated Press Player of the Year, becoming the first defensive player to ever win the award.

He made the 2009 Big 12 Commissioner's Spring Academic Honor Roll and makes volunteer visits at Nebraska hospitals.

He currently is projected as a top-five pick in the upcoming NFL Draft. ◉

Emily Newell is a spring intern in the NFHS Publications/Communications Department. She is a sophomore at Butler (Indiana) University majoring in journalism (news editorial) and minoring in digital illustration.

Strategies for Hiring the Best Coach for Your School

BY DR. DAVID HOCH, CMAA

Since coaches have direct contact and enormous impact upon student-athletes, hiring the best possible individual is extremely important in education-based athletics. This process should be connected and in harmony with your school's philosophy and mission and is not restricted merely to the athletic realm.

While you want teams to strive and prepare to win games, there are other important outcomes of education-based athletics. This means that in your search for a new coach, an individual's ability with X's and O's, motivation and past experience are important but not the only qualities that you should consider.

Simply put, this means that you should hire coaches who are knowledgeable and passionate, and have experience. However, they should also be positive, encouraging and nurturing, and serve as a role model. Your coaches should also promote sportsmanship and ultimately embrace the educational value of athletics.

The qualities of a good coach and the efforts to fill a vacancy are the same as those of an exceptional teacher, because they are one and the same. A good coach is a good teacher and this is exactly what you should be looking for – a highly qualified teacher, leader and mentor of young people.

When you have a coaching vacancy in your school, your first step should be to post it within the district. In-house teachers are extremely desirable, because they can relate to students not only on the athletic fields but also in the classroom. This relationship has proven to correlate extremely well for both academic and athletic success.

An in-house coach can handle problems immediately, mentor young athletes and intervene better than someone coming in from the community. It is also much easier to communicate with everyone involved in athletics – the athletic director, principal, other teachers and families – when a coach is in the building.

While coaches who are teachers within the building are ideal, care and caution must also be exercised. A teacher should not be automatically given or guaranteed a coaching position unless that is a state or district requirement. You still want the most qualified individual to serve as a coach, because your athletes and program deserve the best as in any other realm of education.

Another problem may exist attempting to hire teacher-coaches. Many schools have aging faculties who may no longer want to coach, but retain their teaching positions. This means that it is not easy to bring in as many new teachers who might be willing and able to also fill coaching positions.

Contractual provisions may prevent you from requiring physical education teachers to coach. Due to their educational background, it would be good if these staff members could coach at least two seasons. If this can't be mandated, it should be strongly encouraged.

If viable candidates do not exist within the high school, teachers at feeder middle and other neighboring schools should be your next option. Why? They can relate to young people and understand how schools operate. These are invaluable qualities for a high school coach.

Some districts may be able to transfer teachers – with or without their approval. Work within your permissible transfer parameters and reach out to eager and willing middle school teachers – particularly in physical education. Add those who are excited and qualified to coach and consider sending those no longer willing to serve to middle or elementary schools that don't have athletic programs.

When teachers are unavailable or not qualified for the coaching position, you then can post the vacancy in the community. You may have no other choice but to hire an emergency coach. While hiring a non-faculty member for a coaching position increases the challenge of communication, with planning and a little extra work it can be a solution to fill a difficult vacancy.



Be prepared, however, to provide additional mentoring when hiring a non-teacher for a coaching position. These efforts may be needed to help assimilate this person into the philosophy and even procedures involved in a high school athletic program.

Who does the hiring? For most vacancies, the athletic director is best positioned for this responsibility. If there is an extremely high profile position, perhaps a committee including the principal, a central administrator, a current coach and possibly a parent can be employed.

It is imperative, however, that you use the same questions for each candidate in order to provide a basis for comparison. Also, you want to prep the committee members as to your philosophy and how the interview will be conducted and this would include who will ask each question.

Considering the committee mix, one should be very careful of including anyone with vested interests or agendas. It may be unwise to involve a booster club member who might try to influence decisions based upon money which has or will be raised.

Once you have made the decision, you will want to contact not only the successful candidate but also the others who applied. A brief, well-crafted letter thanking the applicants for their interest serves the purpose of informing those not chosen. For the successful individual, you should call with congratulations and the ensuing steps which may need to be accomplished – signing a contract and meeting staff members.

Since athletes and parents are usually eager to have a new coach in place for their team, making an announcement is another important consideration. A notice on your Web site, a Blackboard Connect-ED phone call and obviously a small notice in the local weekly newspaper can accomplish this objective.

The underlying principle for hiring a new coach should always be what the best choice is for your athletes and program. Preparing and striving to win are fine, but ultimately there are more important outcomes in athletics. It is our obligation to find the very best individual to teach the values of education-based athletics. ⊙

Dr. David Hoch is the athletic director at Loch Raven High School in Towson, Maryland (Baltimore County). He assumed this position in 2003 after nine years as director of athletics at Eastern Technological High School in Baltimore County. He has 24 years experience coaching basketball, including 14 years on the collegiate level. Hoch, who has a doctorate in sports management from Temple University, is past president of the Maryland State Athletic Directors Association, and he formerly was president of the Maryland State Coaches Association. He has had more than 275 articles published in professional magazines and journals, as well as two textbook chapters. Hoch is a member of the NFHS High School Today Publications Committee.

Hawaii, Alaska Teams Face Challenges to Play Games

BY DAN SCHUMERTH

For the majority of the high school athletes in the United States, a road game involves a short bus ride to a nearby school. But for athletes at Hawaii and Alaska high schools, travel is far more complicated as planes, ferries or even snow machines are often included.

"Our varsity teams can travel out of state for preseason tournaments," said Karen Satterwhite, assistant athletic director at Honolulu (Hawaii) Punahou School. "It entails raising funds to offset the cost of airline, hotel, van and food costs, as well as costs to ship equipment with the airlines."

Juneau (Alaska) Douglas High School Athletic Director Sandi Wagner said that of her $1.5 million budget last year – only $75,000 of which was granted to the department – $1.2 million went to travel. Airline fees alone totaled about $500,000.

North Pole (Alaska) High School spends far less, but only because the department is not responsible for out-of-district travel during the regular season. Each team has its own boosters who are responsible for such funds. Teams whose boosters raise more money can do more travelling.

Even so, Activities Director Walt Armstrong says they still fork





That can be difficult in the midst of a statewide money shortage. Hawaii public schools would have lost many of their sports teams due to a lack of funding – as athletic departments are facing an additional 35-percent cut in funding – if it were not for the Hawaii High School Athletic Association (HHSAA) "Save Our Sports" campaign.

"As it is, the state schools are closed for 17 or so Fridays to save money because of budget deficits," Satterwhite said. "They didn't have money to pay for buses to transport their teams to competition. Without the money the HHSAA helped raise, a lot of schools wouldn't have but maybe one team per sport, if any teams at all."

out about $28,000 for transportation – as local buses currently cost around $40 per hour – which makes up about 33 percent of the budget. Armstrong believes with all together they spend more than $100,000 just on travel.

Douglas' hockey, football and softball teams play in leagues with teams as far away as the Fairbanks region.

Douglas and North Pole, which are members of the same conference for football, ice hockey and softball, are 826 miles apart.

Juneau, a city with no roads leading in or out of it, is forced to travel by airplane or ferry for away games. And with no money available at the state level, the burden of finding funds falls on each

individual school in Alaska.

Students raise money through concessions, dances, "chore-busters" (community service) and much more.

"If you can think of it, we've done it," Wagner said.

And the weather can affect transportation methods as well.

"Teams are not allowed to use ground transport to go out of district when temperatures reach minus 40 degrees," Armstrong said. "We have had to cancel buses at the last minute and buy plane tickets to get teams where they need to be, or withdraw from contests."

Armstrong said there are schools that North Pole does not compete with because the cost – both monetary and days of school missed – is too high. While his school has never had to drop a team because of a lack of funds, Armstrong does not rule it out for the future.

"In today's economy, I can see that possibly happening," he said.

Even though the furthest distance Punahou travels during the regular season is 23 miles, its athletic department still allocates about 40 percent of its budget to travel. While its teams take a bus to opposing schools within the island, flights are required for transportation to other islands or the mainland.

Armstrong is in his sixth year as activities director.

There is some financial assistance from school districts, though, at least if a team advances far enough in the postseason.

"When we have a team qualify for state championships, the district will give the school $1,287 toward travel," Armstrong said. "That is about one-third the cost of a bus trip to Anchorage, where the majority of state championships are held."

Cost is not the only obstacle provided by such trips. Douglas has to find coaches who are willing to provide constant supervision and follow school policies, which according to Wagner is not always easy. And as with high school students everywhere, behavior can be an issue.

While Douglas has not had any major issues for three or four years now, partying, shoplifting and "inappropriate behavior" are all causes for concern.

But Wagner says the trips bring teams closer together. "They become a very cohesive group because they have to."

Douglas students also get to see different cultures through the "housing out" program. At times, athletes will stay at the homes of the opposing players in order to save money that would have gone toward hotels. Wagner says this allows opportunities, which are often taken advantage of, for the athletes to make lifelong friends in different communities.





Juneau teams have travelled as far as Australia to compete. Not only do teams from Juneau have to pay to travel to opposing schools, but they have to pay opposing schools to travel to Juneau in order to have home games.

"We always have problems getting teams to come here. Always," Wagner said.

"We've had seasons where teams didn't have much competition. We've had seasons where teams haven't finished the season."

Armstrong agrees.

"I have not had an out-of-state team come to North Pole High School since I have been activities director," he said.

However, Satterwhite does not see many advantages to the travel situation.

"Advantages, none," she said. "We are at a big disadvantage to the financial responsibility to be able to travel. That puts extra pressure on our parents to help raise the funds. Our kids are at a disadvantage because they are unable to get the exposure to mainland teams, talent and college coaches." ◉

Dan Schumerth is a spring semester intern in the NFHS Publications/Communications Department. He is a senior at Franklin (Indiana) College, majoring in journalism (news/editorial).

School Sued for Suspending Student-athletes Over MySpace Pictures

BY LEE GREEN

The Lawsuit

Two sophomore girls have sued their school district after they were suspended from all extracurricular activities, including their participation on the school volleyball team, for posting sexually suggestive photos of themselves on the social networking Web site MySpace during their summer vacation.

The lawsuit, *T.V. and M.K. v. Smith-Green Community School Corporation*, was filed on October 23, 2009 in U.S. District Court in Fort Wayne, Indiana. Representing the girls, the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) argues that Churubusco High School violated the girls' freedom of speech rights and freedom of expression rights when it punished them for Internet postings that took place off school property at a non-school-related activity, during the summer when school was not in session, and which in no way identified them as students at the school or in any manner involved the school.

According to the written complaint filed in federal court, the ACLU seeks to have the case litigated as a class action suit on behalf of all students participating in, or who may in the future participate in, extracurricular activities at Smith-Green Community Schools.

The outcome of the case may have significant implications for school districts and athletics programs across the country as they struggle to develop effective and legally acceptable policies dealing with online communications by students, especially those that fall into the gray area of regulating student conduct that occurs off school property.

Facts of the Case

During the summer of 2009, the two girls attended a sleepover where, according to court documents, they "took pictures of themselves pretending to kiss or lick a large multicolored novelty phallus-shaped lollipop that they had purchased as well as pictures of themselves in lingerie with dollar bills stuck in their clothes."

The written complaint filed by the ACLU noted that there was nothing in the photos that identified the girls as attending Churubusco High School, nor was there any reference in the pictures to Churubusco High School.

The girls posted the pictures on their MySpace pages, both of which were "blocked sites" that were visible, at least theoretically, only to individuals designated by the girls as their online "friends." An unknown person, either one of the "friends" with access to the girls' MySpace pages or someone who hacked into one of their sites, downloaded the photos and printed copies, one set of which eventually ended up in the possession of the Churubusco High School Principal, Austin Couch. Based on his determination that the online posting of the pictures violated the school's policy governing student behavior, Principal Couch suspended the girls from all extracurricular and athletics activities for the 2009-10 school year.

The school policy in question is a code of conduct applicable to all students who participate in any cocurricular, extracurricular or athletics activities at any school in the Smith-Green District. The policy, explicitly incorporated in writing into the district's Student Handbook and explained orally each year to all students participating in covered activities, includes the following language:

> *"It shall be recognized that the Principal, by the administrative authority vested in him/her by the Smith-Green Community School Corporation, may exclude any student-athlete from representing Churubusco High School if his/her conduct in or out of school reflects discredit upon Churubusco High School or the IHSAA [Indiana High School Athletic Association] or creates a disruptive influence on the discipline, good order, moral or educational environment at Churubusco High School."*

Following imposition of a full-year suspension of the girls for violating the policy, Principal Couch informed their parents that the punishment would be reduced to 25 percent of the girls' extracurricular activities if they would individually apologize to the high school's Athletic Board (composed of the school's varsity head coaches, all of whom at the time in question happened to be male) and if the girls would attend three counseling sessions intended to address their behavior represented in the photos and their decision-making in choosing to post the pictures online.

According to court documents, in order to minimize the number

of matches they would have to miss as members of the school's varsity volleyball team, the girls reluctantly agreed to Principal Couch's conditions. Afterwards the girls reported that "the forced counseling was humiliating" and being required to appear before the all-male panel of coaches and discuss the sexually-oriented content of the pictures was "profoundly embarrassing."



Prior Case Law

The precise legal issue in the Smith-Green Community School Corporation case is the extent to which the First Amendment protects off-school-property student postings on social networking Web sites. There have yet to be any federal or state appellate court decisions directly addressing the question and the most relevant precedents are three U.S. Supreme Court rulings dealing with the authority of schools to restrict student speech and expression.

In *Tinker v. Des Moines Independent Community School District* (1969), Supreme Court Justice Potter Stewart established the now-famous maxim that "students do not shed their constitutional rights at the schoolhouse gate." The dispute, involving the suspension of students who wore black armbands to school in protest of the Vietnam War, resulted in a ruling by the Court that "schools do have the authority to restrict student speech that causes or is likely to cause substantial and material disruption at school or speech that interferes with the rights of others to be secure at school." Because the armband protest was determined to have caused no disruption of the educational environment nor did it threaten the safety of others at the school, the suspensions were overturned.

In *Hazelwood School District v. Kuhlmeier* (1988), the Supreme Court held that school-sponsored speech, such as an article in a student newspaper, may be restricted without violating a student's freedom of speech. The case established the principle that schools have the legal authority to regulate student speech in on-school-property, curricular or cocurricular contexts.

And in *Morse v. Frederick* (2007), the "Bong Hits 4 Jesus" case, the Supreme Court ruled that student speech advocating the violation of a school policy may be restricted and the suspension of a student was therefore upheld for displaying a banner which in the Court's opinion advocated drug use in contravention of explicit school policy.

Student Online Postings and Free Speech

Resolution of the Smith-Green Community School Corporation case will require the federal court to determine whether the students' off-school-property posting on a social networking Web site of sexually provocative pictures was an activity that did in fact cause or was likely to cause a substantial and material disruption at school, that interfered with the rights of others to be secure at school (posed a safety threat), or that advocated the violation of a specific school policy such as those governing drug use, alcohol use, or similar, banned student behaviors.

The legal issue is different from that posed by the suspension of a student for violating a school's "Acceptable Use Policy" setting forth restrictions governing on-school-property use of the Internet. The question is also qualitatively distinct from that dealing with the suspension of a student for violating a school's "Cyberbullying Policy," an issue that would invoke the rights of others to be secure at school.

The court will also need to evaluate whether the generalized language of the Smith-Green Community School Corporation's policy, prohibiting student conduct that "reflects discredit …" or impacts the "discipline, good order, moral or educational environment …" is sufficiently precise to adequately define the specific behaviors covered by the policy or whether the policy is unconstitutional because it is overly vague and imprecise.

A factor that will further complicate the court's resolution of the case will be the long-established legal principle, reflected in many court cases over many years, that student participation in school-sponsored extracurricular and sports activities is a privilege, not a constitutionally protected right. The two students in the Smith-Green Community School Corporation case were not suspended from school – they were suspended only from extracurricular and athletics participation.

The authority of schools to monitor and restrict student communications that occur off-school-property will become clear only after cases like Smith-Green reach federal or state appellate courts and new legal standards are established to cover the wide range of rapidly emerging issues related to online communications via cell phones, Web sites, blogs, social networking Web sites, digital applications, and yet-to-be imagined media and electronic devices that are almost certain to appear in the near future. ⦿

Lee Green is an attorney and a professor at Baker University in Baldwin City, Kansas, where he teaches courses in sports law, business law and constitutional law. He may be contacted at Lee.Green@BakerU.Edu.

Equestrian Teams Growing in Popularity, Participation

BY EMILY NEWELL

When one thinks of high school athletics, equestrian is not usually the first sport that comes to mind. But in several states across the country, equestrian's popularity as both a club and varsity sport is growing.

"Up until about three years ago, we were seeing participation increases of 20 to 30 percent annually," said Candi Bothum, state chair of the Oregon High School Equestrian Team (OHSET). "Because of the economy, we seem to be getting more schools participating, but fewer members per school. Right now, we have about 1,100 athletes participating."

OHSET began 12 years ago and is completely volunteer-run. The program started with just one statewide district, but the sport grew, and OHSET now oversees eight districts.

Each district hosts three meets and then sends its top riders to a statewide competition.

Equestrian competitions involve several different types of horse showing. Participants can ride either English- or Western-style and have the opportunity to compete in individual and team competitions. Types of competitions include drill courses and patterns, jumps, showmanship, reining and cattle roping and penning, among others.

While a majority of the equestrian teams in Oregon operate as a club sport, there are some schools in which equestrian is a varsity sport.

Because most schools run their equestrian team as a club sport, they are not technically bound to the rules and requirements of the Oregon School Activities Association (OSAA), but Bothum said schools do adhere to OSAA regulations.

"From our organization's perspective, we try to follow OSAA guidelines," she said. "We like our students to hold some grade-point average, for example."

Tom Rashid, associate director of the Michigan High School Athletic Association (MHSAA), said that while the MHSAA does not sponsor or sanction equestrian, many of the teams in Michigan also apply MHSAA guidelines as part of their rules.

Because equestrian in both Oregon and Michigan is not a sport sponsored by the state associations, students bear the costs of competing.

Donna Espelein is an equestrian coach at Scappoos (Oregon) High School. She is also an OHSET district chair and the state scholarship chair.

Espelein said her school, like many others throughout the state of















Photo provided by Ann Arbor Pioneer High School, Michigan.

Oregon, is self-funded, and as a coach, she is unpaid.

"My school does a fundraiser in the summer to help with costs," Espelein said. "Schools are allowed to have sponsors, which a few utilize to raise funds. However, they are not allowed to wear the name or logo of that sponsor during competition."

Costs in equestrian are incurred through purchasing or leasing a horse, a pay-to-play fee that is present at many high schools, equipment costs, uniform costs, transportation and hotel and stall rental costs when competitions are far from home.

Marie Seddon, coach at Ann Arbor (Michigan) Pioneer High School, said costs vary greatly depending on how involved a student wants to get, and she said the minimum a student could expect to pay to be involved in equestrian would be around $800 to $1,000.

"You can do equestrian fairly cheap if you lease a horse and buy used," she said. "You can always find ways to spend money in equestrian, but if you set your mind to it, you can always find ways to save, too.

"But, it's not just a sport for the rich. I know there are parents of kids on my team who are making sacrifices so their child can participate in equestrian."

Besides costs, another big issue in the equestrian world is safety.

"The biggest roadblock we've had is convincing schools there is no extra liability involved," Bothum said. "Schools' biggest fear is that they will be liable if a kid gets hurt."

Seddon said parents of team members at her school must be present at all practices and competitions.

"It's a very parent-involved sport," she said.

But while equestrian comes with costs and safety risks, Bothum, Espelein and Seddon all said it has great benefits, especially for kids who are not otherwise involved at their school.

"It offers such a wide range of activities because there are so many different competitions," Espelein said. "Students can participate in Western, English and team events."

Seddon said another benefit of equestrian is that it teaches confidence and responsibility to students involved.

"I see so many benefits for high school kids working with horses," she said. "They gain a sense of responsibility, they work hard and they become more confident."

And though the recent economic troubles have slowed the growth of equestrian, both Michigan and Oregon continue to hold high participation, and Bothum said she has high hopes for her state's organization.

"I would like to see every high school in the state of Oregon say 'yes' if there are members interested in starting an equestrian team," she said. "It's just such a great opportunity for kids to learn and grow as part of a team." ◉

Emily Newell is a spring intern in the NFHS Publications/Communications Department. She is a sophomore at Butler (Indiana) University, majoring in journalism (news editorial) and minoring in digital illustration.

In Wake of Tragedy, Kansas Team Finds Unexpected Support

BY EMILY NEWELL



Tony Sigala


Roberto Sigala

In the waning months of the 2008-09 season, the Southwestern Heights High School girls basketball team from Kismet, Kansas, was on a path to the state championship when tragedy struck.

In January 2009, sophomore Cori Sigala's eighth-grade brother Tony was diagnosed with cancer. He passed away on February 6 of that same year.

In mid-March, the team advanced to the Kansas State High School Activities Association Class 3A state playoffs. One day after winning its first-round game against Hillsboro High School, 49-38, Sigala's father, Roberto, passed away in an early-morning farming accident.

"We won our first game on Wednesday night," head coach Barry Mellen said. "The next morning, we got a phone call from our principal letting us know her father had passed away that morning."

Coaches and staff at the tournament held in Hutchinson, Kansas – about 200 miles from Kismet – got Sigala home as quickly as possible to be with her mother and siblings.

"Luckily we didn't play on Thursday," Mellen said. "The kids were just in total shock Thursday morning. We had a practice scheduled that day, but we just went back to the hotel so we had some time together."

On Friday, the team (minus Sigala) defeated Cherryvale High School, 65-52, to advance to the state final.

Meanwhile, the Hutchinson (Kansas) Trinity Catholic High School boys basketball team was making its way through the boys Class 3A tournament when Carrie Barr, an active member of the Trinity booster club and parent, got word of the Sigala family's losses.

"There was an article in the paper that morning, and I don't usually read the paper until evening, but I read the story about Cori and just thought, 'how much can one family endure?'"

On Saturday afternoon, as Trinity competed for third place in the tournament, Barr did what she could to help the family.

"I took a brown paper grocery bag and stapled the article to it," Barr said. "I asked our principal if we could pass it around at the



game to collect money for the family. All of our fans were very supportive."

Collecting a few thousand dollars during the boys third-place game, Barr said she gave the money to the senior cheerleaders from Trinity to give to Mellen.

"They came up and just presented me with a brown paper sack with a couple thousand dollars to give to the Sigala family," Mellen said. "I was just completely overwhelmed.

"There are a lot of members of our community and league who donated money to the family, but from Hutch-Trinity's standpoint, when you don't know the family, you don't know the team, that's pretty admirable for a school to take the responsibility to say 'hey, we care and we want to help in a small way.'"

Sigala said she was very appreciative of the good deed the fans of Hutch-Trinity did for her family, especially since they didn't personally know the team or family, but were willing to help anyway.

"What they did, I think it speaks volumes about the kind of community we have in Kansas high school athletics," Mellen said.

The Southwestern Heights girls basketball team ended its season by winning the state championship, defeating Wichita Collegiate, 65-59.

"We were down by 14 for most of the first half," Mellen said. "At halftime, some of my seniors said 'we're not losing this game.' They were determined to win for the Sigala family.

"It was one of those things where if we couldn't be with Cori at that moment, we wanted to bring home a state championship for her. We thought if we won, maybe it would bring her a bit of ease."

After the game, the team draped Sigala's No. 45 jersey over the championship trophy.

"I definitely went through the lowest point I've ever been through to the highest point I've ever been through," Mellen said. "It had such a big impact on our community because people who didn't even know us went the extra mile to help out."

Barr said she hopes that her story, and the story of Trinity High School raising the money for a player and a team they never knew, will inspire other people to look after those around them.

"I hope this teaches kids and people just to go out of their way for others," she said. "Even if it's just a kind word or a prayer, I hope it inspires others." ⦿

Emily Newell is a spring intern in the NFHS Publications/Communications Department. She is a sophomore at Butler (Indiana) University majoring in journalism (news editorial) and minoring in digital illustration.



Wrestlers Leave Mats to Clear Snowy Driveways

BY DAN SCHUMERTH



Cincinnati (Ohio) Winton Woods High School head wrestling coach Chris Willertz and the Winton Warriors are waiting for the next heavy snow so they can go out and shovel – again.

The team has done one major job so far this winter – clearing snow that the Cincinnati area received on the evening of January 4 that lasted about a week. Willertz said his wrestlers are expected to shovel their own driveways, as well as that of at least one neighbor. The shovels, donated by board member Jim Cleary, were handed out on the morning of January 5 and the wrestlers got to work.

Willertz said he wants his wrestlers to take responsibility for themselves, as wrestling is an individual sport, while also letting their neighborhood know there is a wrestler in the area.

The service is part of the adopt-a-wrestler program, which Willertz started this season in response to the pay-to-play policy. The policy requires each player to pay $120 to join the team, in addition to any outstanding balance that player might have. Willertz developed the adopt-a-wrestler program to help his wrestlers acquire the required funds. He asked area businesses and families to donate $60 on behalf of a player, while the player would be responsible for the remaining $60. The player would then do yardwork or other odd jobs at the request of the adopter.

It took a recent tax increase, which had been voted down four times, to even allow the team to exist.

"It's about saying thank you to those who voted yes," Willertz said.

Willertz, now in his second year as a head coach at Winton after serving one year as the assistant coach, established adopt-a-wrestler because he was having trouble getting the numbers necessary to comprise a quality wrestling program, with one of the main issues being money. Willertz ended his season as an assistant with 10 wrestlers. He started this season with 43 wrestlers and now has 33.

But Willertz said that people were simply donating the money without asking for anything in return, so he took the initiative to go out with his team and help anyway.

"Nobody likes to shovel snow," Willertz said. "It's something my kids can do that's easy, manual labor."

But even at age 42, Willertz is not one to just let his wrestlers do all the work.

"If I'm not doing this myself, than I'm a poor example," he said.

One added bonus, Willertz said, is that the community has gained a new respect for his wrestlers and for teenagers in general.

While the team has gained media coverage from the local Channel 9 News and more monetary donations, Willertz said the project is simply intended to be a part of the team's character program. Willertz works with the program "Sports Leader" to teach his wrestlers what it means to be a "strong man."

"The purpose is to try to teach character in addition to the sport," Willertz said.

Willertz said that along with improving on the mat, he wants his wrestlers to do their chores at home, get their schoolwork done, treat others with respect and set goals for their future. Community service is one way they work on their treatment of others.

"The kids realize that they themselves aren't the purpose," Willertz said. "Just because they're good athletes doesn't mean that they should be served."

In what Willertz calls an "era of athletes serving themselves," he has found the service project to be a "tremendous experience."

"Young men are supposed to use their strength to help others," he said.

Dan Schumerth is a spring semester intern in the NFHS Publications/Communications Department. He is a senior at Franklin (Indiana) College, majoring in journalism (news/editorial).

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Conducting an Emergency Plan Drill

BY JOE SARGENT, CMAA

Every weekend, athletes sustain injuries while participating in different contests around the country. Some of these injuries are serious enough to call for an ambulance or to seek additional medical help. In these cases, it is imperative that coaches have a well-prepared emergency plan in place, because when coaches and athletes actually practice their plans, things tend to run more smoothly.

At Milford Mill Academy in Baltimore, the previous athletic director visited the various practice sessions and implemented emergency preparedness drills for all teams. Some of the coaches stumbled through their explanation of basic first aid and emergency plan implementations. What would happen if we had a real emergency? Is the emergency plan in every medical kit and are other coaches aware and know what to do in an emergency?



"Failure to Plan is Planning for Failure."

As presented in the National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association's (NIAAA) Leadership Training Course 504, you find out what happens when you fail to follow the "Standard of Care." Based upon previous experiences, it was clear that Milford Mill needed to develop a plan for risk management. It was also important to practice the implementation of this plan.

The Milford Mill plan included 1) who was responsible for calling 911, 2) when to contact parents, 3) how to use the AED, 4) who will administer CPR, 5) who will direct the team and the ambulance and 6) what kind of first aid is available. Coaches and school systems are being sued for negligence because they did not know about liability or how to act in an emergency situation. It is important that schools cover this aspect of liability and standard of care for sports injuries.

We developed various practice activities for the teams involving emergency situations. The athletic director and the trainer met to prepare scenarios. Over the years, the total school athletic team – principal, athletic director, athletic trainer, coach and athletes – was involved.

The goals for this practice activity are:

1. To develop a plan for the athletic department in order to maintain a safe and orderly environment.
2. To develop a safe way to practice for any emergency situation in athletics.
3. To maintain a high level of care and prevention.

The athletic director and the athletic trainer reviewed the coaches' knowledge of basic first aid and emergency procedures in order to create the drills. Next, they reviewed items and materials (AED, CPR) used in an emergency situation.

After the individual drills were created, the athletic director and the athletic trainer implemented them with the coaches, using the different scenarios covering concussions, bee-stings, heart attack, heat injuries and broken bones. Afterward, they met to discuss what happened and prepared a report for everyone involved. With a critique in hand, they provided recommendations for the coaches concerning what's needed and how to improve their "Standard of Care."

With each different season, the coaches will be expected to drill and will be better prepared knowing what to expect. All of this information is shared with the coaching staff, the principal, the county supervisor of athletics and the athletic directors around the county.

In one implementation example, the head football coach pretended to be a victim of a heart attack. This was done in the middle of the team's practice session and only he knew what was going to happen. The coach was 6-foot-6 and a former pro football defensive lineman and he lay on the ground with a scenario paper pinned to his chest.

The assistant coaches had to step up and run the drill. Using the emergency plan, they determined assignments – Who went for the AED? Who called 911? Who performed CPR? Who directed the ambulance to the site? Since everyone relies on the head coach most of the time, it was good to see that the plan was successful without the coach's involvement.

Another emergency example would be a bee-sting. You can choose an athlete who lists bee-sting allergic on his or her medical form. The scenario directs the athlete to tell the coach that he just got stung by a bee. The coach's response should be, "Are you allergic, do you have or use an EpiPen®?" At this point, the coach would apply the proper first aid and call the parents to inform them that their son or daughter had been stung.

During the drill, the athletic director and the athletic trainer would check the medical kit for an EpiPen® with the athlete's name on it. Especially in the summer and late fall when the bees are active, it is important for coaches to make sure that the EpiPen® is in the medical kit. It is also important that a medical kit is at all practice sessions and games.

Initially, these drills were just for the coaching staff, but the athletes started to ask questions and wanted to participate, so we involved the athletes in the drills. Since the athletic director and the trainer have conducted the drills for many seasons, they have had opportunities to put the plan into action. The coaches commented about how the drill had prepared them and how things went as smoothly as possible.

The more that coaches practice the Emergency Preparedness Drill, the more comfortable they become in an emergency situation. All coaches and athletes must take responsibility in any emergency situation on the athletic fields.

These drills are educational opportunities for coaches and athletes to be aware of the injury, risk and liability issues in athletics. The X's and O's are only part of a coach's responsibility; providing a safe and orderly environment is something everyone should always stress and implement every day. Keep in mind the saying, "Failure to Plan is Planning for Failure."

Everyone wants to have a safe and orderly environment for their athletes and coaches. As long as the athletic directors, coaches, athletic trainers and athletes practice and prepare for emergency situations, the prospects of being found negligent in these situations will be lessened. Schools that follow and drill an effective risk management program will uphold the legal "Standard of Care." ⦿

Joe Sargent is athletic director at Milford Mill Academy in Baltimore, Maryland.

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NJCAA Presents Option for Many Student-athletes

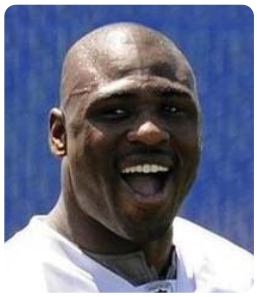
BY STEPHANIE GEIDEL


Nolan Ryan


Bonnie Blair


Andy Pettitte


Jorge Posada


Brandon Jacobs

What do Baseball Hall of Famer **Nolan Ryan**, Olympic Speedskater **Bonnie Blair**, World Series Champions **Andy Pettitte** and **Jorge Posada** and the New York Giants **Brandon Jacobs** have in common? They all began their careers at a National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA) member institution.

According to the College Board, almost 6.6 million students, or 46 percent of all college students, are enrolled in a community college. The NJCAA currently has 54,364 student-athletes participating on 3,588 teams at 525 member institutions in more than 44 states. The NJCAA offers 17 sports with Division I, II and III levels of competition.

As a high school student, the average American teenager has many choices regarding his or her future. For several, determining where to study after high school graduation is a top priority. Many are unsure of what degree path to pursue. Experimenting at the NJCAA level until a course of study is decided upon is a viable option. Students may complete their required courses at the two-year level before transferring to a university within their specialized degree field of choice.

An impressive advantage to participating in athletics at the NJCAA level is the smaller student-to-teacher ratio. The smaller campus size translates to more personal attention where a student is not just a number but instead garners the individual attention of the instructor. NJCAA member schools allow student-athletes the opportunity to spend their first two years adjusting to the demands of higher education before moving on to a four-year university.

Remaining close to home may be a great choice for some students, providing an alternative to a four-year institution. For many, the best option is the nearby two-year college. The NJCAA offers both rural and urban campuses across the country with student populations ranging from 400 to 25,000.

The cost of tuition at a two-year school versus a four-year institution can play a factor for some. The benefit of being able to live at home alleviates the need to pay room and board for the first two years of school. Taking core courses at a two-year college may eliminate the need to take those same courses for a higher cost at a four-year institution. Student-athletes will also be given a taste of their chosen major earlier than waiting for the opportunity to take junior- and senior-level courses at a four-year institution. With many state systems and neighboring two- and four-year institutions offering 2+2 programs (earning an associates degree which automatically transfers into the partners four-year program), working toward that dream career is more convenient.

The current President and CEO of the Black & Decker Corporation is a prime example of the success of the NJCAA. A 1966 NJCAA basketball All-American and honor student at Dixie State (Utah) College, **Nolan Archibald** continued his basketball career at Weber State University where he was an NCAA All-American and Academic All-American. Archibald went on to complete his MBA at Harvard before trying his talents in the NBA. With little luck in the basketball world, Archibald fell back on his education and experiences as a student-athlete to guide him through his career.

Country music star **Billy Dean** also got his start at the NJCAA level. Dean earned a basketball scholarship to East Central Com-

munity College in Mississippi before going on to pursue his love of music. Dean's work has landed him on the Billboard Top 40, earning him Academy of Country Music's Song of the Year as well as a Grammy for his work on a Country Tribute "Amazing Grace."

As a student-athlete, NJCAA-member institutions allow each person the opportunity to participate as a freshman, just as Dean and Archibald were able to do. Joining a team at the four-year level, freshman rarely earn a spot on the playing field which is typically reserved for upper classmen. At the two-year level, freshmen are vital to the team dynamic. Actively participating as a freshman gives the student-athlete the opportunity to develop physically, intellectually and mentally before having to compete against more mature athletes due to the four-year age difference.

Several student-athletes choose to attend an NJCAA program to further prepare for a four-year institution and continue playing the game they love. Palm Beach (Florida) Community College's. **Crystal Bustos** earned three Olympic gold medals with the USA Softball team. **Yolanda Griffith** began her basketball career at Palm Beach (Florida) Community College before winning a WNBA Championship with the Sacramento Monarchs. Perfect game-winner **Mark Buehrle** of the Chicago White Sox began his baseball career at Jefferson (Missouri) College. During the 2009 Major League Baseball Draft, 155 former NJCAA student-athletes were drafted by major league teams.

In addition to attracting top athletic talent, NJCAA member institutions draw top academic students who are looking to save money and remain closer to their family. The competitive, but understanding, environment of the NJCAA allows student-athletes to continue to play the game they love in a familiar community, while allowing more one-on-one time in the classroom. Enjoying friends and family on the sidelines of home games just as they experienced at interscholastic contests builds the student-athletes' confidence. The NJCAA Leaders for Life program recognizes those student-athletes who excel in the classroom and community as well as in athletics. The NJCAA also offers recognition to student-athletes earning All-Region and All-American honors, as well as Academic All-American status.

Today, high school students turn to NJCAA-member schools as a viable alternative for continuing their education. The small class size, proximity to home and game experience give student-athletes the extra boost needed to advance their academic and athletic careers at the four-year college of their choice.

The NJCAA gives student-athletes the opportunity to demonstrate their talents at one of 45 national championships, gaining exposure to top four-year institutions. NJCAA-member institutions comprise 24 regions across the United States, allowing an amazing opportunity to travel around the state and nationally to compete against other top student-athletes. Championships at the regional, district and national levels allow student-athletes to build a resume sure to impress four-year programs and those in the professional ranks – just ask St. Louis Cardinal Albert Pujols (MCC-Maple Woods, (Missouri) and Cincinnati Bengal Bernard Scott (Blinn College, Texas). ⊙

Stephanie Geidel is assistant to the executive director of the National Junior College Athletic Association.



Palm Beach Community College in Florida.



Jefferson College in Missouri.

Cooperative Athletic Programs Continue to Grow

BY EMILY NEWELL

Emery (South Dakota) High School sits in a rural area of eastern South Dakota boasting 62 students. The town of Emery itself has a population of roughly 500.

So in the 1980s, it was no surprise that the school had only about 14 players annually to field a nine-player football team. Logistically, it stretched the team too thin, forcing seventh- and eighth-grade players to fill junior varsity spots.

Jeff Van Leur, head football coach and athletic director at Emery, said forming a cooperative football program with another high school was the only way the school would have been able to stay competitive.

Cooperative programs are formed by combining two or more schools' athletic programs to field one team. Schools could combine efforts for just one sport, or several, depending on the need.

While the rules for forming these "co-ops" vary from state to state, those with a lot of rural schools have seen an increasing number of these programs, as fielding teams has become more difficult.

"Half of our eight-game schedule is against co-op teams," Van Leur said. "It's just something that has to happen around here because of the numbers in rural communities."

Van Leur has been the football coach at Emery since 1980 and has experienced the process of forming a co-op firsthand.

In the fall of 1983, Emery first combined with Spencer (South Dakota) High School, which closed in the fall of 1990 and consolidated with Emery. In 1988, the Spencer-Emery team merged with Ethan (South Dakota) High School.

The merger, Van Leur said, means the co-op now has more than 30 students each year who play football, giving them the ability to field a competitive, nine-player team.

"We've had a lot of success," Van Leur said. "We have three state championships and since 1988, we're 157-57."

The Emery-Ethan co-op is just one of 25 in the state, according to Bob Lowery, assistant executive director of the South Dakota High School Activities Association.

"[Co-ops] give kids the opportunity to participate who otherwise wouldn't be able to," Lowery said. "We have a number of co-ops in both wrestling and football."





However, cooperative sponsorship programs are regulated on a state-by-state basis, and not every state association has bylaws allowing them, said Bob Colgate, an assistant director with the NFHS.

While the Emery-Ethan co-op is only for football, Van Leur said Emery began a co-op with Bridgewater (South Dakota) High School for all other sports in 2005. The two schools will consolidate into Bridgewater-Emery next fall.

But while the Emery-Ethan co-op has been a "perfect marriage" according to Van Leur, there are logistical obstacles that make fielding a co-op team hard on players, parents and the communities in which they reside.

Emery and Ethan are 22 miles apart, so each day in the fall, students from Ethan High School make the trip to Emery for practice. Of the four home games, two are played at Emery, two at Ethan.

"We just reimburse the team that has to travel more," Van Leur said.

Other issues with co-ops are the team name, mascot and colors. When then Spencer-Emery merged with Ethan in 1988, the team became the Spencer-Emery-Ethan Seahawks, taking its name, colors and logo from the National Football League's Seattle Seahawks.

"We got together as a team and let the kids help decide on colors and the team name, and it all worked out well," Van Leur said.

But South Dakota isn't alone in seeing an increase in co-op teams.

Nebraska also has its share of cooperative programs, said Jim Tenopir, Nebraska School Activities Association executive director.

"Nebraska is one of those states that is fairly long east to west, and most of the population is concentrated in the very eastern part of the state near Lincoln, leaving western parts of the state sparsely populated," he said. "Because of that, we've seen an uptick in cooperative programs."

Tenopir said while Nebraska has seen its fair share of co-op programs that have worked well, co-op programs are not always the perfect solution.

"Before schools can form a co-op, they must apply through the state association," Tenopir said. "We list lots of different questions on that application so schools enter the co-op with eyes wide open."

Questions range from where practices will be held, who will provide the head coach and coaching staff, where games will be played, what colors the uniforms will be and who gets the money from ticket sales.

Another issue schools must consider, Tenopir said, is their classification. In Nebraska, if two or more schools form a co-op for any sport, the enrollment of each school is combined and that number is what is used to place the team in a certain class.

"We have had teams decide not to co-op because they don't want to change classifications," Tenopir said.

Things also become difficult when the co-op formed is between schools in two or more conferences, leading those individual conferences to decide whether or not the team can compete for a conference title.

After applying to form a co-op, the state must approve the merger, Tenopir said, meaning legitimate reasons for the co-op must be stated.

"We've had some bigger schools trying to co-op with one another," he said, "but for the most part, all the reasons have been about the inability to field a team or event."

While co-ops do provide a great way for schools to offer programs to students that would otherwise be unavailable, Tenopir said consolidating schools sometimes may be the best option.

"Co-ops have allowed small schools to remain open beyond what some people think may be the appropriate and useful life of a school," he said, "but for the most part, the co-ops we've had have been very successful." ◉

Emily Newell is a spring intern in the NFHS Publications/Communications Department. She is a sophomore at Butler (Indiana) University majoring in journalism (news editorial) and minoring in digital illustration.

MUSIC EDUCATOR AWARDS



➲ Seventeen individuals have been selected to receive the 2009-10 Outstanding Music Educator Award, given by the NFHS Music Association.

The Music Advisory Committee selected the recipients based on their outstanding contributions to high school music programs and activities. The awards recognize high school or college band, choral or orchestral directors, supervisors and adjudicators.

This year, six individuals were selected as section winners and 11 were selected as state winners. ◉

For complete biographical information on this year's Music Educator Award winners, visit the NFHS Web site at **www.nfhs.org/hstoday**.

The following is a list of this year's winners:

SECTION WINNERS

Duncan Goff – Section 3

Gary Fiscus – Section 4

David Circle – Section 5

Kenneth Griffin – Section 6

Clinton Frohm – Section 7

John Combs – Section 8

STATE WINNERS

Chip Braker – IL

Stanley Johnson – NE

Kathy Phillips – MO

Laurence Johnson – SD

James Morrison – OK

Michelle Ewer – CO

Arnell Arellanes – NM

Craig Jones – AR

Nellie Ponikvar – TX

Dale Johnson – WA

Peggy Dahl-Bartunek – ND

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Conducted in cooperation with state athletic administrator associations as outreach to targeted demographic areas. Offering of LTI, RAA, one year NIAAA membership with 10 percent of participants receiving registration and lodging scholarship to National Conference.

Media Materials
Availability of numerous items to assist the professional in the form of DVD, CD, online and print.

Opportunities

- NIAAA Committee Membership – 11 committees.
- Field Renovation Program – Members may apply for consideration to have an outdoor field renovated by Sports Turf Committee.
- Student Scholarship/Essay Program – Open to students in schools where the Athletic Director is an NIAAA member. Female and male recipients at State, Section and National levels.
- NIAAA/Mildred Hurt Jennings Endowment – Opportunity to contribute. Portion of Funds utilized for professional growth outreach initiatives.
- In-Service Program – Offering selected LTI courses adapted in 90 minute or 4 hour presentations. Avaliable to school or district staff. Topics include risk management, time management and interpersonal relationships.
- Self-Assessment and Program Assessment

Website Benefits at : www.niaaa.org

- Dedicated to NIAAA information and program offerings. Links to key affiliates.
- Member Services – Online opportunity through NIAAA database to view personal account, find members, order materials or initiate/renew NIAAA membership. Post a resume, open dates, job openings and equipment for sale. Use "message board" to post questions and gather information, as well as respond to questions posted by other members.
- Registration and information regarding the annual National Conference.
- Athletic Administrators Outfitters (AAO) is a shop that offers logoed NIAAA apparel.
- Buyers Guide – Online site for preferred companies with contact information and links.
- E-news – Electronic newsletter offered 10 times annually at no cost.
- *The Role of the Principal in Interscholastic Athletics* – Free 12 minutes video through link to the NIAAA Web site. Produced in cooperation with the NASSP and NFHS.
- Calendar of events scheduled by state athletic administrator association, as well as the national office.
- State Leadership Directory – Listing of key contact individuals within states.
- Approved Fundraisers – Guide and information on companies that have met qualifications.

Direct Benefits to Members

- $2,000,000 Liability insurance.
- Interscholastic Athletic Administrator magazine (IAA). Quarterly 48 page journal provided as part of membership.
- $2,500 Life Insurance.
- Membership kit for first-time registrants.
- A Profile of Athletic Administration – 28 page booklet available at no cost, providing purpose of position and description of how AD position should be structured.
- National Emergency Network – Assistance available in cases of accident or medical emergency while traveling.
- Continued cutting edge development through NIAAA 3rd Strategic Plan.

Cost Reductions
- Lower Registration cost for National Conference.
- Reduced premiums on AFLAC cancer and accident insurance.
- *From the Gym to the Jury* newsletter special $10 annual online subscription ($39 value). Includes current legal rulings associated with athletics.
- Discounted rates offered on Long Term Health Care. Added inclusion in Tuition Rewards and Care Options Assistance.

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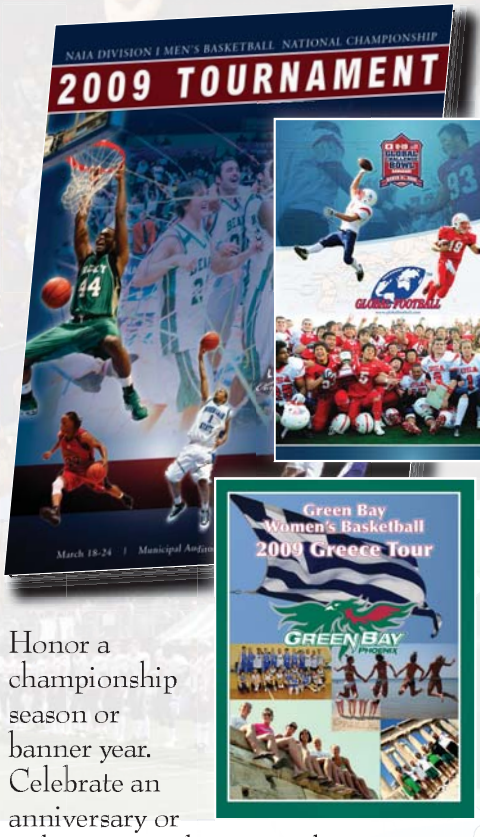

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The Sickle Cell Athlete: What Administrators, Coaches Need to Know

BY TORRANCE WILLIAMS

Sickle Cell Trait (SCT) is not a disease, but a description of a type of hemoglobin gene. Hemoglobin is what carries oxygen in the bloodstream. SCT differs from Sickle Cell Anemia (SCA) in that the trait is present when one gene for sickle hemoglobin is inherited from one parent while a normal hemoglobin gene is inherited from the other. If a sickle cell gene is inherited from each parent, the child will then have SCA.

SCA is a serious disorder that typically causes severe medical problems early in childhood and continues into adulthood. People with SCT rarely have any problems. In fact, more than three million Americans are SCT-positive and generally live normal healthy lives. (Bergeron, 2004) However, they may develop problems under extreme physical stress or with low oxygen levels (high altitude).

People with ancestors from Africa, Mediterranean countries, India, South or Central America, and Saudi Arabia are at high risk for having SCT. SCT occurs in about eight percent of the African-American population in the United States. The National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) currently recommends that the sickle cell trait status of all college athletes be determined.

The U.S. Armed Forces first linked SCT to an increased risk of sudden death during extreme physical exertion several decades ago. SCT has also been linked to several deaths occurring during off-season conditioning in collegiate football players in the past 15 years. At this point, SCT does not appear to be as significant of an issue in high school athletes as it is at the college level. This is likely due to the fact that the intensity and duration of physical activity in high school athletes does not reach the intensity seen in collegiate conditioning activities. It does, though, still represent a potential cause of death or serious illness in athletes that is completely preventable. Thus, this brief overview of SCT can help you develop a plan to prevent your athletes from suffering a crisis.

A Quick Lesson on the Sickle Cell Trait

SCT is the inheritance of one gene for sickle hemoglobin and one for normal hemoglobin. (Association, 2009) The sickle gene is very common in individuals who have ancestry from areas where malaria is prevalent.

The "sickled" cells are unable to move through blood vessels normally, resulting in limited blood flow to muscles, kidneys and other vital organs. When tissue cannot get blood, the tissue dies and becomes necrotic. Sickling may begin as early as two to three minutes of sustained maximal exertion, such as wind sprints in football or running laps in basketball (Browne, 1993). The more the athlete exerts himself or herself, the earlier and greater the sickling of the red blood cell (Jones, 1970). A potential catastrophe can be prevented in the athlete with SCT by identifying those at risk, anticipating common problems, and observing the signs of early problems. Taking the following simple steps can save a life!

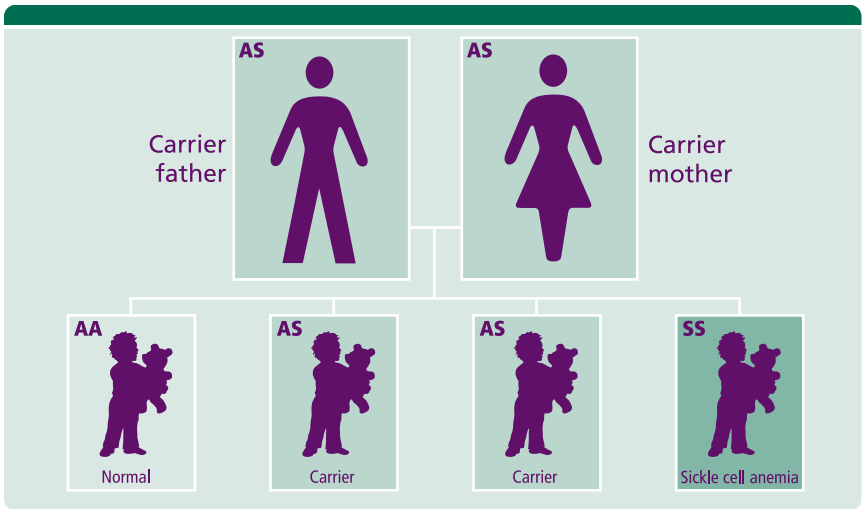
Identify the SCT Athlete

The pre-participation physical form should have a question about the athlete's sickle cell status. If the athlete or parents are unaware of the athlete's status, they may very likely be able to find the information from their primary care physician or state screening records. While the NCAA has recommended screening of all athletes, currently no medical organization is calling for the screening of SCT in high school athletes. Parents who are interested in having their child screened for SCT should discuss it with their physician.

When those student-athletes with SCT are identified, it is important that the student-athlete and his or her parents are educated on SCT. It is important to not discourage the parent or the athlete from sports participation. However, they must be educated on preventive measures and the potential dangers. It is vital that the necessary personnel, i.e., certified athletic trainer, coaches and athletic director, are informed of the athlete's status, but it is also important to protect the student-athlete's privacy.

Develop an Emergency Action Plan

Hopefully you already have an emergency action plan (EAP) in place for all of your sports and venues. If not, then such a plan must be developed. The EAP should be curtailed to your school dynamics, and should be very detailed to the point where a complete stranger could understand and implement it.



Know the Signs and Symptoms of a Sickling Crisis

One of the reasons that it is so important to identify which of your athletes has SCT is so that coaches and athletic trainers can distinguish between a sickling crisis and an exhausted athlete during practices and conditioning drills. How is a football coach to know when to allow the athlete to rest or when to "encourage" him to work on his fitness, and to teach the player not to quit? If you look at the signs and symptoms below, you will see how many athletes show these signs and symptoms every day, but may not have SCT. In any case, all athletes – those with SCT or not – should always have plenty of water breaks throughout practice, and good judgment should always be used when coaching adolescents.

Here are some of the signs and symptoms of an exertional sickling crisis:

a. The athlete may complain of pain, or cramping in the legs, back or stomach
b. Difficulty breathing
c. Extreme fatigue
d. Collapsing, fainting or passing out

SCT is very complex and can be life-threatening. However, if the proper steps are taken, these symptoms are generally easy to manage and normally subside within a few minutes. The athlete's symptoms normally subside when he or she is hydrated and rests. During hot weather, the athlete should also be taken into a cool, controlled environment to prevent overheating. If at any time the athlete collapses (sickle collapsing), this is a true medical emergency! EMS should be activated and an AED should be readily available.

Alter Practice and Training for the Athlete with SCT

Athletes with SCT can generally perform at the same physical level that their teammates can; however, they may not be able to do it for an extended amount of time. For example, the athlete with SCT should not run timed, sustained 100-yard sprints, or timed sustained "suicides." The athlete can still run sprints and suicides, but the athlete with SCT must have more rest in between sprints.

According to research, there has never been a single death associated with SCT during a game. All of the deaths have occurred during in-season or out-of-season conditioning drills. Coaches and athletes must be aware of the athlete's limits! If the athlete is feeling exhausted, or is showing symptoms of a crisis, the athlete must immediately stop, hydrate and rest.

If an athlete is known to have sickle cell trait, the following precautions are suggested during physical activity:

- Set own pace
- Engage in slow and gradual preseason conditioning regimen
- Use adequate rest and recovery between intense drills
- Stop activity immediately upon struggling or experiencing muscle pain, abnormal weakness, undue fatigue or breathlessness
- Stay well-hydrated

While caution must be taken, the SCT athlete should always be allowed to compete in all sports, and should be treated the same as the other athletes. It needs to be emphasized that these athletes normally do not have problems, except if put under extreme physical duress. The precautions and training modifications discussed in this article are intended to allow the athlete with SCT to participate in athletics as safely as possible. If you have further questions regarding this issue, contact your state association's medical advisory committee. ⊙

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Torrance Williams is the head athletic trainer at Wekiva High School in Apopka, Florida. He also is an adjunct professor at the University of Central Florida and teaches in the athletic training department. Williams serves on the National Athletic Trainers' Association (NATA) Secondary School Committee and is a member of the NATA Inter Association Taskforce for the Sickle Cell Trait.

Planning Underway for 2010 National Student Leadership Conference

BY DAN SCHUMERTH

The 2010 NFHS National Student Leadership Conference will be held July 15-18 at the Indianapolis Hilton Hotel in downtown Indianapolis. About 300 student delegates from many of the member state associations are expected to attend.

The purpose of the conference is to instill positive values, such as respect for self and others, sportsmanship, teamwork, healthy lifestyles, community service and perspective.

"We focus on the core values of the conference," said Elliot Hopkins, NFHS Director of Educational Services and conference director.

"We want to provide an opportunity to exchange ideas through dialogue with students from around the nation and Canada. We want students to leave the conference having a game plan to be better and help their teammates and fellow group members. We want to give them the tools to implement all those changes."

Throughout the conference, college facilitators will lead large- and small-group discussions on contemporary issues facing education-based athletics and activities. In addition to the discussions, delegates will participate in a community service project in which they will clean up nine Indianapolis high schools in order to gain firsthand experience with servant leadership.

Hopkins said one of the goals of the conference is that students gain the perspective that winning and losing is simply in the moment, rather than a long-term circumstance. Students should learn to evaluate themselves and situations.

State associations received delegate applications in January to be distributed to students. Applications, along with codes of conduct, releases and health forms, are due back to the NFHS on May 14. Students then will receive their preconference packet – which includes final instructions on what to bring, wear and expect – in June.

Conference registration, housing, transportation and meals will be free for registered student delegates, thanks to a grant from T-Mobile USA, Inc.

Hopkins boasts of successful results from conferences in past years.

"We've had young people go back to their respective schools and implement new programs for entire high school conferences with the skills gained [at the NFHS conference]." ⦿

Football fatality update

According to the 2009 Survey of Football Injury Research, there were three direct football fatalities and 12 indirect football fatalities (15 total) at the high school level this year. Overall, the number of combined fatalities increased from 2008, when there were 14 (seven direct and seven indirect).

"We are trying to do everything we can to minimize risk – either through rule changes, through equipment design or a variety of other things," said NFHS Assistant Director Bob Colgate. "This was kind of an unusual year, especially when we look at the case studies on the direct and indirect fatalities. There are some things that don't normally happen that have resulted in fatalities."

The survey classifies direct fatalities as traumatic injury while participating in the skills of football, while indirect fatalities are caused by systemic failure as a result of exertion while participating in a football game or practice or by a complication that was secondary to a non-fatal injury.

Two of the direct fatalities were brain injuries, while the other was Commotio Cordis (blow to the chest which stops the heart) after being tackled. Of the 12 indirect fatalities, three were heat-related, two were asthma attacks, three were heart-related, one was from lightning and one was natural causes. The cause of two of the indirect fatalities remains unknown.

"Would we like to see the numbers at zero? Yes," Colgate said. "Is it going to happen? No. With more than 1.2 million playing high school football at more than 15,000 high schools, we just know by the very nature of the game that it's going to happen no matter what we do. If I had an answer that I could wipe it out and get it completely to zero, I would."

"There was only one year – 1990 – when there were no fatalities in all of football," said Dr. Frederick Mueller, the director of the survey. "I think the head-to-head contact will make some fatalities inevitable."

Heat stroke is the most consistent cause for concern with indirect

high school football fatalities, of which there have been 31 since 1995.

"There is no excuse for any number of heat stroke deaths since they are all preventable with the proper precautions," Colgate said.

"Players must also feel that they can tell the coach when they are not feeling well, dizzy, or have a headache, and coaches should not make them feel like they are not tough if they report these problems to them," Mueller said.

The survey, which is conducted by the National Center for Catastrophic Sports Injury at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, has resulted in rule changes, improved equipment, improved medical care and improved techniques for coaching football. For example, a rule forbidding players to lead with their heads while tackling and blocking was implemented in 1976 as a direct result of the survey.

"The problem has been that players see the pros on Sunday afternoon with the head contact and think that is the way to hit," Mueller said. "High school coaches have to emphasize to players that head contact can lead to death and permanent paralysis. Players also must realize the dangers of head contact and eliminate it in games and practices. Rules are in place, but officials sometimes are not calling penalties for illegal helmet contact and until they start calling penalties, it will continue. It is up to coaches, players and officials to stop head contact."

"We're always looking within our NFHS football rules process to make sure we're minimizing risk and trying to prevent future fatalities in the sport," Colgate said. ⦿

Dan Schumerth is a spring semester intern in the NFHS Publications/Communications Department. He is a senior at Franklin (Indiana) College, majoring in journalism (news/editorial).

Paul Angelico named CHSAA commissioner

BY EMILY NEWELL



After serving as associate commissioner of the Colorado High School Activities Association (CHSAA) for the past eight years, **Paul Angelico** will become the eighth commissioner of the CHSAA following the retirement of current commissioner Bill Reader this summer. He will assume the position July 1.

Prior to serving as associate commissioner, Angelico served as the assistant commissioner of the CHSAA from 1990 to 2002.

Angelico began his career at Coronado High School in Colorado Springs as a business education teacher, boys and girls gymnastics coach and activities director from 1977 to 1979.

He then served as the activities and business manager, girls gymnastics coach and student council advisor at Colorado Springs Air Academy High School from 1979 until 1989.

Since becoming the associate commissioner, he has served as the staff liaison for gymnastics, boys and girls tennis, boys and girls swimming, speech, lacrosse, wrestling, coaching education and registration. He also handled the Classification and Organization and Budget and Finance Committees.

Angelico has also served as a member of several NFHS committees and is currently a member of the NFHS Sports Medicine Advisory Committee.

Among his accomplishments, Angelico has worked to create the current CHSAA classification system, the school refund concept and a speech coach workshop. ⦿

Emily Newell is a spring intern in the NFHS Publications/Communications Department. She is a sophomore at Butler (Indiana) University majoring in journalism (news editorial) and minoring in digital illustration.

Amemiya leaves HHSAA



Keith Amemiya, executive director of the Hawaii High School Athletic Association (HHSAA) since 1998, will step down from the position at the end of the school year. In his 12 years at the helm of the HHSAA, Amemiya has dealt with the state's unique challenges to expand opportunities for its 95 member schools.

After leaving the HHSAA, Amemiya will take the position of executive administrator and secretary of the University of Hawaii Board of Regents.

One of Amemiya's first tasks upon taking the job in 1998 was to create a director of information position to oversee media relations and give increased visibility to athletes and sponsors. Shortly after, he initiated the HHSAA's first state football tournament in 1999, and in 2000, presented a historic football doubleheader between mainland powers Concord (California) De La Salle and Long Beach (California) Poly versus Honolulu St. Louis and Kahuku High School, respectively.

Amemiya also inherited an organization that had recently become autonomous and would be responsible for raising its own funds. As such, he helped in obtaining $4.5 million in state and private funding for installation of an often-used synthetic field and track surface at Honolulu Roosevelt High School, and agreed to a statewide television agreement with Hawaii Sports Network to provide unprecedented coverage of state tournaments.

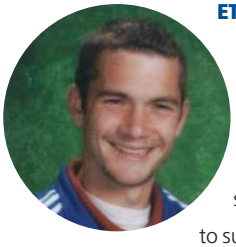
In recent years, budget shortfalls for Hawaii's schools has led to the HHSAA creating the "SOS" (Save Our Sports) campaign to help offset budget cuts to public schools athletic programs. Shortly after Amemiya announced the initiative, the campaign had raised more the $500,000. ⦿

VOICES OF THE NATION

Q | *What's the most important thing you've learned from participating in high school activities?*

ANTONIA JANKOWIAK
Kenwood High School, Baltimore County, MD

"The most important thing I have gained from my participation in high school activities was how to correctly and efficiently maintain adequate time-management skills. This is especially important so that I may balance my social, personal and academic lives, while maintaining success in all three. Being active with others in school helps someone develop a healthy sense of interdependence, and assists in maintaining friendships and acquaintances that will last them a lifetime. Overall, playing sports and doing after-school activities allowed me to make bonds that will last a lifetime and gain strength on and off the field."



ETHAN BYRD
U-32 High School, Montpelier, VT

"The thing that stands out the most for me is that I have learned to be a team player. Instead of trying to be an individual and trying to succeed by myself, or only for my own success, I have to learn how to help my team be strong. I have learned that I must find people who I can work with and become a unit with them. Everyone has something to bring to the table – strengths and weaknesses! This method gets the job done quicker and more effectively. To be a team player doesn't mean only me; my coaches and parents must also be team players as well."



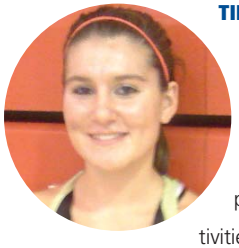
JENNA LEVY
Franklin High School, Baltimore County, MD

"While participating in high school athletics over the past four years I have learned many important things; one that stands above the rest is leadership. Many student-athletes learn leadership by being captain on a team. Although that was part of my experience, I really learned to be a leader by founding the "Pink Out" game at my high school. This event enabled my team to raise awareness and funds for breast cancer and donate the proceeds to the Susan G. Komen Foundation. Now I am currently planning our second annual "Pink Out" game and have gotten my entire school's support."



RACHEL WEBBERMAN
McCallum HS, Austin, TX

"By participating in school activities I have learned that I can make an impact. It is easy, especially in high school, to write ourselves off, or allow others to write us off, as insignificant. We don't have much say in the world around us, most of us can't vote and we still live under our parents' rule. Being involved in school activities is a chance to make a change in something. School activities have shown me that with the right amount of effort, what I do matters. That if I want to make a difference, I can."



TIFFANY JANTZEN
Dulaney High School, Baltimore County, MD

"The obvious answer to this question is teamwork; however, I believe the most important thing I've learned from high school activities is trust, and teamwork is only a portion of what it takes to have trust. Achievement is reached when you learn to believe in the people around you, and character is built when trust is divided into all the qualities we get from participation in activities. Trusting the officials is sportsmanship. Trusting your coach is preparation. Trusting yourself is confidence and trusting your friends is teamwork."