



Newsletter

February 2006

On a snowy Jan. 6, 2005, more than 400 interscholastic and community sports leaders, school administrators and student-athletes attended the rollout of the University of Maine's *Sports Done Right* initiative at the Augusta Civic Center. A year later, the initiative and its report - "*Sports Done Right: A Call to Action on Behalf of Maine Student-Athletes*" - is a statewide and emerging national model for defining, shaping and maintaining healthy interscholastic and youth sports programs.

Twelve pilot sites representing 29 separate schools are developing and implementing local compacts and practices based on the *Sports Done Right* core principles and practices. Seventy other Maine school districts representing 219 communities have begun using - or are considering - the model to steer local sports reform efforts. In addition, 40 other states have requested information about the initiative, and approximately 200 visitors log onto the Maine Center for Sports and Coaching (MCSC) website every day.

"Citizens across the state have pushed forward with a passion, promoting *Sports Done Right* and advocating for community discussion about their local interscholastic and youth sports programs," says MCSC director Karen Brown. "Their dedication will result in change."

The pilot site leadership teams are also assisting the MCSC with an official *Sports Done Right* School accreditation process and the Maine School Management Association with sample policy development. Their efforts will help create a common language and consistent expectations throughout a community, according to Brown. "The pilot sites' work and insight are crucial to grassroots consensus and key to making the process stick," she says.

In July, six part-time consultants, all experienced Maine educators and sports leaders, were hired to support the pilot sites and help train local leadership teams at other Maine schools wanting to implement the model. Brown says she envisions growing demand for assistance and training as more and more communities begin moving forward with the actual implementation process.

The momentum has not shown any sign of slowing down, according to Brown, who recently made an invited presentation about *Sports Done Right* at the National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators' Association conference. In addition to continuing coverage by Maine sports media, who were invited to participate in the initiative from the beginning, ongoing national media attention generates inquiries from across the United States and Canada.

"I am proud to say that as other states watch what Maine is doing with sports reform, our communities are demonstrating that they truly are a national model," Brown says. "I predict that by our second anniversary in January 2007, we will have our first class of official *Sports Done Right* school communities."

- UMaine News Release, January 6, 2006

Maine Icon Still Has Lessons to Offer at 83

Boston Celtics coach Doc Rivers probably doesn't tell his team to have fun before a game. But for members of the Scarborough Middle School boy's seventh-grade team, it's all about having fun and learning the fundamentals of the game. And who better to teach those things than a Maine Coaching legend, 83-year-old Gene Hunter? "I feel I still have something to offer. I'm probably a better coach than I was 30 years ago. I know I'm wiser and mellower. I've worked with kids longer than any person I know." Hunter began coaching in 1948 at Houlton High School. What followed was a career that landed him in the New England Basketball Hall of Fame. "He teaches more than just basketball to the kids," said Frank Bean, whose son Zach plays for Scarborough. "He teaches them about life. He talks about playing with passion. He's always complimentary to the kids and always has a story." Hunter, who taught history in school, said basketball is an extension of the education process. "I always consider myself an educator first and a coach second. The same goals I set for my teams in basketball, I set for my classroom." After back-to-back unbeaten seasons, the players who have funneled through Scarborough's seventh-grade program over the last two years realize what Hunter has meant to them. "It's great learning from a legend," Zach Bean said. "We learned the fundamentals, how to hustle and play with pride." "Coach Hunter," said James Ek, "teaches us the stuff that doesn't get in the stat sheets." - *Portland Press Herald, January 12, 2006*

Drug and Alcohol Violations Cost Team Season

Violations of the high school's drug and alcohol policy have forced the Portsmouth School Board to cancel the remainder of the high school swimming and diving team's season. Superintendent Robert Lister said the cancellation came after school officials investigated an incident involving team members over the weekend. "The decision was based on the number of athletes who were involved or knowledgeable of the situation," Lister said. Members of all sports teams must sign the school's athletic contract, which forbids the use of drugs and alcohol. It also forbids students from being "knowingly in the presence" of drugs and alcohol. Lister said that the decision to punish the entire team was because "the number of athletes that had knowledge of this was pervasive." The coed swimming and diving team has 44 members from Grades 9-12. "This is very disappointing," Lister said. "We're basing this on the fact that they compromised the integrity of athletics. They're not just representing the swim team, but Portsmouth High School and the Portsmouth community." Board members said the last time they recalled having to cancel a sport season was the hockey team in either the late 1980s or early 1990s for violating the athletic contract by drinking on the bus while traveling home from games. - *Portsmouth Herald, January 15, 2006*

A Right Way and A Wrong Way

Sports Done Right, a statewide initiative originating from the University of Maine's College of Education and Human Development, has garnered national attention for its willingness to shine the spotlight on what's wrong with school and community athletics, while offering a blueprint as to what constitutes healthy participation and competition for sports in Maine and beyond. The towns of Cumberland and Yarmouth make up MSAD 51 - a *Sports Done Right* pilot site. Parent, and *Sports Done Right* leadership team member, Diane Morrison, says she got involved because she was impressed with the initiative and saw a need to create consistent guidelines. She also sees the benefit in reminding parents, both old and new, as to what amateur athletics should be about. "In MSAD 51, we're handling *Sports Done Right* a little differently, than say, Portland, or other communities are," said Morrison. "Many of the pilot sites and communities are bringing *Sports Done Right* to the community and asking them to accept the program and then rolling it out. What we're doing is educating the community-at-large," she said. The twin cities of Lewiston and Auburn have traditionally been bitter rivals. When *Sports Done Right* selected these two communities to be their only joint pilot site, it was an interesting experiment, to say the least. Auburn's superintendent of schools, Barbara Eretzian has been pleased by the results of *Sports Done Right*. "We took two very competitive communities, who could be characterized as fierce rivals and we've developed a spirit of cooperation." - *MainelyKids.com, January 2006*

Implementing *Sports Done Right* Policy

Marshwood athletic department and district administrators are planning to decide in March or April on whether *Sports Done Right*, currently a pilot program in the district, will be officially implemented as policy. The Marshwood school district is one of 12 districts in the state to become pilot sites for the program in March 2005. Athletic administrator Rich Buzzell presented an update to the school board on Wednesday, Jan. 18. Although there are certain non-negotiable aspects of *Sports Done Right*, such as establishing school board policy and creating a method of review and assessment, Buzzell said the district would need to figure how to fit *Sports Done Right* into Marshwood athletics own structure. Administrators will need to determine whether the district has the right tools and is ready to move forward with becoming a *Sports Done Right* school community. Buzzell mentioned several steps the athletic department has taken since becoming a pilot site. They have focused on professional development of their coaches through training sessions and online courses. They have sought input and advice from community members through public forums, one of which was held in May and attended by 40 residents. They brought in a motivational speaker to talk to the students, and had students complete a survey about their feelings toward school sports. The athletic department is looking to gain information from the surveys. As they work toward deciding on implementation, Buzzell said they will be addressing possible road blocks, and looking for ways to make sure the district actually practices policy, and not just “checking a box” which says they do. “I really, really like the goals [of *Sports Done Right*],” said school board member Martha Leathe. “They are ambitious and noble at the same time.” - *Foster's Daily Democrat, January 23, 2006*

The Right Results

In January 2005, *Sports Done Right* was rolled out with great hype and grandeur. Pilot schools have worked to implement and instill its philosophy ever since. “Changes are being made,” said Lewiston’s Luke Potter, a senior that attended the rollout and has been part of the Lewiston-Auburn leadership team. “There is something being done. It wasn’t just these meetings last year and people saying, ‘OK, we have this great little book and it says all these things that we should do.’ Things are happening. So far, I don’t think change is happening a whole lot but kids are aware. Kids are thinking about it.” Paige Piper, a sophomore at Poland Regional High School, was at the summit in Orono nearly two years ago. She’s noticed a more positive tone at games. “I’m really glad that it’s starting to grab on,” said Piper. “I think it’s a really good thing. I think it’s going to start to develop more as I’m a senior, but then it’s going to really catch on, and I’m not going to be here when it does, but I’m part of the foundation of it.” Changes in atmosphere and awareness already signal progress. *Sports Done Right* has generated community conversations and a change in attitudes. “I think it has brought a lot of these issues to the forefront,” said Jason Fuller, athletic director at Lewiston. “You’re seeing a lot more people focusing on sportsmanship and what the benefits of athletics are supposed to be. I think it’s increased the conversation and communication across the state.” The one-year timetable for pilot sites extends to the end of the current school year. Non-pilot sites have already started lining up. The MCSC will work with communities by providing resources and guidance. - *Lewiston Sun Journal, January 30, 2006*

*“I think [*Sports Done Right*] was misunderstood at first. It was more accepted as something that said, ‘Let’s not think about winning.’ But that’s not what *Sports Done Right* is at all.” - Paige Piper, student-athlete, Poland Regional High School*

*“For any naysayers out there, I don’t think they’ve been fully introduced to the program and it’s purposes and the values that are deeply rooted in it. Those people that are speaking out against [*Sports Done Right*], I don’t know how you could. Maybe I’m biased, but I don’t know how you could speak out against a better atmosphere for kids and parents, teachers, coaches and sports.” - Luke Potter, student-athlete, Lewiston High School*

Making the Core Principles Stick: The Candidacy Process for *Sports Done Right* Accreditation

I. Formative

- School superintendents submit a letter of intent to the Maine Center for Sport and Coaching Board of Directors.
- School superintendents take the initial responsibility for launching the local conversation. They appoint a leadership team - membership shall include student-athletes, coaches, community members, parents and educators.

II. Informative

- The leadership team participates in *Sports Done Right* training.
- The leadership team develops and implements an action plan.
- The leadership team carries out community conversations about *Sports Done Right*. (Target audiences to include student-athletes, coaches, parents, other youth sports organizations and community-at-large.)

III. Adoption

- The *Sports Done Right* policy is adopted by the school board.
- The *Sports Done Right* compact is signed by the school board chair, superintendent, principal and athletic administrator.
- Student-athletes, parents and coaches sign the *Sports Done Right* compact to underscore their commitment and describe their roles in upholding the core principles and core practices of *Sports Done Right*.

IV. Application for Candidacy

- Upon adoption, the school community seeks accreditation from the Maine Center for Sport and Coaching:
 - Complete self-assessment rubric
 - Entertain a visit from Maine Center for Sport and Coaching representatives to review self-assessment
- The Maine Center for Sport and Coaching Board of Directors reviews the school community candidacy and issues a full accreditation or accreditation with contingencies.

V. Accreditation, Implementation and Sustainability

- The school community receives special recognition from the Maine Center for Sport and Coaching

Community Mourns Passing of Phil Soule

The Bowdoin community learned of the passing of Phil Soule, a well-known presence in the athletic department, over winter break in a statement issued by President Barry Mills.

Soule, after an exceptional athletic career in high school and at the University of Maine, joined the Bowdoin coaching staff in 1967 as an offensive line coach. He served the football team admirably for 39 years, and coached both offensive linemen and the defensive line during his tenure. Throughout his career, Soule also served as the head coach for the wrestling, baseball, and squash teams, and was assistant lacrosse coach.

Soule will be remembered for his devotion to Bowdoin sports, his love of the Maine outdoors, and the wisdom and advice he bestowed upon countless players, students and coaches who were fortunate enough to work with him.

“He embraced everything about Bowdoin, and everything about Maine,” remembers Head Football Coach Dave Caputi. “He was a great man, and he will be missed tremendously.”

Bowdoin athletes, who had the privilege of working with Soule, recalled his selflessness and no-nonsense approach on and off the gridiron. Mike Stratton '06, a defensive lineman, worked with Soule for all four years of his Bowdoin career.

“Coach Soule brought out the best in people. He was always willing to work with players one-on-one. He would take us aside and patiently teach us the right way to do things. He always believed in doing things the right way,” Stratton recalled.

Stratton also remembered Soule’s concern for those he worked with.

“Coach Soule cared a great deal about his players, and looked out for our well-being,” he said.

Off the athletic fields, Soule lived with equal passion. With Maine as his backyard, Soule hunted, fished, dug for clams, and set lobster traps. Soule was also a national champion canoe racer and ultra marathon runner.

Caputi recalled that Soule used to joke, “Why eat a turkey when you can shoot a Canadian goose?”

Zach Hammond '07 got the opportunity to go hunting with Soule last fall.

“Phil was an extraordinary person and I am honored to have known him,” Hammond said. “Phil has played the invaluable role of being my coach, both in sport and in life.”

Even in his 60s, a time when many men resign themselves to rounds of golf or games of gin rummy, Soule remained active.

“Phil loved working out,” remembers Defensive Coordinator Tom Radulski, who worked with Phil for six years. “Everyday in the gym around noon time, Phil would come in and run on the treadmill or lift weights.”

Soule is survived by his wife Mo, his four children, and 10 grandchildren. Over 600 people gathered at St. Charles Borromeo Church in Brunswick on January 19 to commemorate his life and legacy.

- *The Bowdoin Orient*, January 27, 2006

“The Greatest Coach of All-Time”

At the end of these remarks I want to talk a little bit about how Coach Soule’s death has hit me, but I first want to take care of other matters, and hopefully give you a bit of a picture as to why Phil Soule is such a legend.

There have been so many great words already written about Coach Soule. I thought that the obituary in the Portland Press Herald, quoting Coach Soule’s children, was great and President Mill’s letter to the Bowdoin community was just perfect. I can’t improve on the amazing biographical information that we have seen. Coach Soule’s achievements are towering.

I can underscore the words we all are using to try and describe Coach Soule: larger than life; invincible; a force of nature; a natural leader; direct; an inspiration; he lived every day to the fullest. These words are all so true. But what I really want to try and do on behalf of all the players, is to say that Philip Hilton Soule was THE BEST COACH of all time. Let me tell you why.

Upfront, I should say that I had a great experience at Bowdoin and I love the College. While I was there, I was taught by some fantastic teachers, real giants - Nate Dane, John Ambrose, Barbara Kaster, Allen Springer - these were great professors, but no one got me or taught me more than Coach Soule.

I met Coach Soule in the Fall of 1977 as a freshman offensive lineman. During double sessions, we wore a piece of tape with our name on the front of our helmets. My name is Lyne, L-Y-N-E. On the first day of practice, Coach Soule looked at me and said, “How do you say that name?” I said “Lyne” (line). Coach Soule said “Jesus Christ, what a great name! You can name your first son Offensive! And then you can name your next boy Defensive! What a flail!”

I was hooked.

Playing for Coach Soule - and honestly just being with Coach Soule even if you didn’t play for him - was an amazing, life transforming experience. I think there are five main reasons for this.

First, Coach Soule took ordinary or daily things and “amped” them up. That made things incredibly fun. On a typical cold, lonely Saturday in January, when we were having wrestling practice and the rest of school was on vacation, Coach Soule never had a scrimmage. He divided the team in half, and had the World Championship of Wrestling. “You guys are Serbia, you guys are Bulgaria. Only one team comes out alive!”

This summer, a pick-up basketball game in the backyard on Palmer Street with the Hanson kids and our kids all playing - and with Coach Soule pitching and playing first base for both teams - quickly became the AL championship series at Fenway. Our kids still talk about that afternoon.

Coach Soule didn’t just host a barbeque in Woolich. It was the “Flambe’ by the Bay.”

During Boiled Owl week, we never just went up to Garcelon Field to play Bates. We were the Spartans going to Thermopylae - if you didn’t win, you better die trying.

Second - and think this may have been his secret - when Coach Soule took those ordinary, daily things and amped them up, he got people to accomplish extraordinary things - things that maybe you only realize were extraordinary ten years later.

How many people did Coach Soule get to go for a jog and ended up running a marathon or doing a triathlon? How many bench-warming freshman linemen did Coach Soule work with day in/day out so that they got better, and by the time they were Seniors became starters and some then all stars? And the really extraordinary thing about that all that, wasn’t even the running of the marathon or becoming an all star. It was learning the lesson that you only achieve big things through daily perseverance - and Coach Soule’s life was a testament to teaching that lesson.

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Third, Coach Soule had an amazing work ethic. Coach never missed a practice, he was always early to the field and I think that every player who ever played for him would tell you that he never “mailed in” even one practice. He was committed to his players and that commitment did not end at the practice field. At the end of the season, when I was playing, Coach Soule would always host a lasagna break-up dinner at his house in Portland. Coach Soule would also take players on canoe trips or long runs. He was always coaching and always working hard, and I think that one of the lessons he was teaching is that sports never end.

Fourth, Coach Soule had great sayings that stay with you all of your life. When I need to get pumped up or regain my enthusiasm, I just hear Coach Soule saying “You’ve got to have the blood dripping from your heart!” If I am over-analyzing something, I just say “No think. Throw a fit!” If I am getting tired in a workout and I don’t think that I can do more rep, I hear Coach Soule saying: “To burn is to be lucky!” If I am going into a tough meeting where it doesn’t look good, I just say one word: “Flail”. If I lose, I hear Coach Soule saying “Buckle up your chin strap. Let’s go.” If I am having a spiritual crisis, I just hear Coach Soule singing “Drop kick me Jesus through the goal-posts of life.” And I always remember “There is nothing tougher than a Boiled Owl!”

Fifth, there was this unique quality of Coach Soule - I can’t perfectly name it - but it was kind of whimsical and fun, and I think it had something to do with his love for the State of Maine. It just made playing for Bowdoin like nothing else and truly special. I’ll try and describe it with a few examples.

Coach Soule would have freshmen pick a leaf from the trees at Pickard Field to put under their pillows so that they wouldn’t get homesick on their first away trip. He gave out great nicknames that last for lifetimes - just ask Jelly Butt, Mad Mike, Boomer or 267. He wanted you to know that if it was real quiet at night, Witchita - The Lineman Statue - would talk to you. He always connected the Bowdoin players of the past with his current players and let the current players know the legacy they inherited. He was the touch stone for all visiting alumni. He went to Gettysburg about 7 years ago and picked up a rock from the top of Little Round Top, brought it back to Brunswick and put it in the crook of the tree over Joshua Chamberlin’s grave by Whittier Field. He made sure all his players knew about Joshua.

The closest name that can put on this quality is “magic”, and Coach Soule had it.

In a minute I want to quickly touch on Coach Soule’s death, but I hope that these remarks give you some idea of why it was so amazing to play for Coach Soule and why he was the best coach of all time. I think I can also prove it this way. With all the different teams and sports Coach Soule coaches, you can’t really accurately measure his achievement by wins, distances or times - besides, he was really coaching more than football, wrestling, baseball, squash, track and lacrosse - he was coaching Life its own self. You have to measure his achievement by the lives he made better. He was the best coach of all time.

At the start of these remarks, I said I wanted to talk a little about how Coach Soule’s death has hit me. It is so sad and I cried my eyes out on Sunday and I won’t do that here. I thought Coach Soule would live forever. But I take some comfort in this: Coach Soule’s life had an upward arc and he was in his prime.

He loved this football season and his group of seniors and everything they accomplished. He was really enjoying Bowdoin and Brunswick. He was a huge fan of the other Bowdoin sports teams. [Earlier this week] Ohio State won the Fiesta Bowl, and the Bowdoin hoops team had beaten Tufts. He was so proud of his kids and adored being a grandfather. He told me this summer that he wanted to be “the flailingest grandfather in history.”

Coach Soule, for all the players - and for everyone you coached in life - thank you. You were the best coach of all time. We love you and we will never forget you.

- Rememberances shared by Emmett Lyne, 81’

Sports ★ *Done Right*

