

Welcome back

As our schools and sports teams get geared up for the 2008-09 school year, the Maine Center for Sport and Coaching (MCSC) is preparing to expand its outreach efforts in the state of Maine. Over the past two years the MCSC has been working directly in school communities, assisting their progress toward *Sports Done Right* accreditation.

Although participation in the accreditation process has continued to increase, other school communities have been using *Sports Done Right* as a guide for athletic programs but have not yet opted to seek accreditation standing.

To honor their work and expand the *Sports Done Right* program, the MCSC will be launching an endorsement process. Receiving a *Sports Done Right* Endorsement from the MCSC Board of Directors is an acknowledgement of the school districts efforts toward creating a healthy and positive sports experience for the student-athletes using the core principles and practices of *Sports Done Right*. The endorsement recognition is less intensive when compared to the accreditation process, and reflects the first level of implementation. The process and application for *Sports Done Right* Endorsement will be available this fall.

The MCSC has also joined forces with the National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association (NIAAA) to offer professional development opportunities online for athletic administrators. The NIAAA Leadership Training Program provides resource tools to assist in developing and maintaining a quality sports program. By offering several of the NIAAA Leadership Training courses online, the NIAAA and the MCSC hope to broaden availability.

Online Courses include:

LTC 501 Athletic Administration: Philosophy, Leadership Organizations and Professional Programs

This flagship course of Leadership Training serves as an overview for interscholastic athletic administration. This course focuses on the roles of the NFHS, the NIAAA, the State Athletic/Activity Associations, and the State Athletic Administrators' Associations. The course also previews the NIAAA Certification Program and the NIAAA Leadership Training Program. It is a prerequisite for all levels of certification and includes study materials for the CAA Certification Examination. *Required for: RAA, CAA and CMAA Certification*

LTC 502 Athletic Administration: Principles, Strategies and Methods

This course will take a basic approach to the fundamentals and methods of athletic administration and will alert and educate athletic administrators regarding potential problems and possible solutions in areas such as budgets, transportation, scheduling and parent/student/coach conflicts. The course will also touch upon sample athletic/activity program philosophies, department organizational charts, activity procedures/checklists, public relations, coaching applications/assessments and emergency plans. *Required for: RAA, CAA and CMAA Certification*

LTC 504 Athletic Administration: Legal Issues I (Risk Management)

This course has been developed to guide contemporary athletic administrators and coaches in their efforts to reduce and manage risks. As such, it is intended to alert program administrators to potential sources of litigation and provide information about contemporary and preventive "best practices" and strategies for risk reduction. The course should be used as a framework for examination and development of risk management procedures and guidelines for local schools or school districts. It is intended to serve as a focal point for thoughtful staff discussions and for development of local policies, methods and school-specific procedures. Athletic administrators will be exposed to five areas of study and will become conversant with various legal issues and potential sources of litigation that challenge contemporary high school athletic administrators risk management strategies. *Required for: CAA and CMAA Certification*

If you would like to learn more about the Sports Done Right or NIAAA LTC online options, please contact the MCSC at 866-767-8540.

Unity or hazing?

GOODRICH, Michigan - What started as a simple complaint about an unauthorized haircut at football camp has turned into a raging debate that's put one mom against dozens of area residents and coaches. But one national expert says the mom is right: Football-camp haircuts are a kind of hazing. The woman, whose son attends Goodrich High School, was upset and complained to the Board of Education when her son came home from football camp with his head shaved - a haircut she didn't authorize. Coaches and other teammates said all players agreed to the cuts. The expert says even with the boys' consent, the act is out of line. "With the issue of hazing, consent doesn't matter because in most states, hazing is against the law," said Norm Pollard, dean of students at Alfred University in Alfred, N.Y. "Someone can say they wanted to do it, but that really doesn't matter." One coach said many high school sports teams have some type of tradition - but for solidarity, not as hazing. "It's something the team does. It's kids being kids," said Joe Delaney, varsity football coach at Grand Blanc High School. "My kids come back on a regular day with haircuts that look strange, and I know they did it to each other," he said. "It's not hazing. It's something they enjoy, and they ask each other to do it." Hazing is against the law in Michigan but reports show hazing in high schools is a problem. According to a report by The Associated Press in March, police launched an investigation against six high school baseball players in Johnstown, Colo., after they allegedly held down younger classmates and rubbed their genitals in their faces. In 2000, Alfred University conducted a study in which about 48 percent of high school students surveyed nationwide reported being hazed. John Johnson, communications director for the Michigan High School Athletic Association, said hazing is an issue in many high schools, but it's handled locally and is not something the association deals with. Johnson said the association has a policy against hazing. - *By RoNeisha Mullen, The Flint Journal, July 1, 2008*

Torn ACLs, other big injuries hit little athletes

WASHINGTON (AP) - A single morning's patients for Harvard Dr. Mininder Kocher provides a window into a troubling trend: Injuries once seen mostly in adult athletes are becoming distressingly common in youth athletes. Kocher, an orthopedic surgeon at Children's Hospital Boston, is about to begin a government-funded study to figure out the best treatment for children who tear that anterior cruciate ligament while growth plates around the knee still are active. "I wonder what these kids are going to be like 20 to 30 years down the road," he says. "Will we have a whole generation of middle-aged adults with early arthritis?" Why the sudden influx? Orthopedic surgeons say that today's youth sports are more intense, with players often picking just one to specialize in as young as 8. And they can play and train in some sports virtually year-round. "Young athletes are not the same as small adults," says Dr. E. Lyle Cain Jr. of the Andrews Sports Medicine & Orthopedic Center in Birmingham, Ala. Certain types of injuries "can cause permanent damage that affect their future growth." In 2006, McCall Maddox of Jacksboro, Texas, tore his ACL during Pee Wee Football at age 12. Three doctors refused to do surgery until he was 16 and had quit growing, ordering no running until then. Why? Standard ACL repair involves drilling through the leg's growth plates, risking a stunting of any still-to-come growth. McCall's mother, Roxanna Maddox, sought out Kocher in Boston, who repairs children's ACLs in a different way. Winding the new ligament around the shinbone instead of drilling. Kocher reports patients doing well five to eight years later but acknowledges a big question: "Will it hold up 20, 30 years down the line" like the adult surgery does? - *By Lauran Neergaard, The Associated Press, July 8, 2008*

For many student-athletes, game over

MOUNT VERNON, N.Y. - On Long Island, a group of parents started a charitable corporation, Wantagh SOS (Save Our Students), to collect money for nearly 100 sports teams and extracurricular clubs that were dropped from the school district's budget last month. The group raised more than \$334,000, about half of its goal, through dinner parties, car washes, a lacrosse tournament and a walk-a-thon. And come fall, middle school students in Dearborn, Mich., will have to settle for fewer games after every team's season was cut by a quarter, or about two weeks, to save \$130,000 annually on busing and coaching. The district trimmed the schedules after students and parents opposed its plan to replace the sports team with an intramural program, in which students would not have competed against other schools. As cash-strapped school districts across the nation scale back sports programs or try to pass on part or all of their costs to students and parents, some fear that the tradition of the scholar athlete is at risk. In Mount Vernon - where this year more than 700 students were expected to participate - many teachers and parents say that sports not only keep children coming to school but also keep them away from crime, drugs and gang activity. School officials here and elsewhere say they recognize the value of athletic programs, but have little choice as they face rising teacher salaries and mounting costs for benefits, special education classes and utility bills that are soaring with higher fuel prices and inflation. Stewart Trost, an associate professor in the Department of Nutrition and Exercise Sciences at Oregon State University, said that while schools had a tradition of providing physical exercise that dated to the 1850s, less than 10 percent of the nation's public schools have daily physical education classes. Trost argued that "ensuring health of children is part and parcel of the academic mission of schools in that you have to be healthy to learn," citing studies showing that students who participate in a physical activity or sports perform better on standardized tests, and are less likely to smoke, use drugs, or engage in unprotected or promiscuous sex. - *By Winnie Hu, The New York Times, July 28, 2008*

Cost of youth sports pinches metro parents

With each uptick in the price of gas, the cost of sports success has risen for parents, who shell out hundreds on every weekend trip. For example, the Georgia Impact's pursuit of girls softball glory has taken the team across the Southeast this summer, from Lakeland, Fla., to Lynchburg Va. The goal: making it into a 144-team national tournament in Owensboro, Ky. Club athletics have mushroomed in the last decade or so, creating a micro economy built around road trips. High gas prices and the slumping economy are changing the equation. "I think across the board, you could say within the entire softball community, everybody is having to re-evaluate this commitment that everybody's made to softball," said Will Tomasello, who coaches another Impact club team. Al Owen, coach of the 16-and-under team said his gas bill last month was \$850. Owen, whose daughter is also on the team, estimates his family has spent at least \$20,000 on softball in the past four years. Such costs are typical, regardless of the sport, and they are forcing adjustments by club sports organizations as well as parents. The girls field at the U.S. Tennis Association's 18-and-under Southern championship in June was the smallest ever, said Bill Ozaki, program and player development director for USTA's Southern section. The boys field, which usually has a waiting list, accommodated everyone who wanted to play. - *By Ken Sugiura, The Atlanta Journal-Constitution, July 29, 2008*

Boosters cling to system: Parents, coaches afraid of losing quality

After an investigation by the Herald-Leader into the funding of Fayette County's high school sports and bands, Superintendent Silberman and the school board created a task force to examine extra-curricular activities. Silberman, who is concerned about the inequities created by the system, says he isn't sure how to make it more fair. Raising taxes isn't an option. Limiting booster clubs would discourage parent involvement. Academics who study sports management and groups that work with athletic directors said that the best way to solve Fayette County's problems would be to dedicate more tax dollars to extracurricular activities. If that's not possible, they said, Fayette County could address some of its problems by creating one central booster group at each school, formalizing any fee system and providing better oversight. Scott J. Smith, former athletic director and now an assistant professor of sports management at Central Michigan University recommends moving toward a single group that raises money for all programs and then divides it up based on student participation, not by how much money individuals raise. It's been a successful model around the country, if booster groups are willing to cooperate, said Mike Sellers, founder of GR8 Sports, a consulting group. The Fayette County booster clubs do not have much guidance from school administrators. The result is confusion. In the past, the district has been reluctant to set rules, in part because booster clubs are separate organizations that are incorporated as non-profits. Experts recommend that Fayette County provide better oversight to ensure that costs don't prevent students from participating and to equalize spending between schools and sports. The task force set up by Silberman is examining activities at elementary, middle and high schools. It will consider barriers to participation, equity and other issues. The group will report back to the school board in March and make recommendations. - *By Sarah Vos and Jennifer Smith, Lexington Herald-Leader, August 4, 2008*

Deering assistant coaches dismissed

PORTLAND, Me. - Three Deering High assistant coaches have been dismissed as part of a Portland School Department investigation into alleged underage drinking by students in the company of adults. Varsity assistants Frank Watson and Chris Grant along with freshman coach, Mike D'Andrea Jr., the son of head coach Mike D'Andrea, have been dismissed from the program. The decision was announced Monday by Superintendent Jeanne Whynot-Vickers and Deering Principal Ken Kunin. A school department press release stated the move was made because Whynot-Vickers and Kunin "have lost confidence in the ability of these individuals effectively to supervise and serve as role models for Deering High School students." The alleged incident took place at a party on June 21 after Deering's victory in the Class A state championship game. Multiple sources told the Press Herald the party was held at Watson's home in Portland. "Because the investigation is ongoing, I have been asked not to comment," said head coach, Mike D'Andrea. "The thought of underage drinking is disappointing - nor do I condone it." The school department said further disciplinary action may be taken against any adults or students found to have violated school department policies. "We want to get the full story," Kunin said. "We started talking to the adults and then the students. We want to give everyone the opportunity to tell their side of the story." Kunin said it's important to determine if the consumption of alcohol was a mistake by students or represents a pattern of behavior which would bring a recommendation of counseling. He said students who agree to a substance abuse evaluation can reduce their extracurricular activities suspension to a week. The senior D'Andrea served a four-game suspension at the start of the 2002 high school baseball season for drinking a beer on the team bus while his team was in a restaurant following Deering's third consecutive state title in June of 2001. In 2001, Deering players and an assistant coach were involved in an alcohol-related incident following a 2001 loss to Bangor in the Class A state basketball championship at the Bangor Auditorium. - *By Tom Chard, Morning Sentinel, August 5, 2008*

Atlanta mom charged after alleged assault

An Atlanta-area mom is facing charges after allegedly pummeling another woman at her daughter's cheerleading camp, Fox 5 News in Atlanta reported. Michelle Rains, who has been charged with simple battery, says the argument started because she wanted her 9-year-old daughter placed on a different squad than the one assigned, but the president of the cheerleading clinic refused. That's when things reportedly got out of hand - but the 39-year-old mother of three vehemently denies hitting Nancy Cunningham, president of the Sharon Springs Cheerleading Association. A complaint obtained by Fox 5 Atlanta says the cheerleading president accuses Rains of punching and taunting her in the Aug. 1 incident. "I did not punch her," she told Fox 5 Atlanta. "I did take my three fingers and put them underneath her chin and push her head back...I think it escalated to a point where it shouldn't have." - *FOXNews.com, August 20, 2008*

Campaign on for health, sportsmanship

Facial puffiness. Higher blood pressure and heart rate. Drastic personality changes. Those are some of the signs Maryland physicians are being encouraged to look for as they treat young athletes - signs that could be red flags for steroid use, according to a campaign launched yesterday. "The message about anabolic steroids, about energy drinks, supplements, is something that people want to know about," said Michael Gimbel, director of Powered by Me!, a St. Joseph Medical Center program for training and educating people on steroids and other performance enhancers. "There's a lot of information out there and we want to reach as many people as we can." More than 1,000 packets of information were sent out to Maryland pediatricians yesterday, Gimbel said, including a small, pocket-size card with a list of steroid- use warning signs, symptoms and side effects. "It will remind [doctors]...to share that information about steroids and supplements," Gimbel said, adding that PASS seeks to reach every aspect of the community that touches youth, including pharmacists and psychiatrists, as well as parents. - *By Arin Gencer, The Baltimore Sun, August 20, 2008*

Pay up to suit up

High school sports programs that were taken for granted for decades are no longer a sure thing in these days of budget cut-backs. The passage of Proposition 2 1/2 overrides this spring in Canton, Holbrook, and Randolph allowed high school athletic programs to survive or escape crushing fees. But as a budget crisis engulfed the town of Weymouth, fees for high school sports doubled and school officials are still struggling to prevent further cuts in programs or higher fees. Of the 46 public high schools in the Globe South area, 38 - 83 percent - have athletic user fees, charging an annual fee per student or by sport. Most districts cap how much a family pays each year and use a waiver system for those unable to pay. In Holbrook and Randolph, the overrides saved sports programs that school officials say almost certainly would have had to be scrapped. A \$4.5 million override passed by Canton voters in May enabled athletic fees to be dramatically reduced. Fees reached almost \$500 per sport last year, but have dropped to \$100 per sport for the coming school year. In Weymouth, the reverse is true. A budget crisis precipitated by soaring employee healthcare costs recently forced the School Committee to double high school athletic fees to \$200 each for most sports - with a \$250 fee for football and \$400 for boys' and girls' hockey - and no family cap. Athletic director Kevin Mackin is warning that the higher fees could drastically affect participation at a school where one-third of students play a sport. Fund-raising to support athletic programs is increasingly becoming part of the picture. Many parents of student-athletes joined booster clubs that raised huge amounts of money to help reduce the fees. An increasing number of athletic directors are involved in fund-raising to supplement athletic budgets. - *By Rich Fahey, The Boston Globe, August 24, 2008*

Student-athletes sometimes need specialized physicals

Florida requires students to get physicals to be eligible for school athletics. But the examination is only as good as the medical professional who performs it, the questions asked and the diagnostic tools used, experts say. And many examinations fail to detect the cardiac abnormalities that are the biggest cause of athlete deaths, critics say. Even when cardiac problems lead to a prospective athlete's disqualification from play, the two most common causes of sudden death - hypertrophic cardiomyopathy (HCM) and coronary artery anomalies - are rarely cited. Although 49 states and the District of Columbia require sports physicals, there is no universal standard for them. As a result, practices vary widely. Florida, for example, is one of 18 states that allow chiropractors to sign off on school physicals. The AHA has said that it "harbors particular concern" about the use of chiropractors because of their "lack of formal professional training for such activities." A free back-to-school physicals program was offered two Saturdays this month at Nemours Children's Clinic and Wolfson Children's Hospital. Nearly 300 volunteers, including more than 50 physicians and residents from an array of local hospitals offered their services. Some students were diverted for more in-depth testing based on their personal and family medical history and their performance on preliminary tests. Statistics weren't immediately available for this year's program. Last year, 169 students were referred to the cardiology station. Using an electrocardiogram and echocardiogram, tools rarely used for physicals, cardiologists found three students with significant heart defects. - *By Jeremy Cox, The Florida Times-Union, August 26, 2008*

Pressure to excel driving young athletes away

Until last week, Oakville, Ont. hockey player Stefan Legein was a poster boy for youth hockey. After star turns with the Canadian junior team and a stint with the Ontario Hockey League, he was drafted in the second round by the NHL's Columbus Blue Jackets last year. But last week, when the 19-year-old decided to call it quits on the eve of training camp, many observers wondered if youth hockey's gruelling expectations might be to blame. Fall used to be the season in which kids would choose one or more sports to play outside school. Today, though, Labor Day signals very little; many have been hitting the ice or kicking a soccer ball all summer long to prepare for fall tryouts. Coaches and sports administrators admit that the relentless pace exacts a price. Brandon Regier, a 16-year-old hockey player who recently decided to give up his spot on the WHL's Brandon Wheat Kings said "It's never been my favorite thing to do in the world. Everyone's telling me they hope I change my mind." His dad, Jeff Regier, admits he probably made it hard for Brandon, the youngest of four hockey-playing boys, to quit. "We're a hockey family, so it's definitely not a good thing to tell your dad you're quitting hockey," he says, adding that it's hard to stay balanced in a sport that demands a huge commitment but can, at elite levels, help pay for college. Vaughn Karpan, a former hockey Olympian who now works in scouting, says "The bar's been raised, but it hasn't. It's been accelerated. The kids with the most potential are still the kids with the most potential. Some kids are getting to their peak at a very quick pace. A lot of parents don't understand this." Youth hockey coach Ron Sticklee says he has observed that it's more often the parents with NHL stars in their eyes. While he can threaten to expel families in which kids are obviously pushed to emotional extremes by overbearing types, a player's quiet ambitions are nearly impossible to influence. All he can do is be responsive to kids who need a break. He is currently coaching a teen who dropped out of high-level hockey about four years ago because "it was too much pressure." But even if a child is mentally and physically prepared for a hectic sports schedule, new research suggests throwing a kid's sports eggs in one basket can make him a worse, not better, player. - *By The Canadian Press, The Chronicle Herald, August 27, 2008*

For more information about the *Sports Done Right* initiative visit
www.sportsdoneright.org or call 1-866-767-8540



An Official Sponsor of *Sports Done Right*