

Tiger girls deemed best sports in Eastern Class B

PORTLAND – The Rockland District High School girls basketball team was awarded the 2006-07 Maine Principals' Association Eastern Class B Good Sportsmanship Award February 24th at the Cumberland County Civic Center.

"This is a significant accomplishment for the girls basketball program at Rockland," said eighth-year Tiger coach Karen Bickmore. "Good sportsmanship and respect for the game are key elements of the athletic experience and ones that we take very seriously. We are certainly proud to be acknowledged for our representation of our team, the school and the community."

"It's the first time that any team [from Rockland] has won it," said Tiger senior Megan Ranquist.

"It means a lot because our coach focuses on us having good sportsmanship," said Tiger junior Dana Clark, adding that the honor coincides nicely with the school's *Sports Done Right* program. "It's a big achievement for our school."

According to the MPA's website, the criteria used in determining the winners of good sportsmanship banners are:

- Players supporting their teammates on the court and from the bench.
- Players treating their opponents with respect, exhibiting no unnecessary roughness, taunting or inappropriate gestures.
- Coaches and players exhibiting appropriate and positive communication and neatness in attire.
- Coaches and players exhibiting positive and appropriate behavior and communication toward game officials.
- All school members and staff associated with the team exhibit positive and appropriate behavior. Cheerleaders and band members are excluded from judgment.
- Maintenance of [the tournament] facility by all school team personnel.

Although the MPA sportsmanship honor for the Tiger girls is separate and judged strictly on Rockland's sportsmanship this year, it may, in some respects, be a reflection of lessons instilled in student-athletes by Maine School Administrative District 5's involvement with *Sports Done Right*, a statewide program for school athletics.

"I think *Sports Done Right* has [had an impact] with the fans and things like that," said Rockland senior, Danielle Hansen. She added that the reading of the *Sports Done Right* philosophy for Rockland District High School before games made the fans think about their actions and probably put a better attitude in their minds to start each contest.

On the attitude of the players, Hanson said, "I think it [helped] slightly, but our coach really pushes sportsmanship. She is all about teamwork and being supportive and not being negative on the court, helping the other team."

"It didn't occur to me until quite a bit after that — [when] I heard we had received [the sportsmanship award] — did I even think about *Sports Done Right* with our school," Bickmore said. "[A focus on sportsmanship] has been something that has been within the [girls basketball] program for the last eight years. It's something that I have really worked to instill within the girls. To compete and play the game with dignity and respect."

Bickmore added, "I think the *Sports Done Right* program reinforces the things that we have been doing, not just for one year, but many years." - *By Ken Waltz and Ron Hawkes, The Village Soup, March 2, 2007*

Sportsmanship display highlights post-game chat

After a cool-down period following Thursday's Eastern Maine Class D girls basketball semifinal, Terry Cummings, the coach of the No. 3 Greater Houlton Christian Academy girls basketball team, finished talking to his Eagles and opened the locker room door.

On the other end of the hallway in the Bangor Auditorium, the members of the No. 2 Washburn team were filing out of their locker room, chatting happily in the wake of their 49-47 win.

Cummings asked Washburn coach Ron Ericson to have his girls stay behind. Both teams' players and coaches gathered around Cummings as he made a short speech.

"It's easy to say something before a game, but can you say the same thing after?" he told the Washburn players. "And I can tell you, yes I can. I told you guys, if you won we'd be very happy for you. I told everyone, there's not a team I would have rather lost to as a coach, as hard as it is, 49-47. Two games in a row, that's hard to take. ... I believe this — you guys may not believe this and that's OK but I believe it — we really helped you guys this year, and I believe that we motivated you guys to get where you're going to be on Saturday. We wish you the best."

It was a touching display of sportsmanship, especially as many of the Greater Houlton Christian players behind Cummings were still a bit teary-eyed after the loss.

The two teams are quite friendly, both Cummings and Ericson said after the game, and split in the regular season. The Beavers handed the Eagles their only regular-season loss — also 49-47 — on Jan. 15. GHCA won the first game 52-44 on Jan. 15. - *By Jessica Bloch, Bangor Daily News, February 22, 2007*

Baylor College of Medicine: Little league health risks anything but minor

HOUSTON -- Before letting young athletes play like the pros, know the risks – both physical and mental – of putting undeveloped muscles and bones to the test.

Dr. Joseph Chorley, assistant professor of pediatrics at Baylor College of Medicine in Houston, suggests parents wait for indicators of physical maturity before allowing their children to engage in intense, physically demanding activities and year-round sports. Indicators for boys include needing to shave and for girls, the beginning of menstruation, said Chorley, who is also a sports medicine specialist at Texas Children's Hospital.

"It is difficult to set an age at which kids should be allowed to throw a curveball (which puts undue stress on the shoulder and elbow) or play their sport of choice year-round," he said. "At 14, kids are at such different developmental stages than one another that the decision needs to be individualized."

Exposing a body too soon to intense physical strains can lead to serious injury. Chorley regularly sees adolescents and children with shin splints, stress fractures and knee pain from running cross country; ankle sprains and low back pain from soccer; shoulder strains and bursitis in swimmers; jumper's knee and shoulder pain from volleyball and little league elbow and shoulder pain from pitching in baseball.

As for playing sports year-round, children and adolescents should not only be developed and physically ready for the pressures but also emotionally prepared.

"Sports are a great way to enhance childhood, but they shouldn't take away from it," said Chorley. "Often parents lose perspective; only one in 10,000 high school varsity players will ever make money in pro sports. We shouldn't have an all-or-nothing attitude of either belonging to the physically elite or being a couch potato."

Chorley says adolescents who are serious about year-round sports can do so if they can maintain appropriate weight and growth, perform without pain and injury and meet their unique nutrition needs. He does, however, caution against psychological burnout, which can take the form of flu-like symptoms and less enjoyment of the activity.

"Whatever a young athlete's choice of sport, whether contact is involved or not, it can be detrimental if the child is not physically, developmentally and emotionally ready," said Chorley. "Both parents and pediatricians need to be aware of the risks." - *By Laura Madden-Fuentes, Baylor College of Medicine February 26, 2007*

Multisport participation will help young bodies

Whitney Moore is owner of Moore Training. She has master's degrees in health and exercise science and food science and human nutrition. She is an executive council member for the National Strength and Conditioning Association's Youth Special Interest Group. She trained Division I collegiate athletes at West Virginia University. During the past two years, Whitney has trained more than 600 Tucson children.

Remember Bo Jackson? It seemed he could step into any sport he chose and compete at the professional level. He also did not suffer the minor or chronic injuries we hear of in today's athletes. Part of the reason was his more diverse training and competing. He was not practicing just one type of activity all the time, but all the skills and athletic necessities for two different sports.

How many of your high school mates do you remember having major injuries before they graduated because of sports participation? How many knee and shoulder surgeries?

Now, how many of your children's friends are having major or even chronic injuries? How old are they? Why is this happening? Two primary causes are:

- 1) Competing and training in just one sport
- 2) Not having free-form play.

Competing in just one sport usually requires only training your body for that sport's specific movement patterns. But those are not the only movements in the world. Some children might excel in one sport, but if put into a different sport, they look average or perhaps even below average. Why? Their body has only been developed for their one sport's actions.

Not having free-form play means there are important movement patterns not being learned, including how to fall without breaking anything.

Why are youth athletes developing injuries previously not seen until the college level, if not the professional level?

- 1) The high repetition and competitiveness of youth sports at earlier and earlier ages.
- 2) Training focused on just one sport's specific skills, not on general athleticism.

These factors result in unbalanced development. That means certain muscles are developing more than others, leading to a higher risk of injury. And children are attempting more and more difficult or complex movements that their bodies might simply not be ready to handle.

How can this be avoided? Participate in a variety of sports. Have a preferred sport and hobby sport(s). Your child could put swimming at the top of the list, but play on a recreational "for fun" basketball or soccer team as well. Usually if the coach knows ahead of time what the child's priorities are they can be flexible and understanding.

Another option is doing athleticism training through strength, agility, flexibility, and balance to develop the muscles, coordination patterns and abilities either not trained or minimally trained in their favorite sport. Such training, when taught properly, decreases muscle imbalance development and trains movement patterns important for life and sport coordination. - *By Whitney Moore, Tucson Citizen, February 26, 2007*

Congratulations SAD 5 Girls Basketball Team!

2006-07 Maine Principals' Association Good Sportsmanship Award

Recipient for Eastern Class B!

SAD 5 became the first official *Sports Done Right* school community in October 2006. The student-athletes continue to inspire while modeling positive behavior, good sportsmanship and respect. Thank you!

Little League president and pal arrested in basketball melee

BRIDGETON, NJ -- During a youth basketball game at Bridgeton High School last Thursday as many as 30 fans poured onto the court, a referee was choked, and the President of the local Little League was arrested, police said.

Officers responded to a call to the high school gym due to unruly fan behavior, according to Lt. Jere Branch. Police said they were in the gym only a few moments when 32-year-old referee Ricardo Hernandez made a call regarding a foul. The call came with less than 25 seconds to play in the fourth quarter of the Bridgeton Recreation Midget League championship game.

Plt. Angel Santiago then observed a spectator, Benjamin C. Pierce III, the 29-year-old president of Bridgeton Little League, walk onto the court and confront referee Hernandez. Anywhere from 15 to 30 other spectators followed, storming the court.

Branch reported that since police were able to prevent the incident from reaching "riot" level, Pierce was not charged with inciting a riot. However, Pierce was later cited for breach of peace after he allegedly cursed at the police officers that were keeping him away from Hernandez outside the gym.

During the melee on the court, Plt. Santiago observed one of the rioters, later identified as Willie Holden Jr., 23 and of the same address as Pierce, grab referee Hernandez by his throat and push him backward.

Holden turned himself into police Friday morning and was charged with aggravated assault under the state's youth-sports-violence law. The relatively new state law allows for anyone accused of committing a violent act at a sporting event involving children 16 years old or younger to be charged with aggravated assault, as opposed to the lesser charge of simple assault. Holden was released after posting \$2,500 bail.

According to Santiago's report, Willie Holden Sr., of Cedarville, went to the police station Thursday night to question why police were at his son's house. Holden Sr. alleged that Hernandez attempted to hit his son during the incident and was directed to the municipal court by police to sign a complaint against Hernandez. - *Bridgeton News*, March 3, 2007

Diuretics brings charges against 2 assistant coaches

DANBURY, Conn. (AP) -- Two assistant Danbury coaches have been arrested on felony child endangerment charges for giving two young football players diuretic pills and having them and others participate in dangerous exercises to lose weight.

Hugh Joshua Weyer, 22, and Christopher Murphy, 24, assistant coaches of the Danbury Athletic Youth Organization's Trojan Football team (a Pop Warner football team), were dismissed after a parent complained about the September incident.

Weyer and Murphy were each charged with one count of risk of injury to a minor, a felony punishable by up to 10 years in prison and a fine of up to \$10,000. The two men turned themselves in to Danbury police on Friday and were released on written promises to appear in court on Feb. 28. [Both coaches have since pleaded not guilty and will have their cases heard April 4th.]

Twelve boys, aged 7 to 13, were "subjected to a rigorous training program" on Sept. 2, police said. They report that the boys did various exercises during a training, including exercising in the warm weather and spending time in a sauna while wearing sauna suits made of plastic garbage bag-type material beneath long sweat clothes.

According to police, five of the youngsters took part in a 24-hour training session in which they were given little food and water. Two children, ages 12 and 13, also were given water pills, or diuretics. One of the children lost 9 pounds in a day.

None of the children were hurt, however, "It is a dangerous way to lose weight, especially for children," said police Detective Gary Guertin. The two coaches "acknowledged it was a mistake," he said.

Pudgie Delohery, president of the Danbury Athletic Youth Organization, said in a statement that the matter was an "unfortunate, isolated incident," and "was attended immediately by the board and both parties involved were immediately dismissed from the organization." - *The Associated Press*, February 17, 2007.

The Pop Warner Association has also banned Weyer and Murphy from ever coaching a Pop Warner team.

Parent arrested in assault on basketball coach

LIBBY, Mont. — Police arrested Francis Pierre, a parent from Arlee, for hitting his son's coach in the head Friday, during the District 8-B boys high school basketball tournament.

Pierre, 50, said the punch was partly his reaction to what he perceived as a verbal attack by the coach against his son during Arlee's 63-60 loss to Superior. Pierre said the coach used "foul, cursing and naughty language" toward his son who plays junior varsity for Arlee, but traveled with the varsity team for the district tournament.

First-year Arlee head coach Brandon Hobbs, 27, denied the accusation. "Through the game, he [Pierre's son, Richard] was being negative on the bench," Hobbs said. "He was pretty much staring me down and giving me nasty looks throughout the weekend. I had enough and told him if he didn't want to be on the bench, he could go to the locker room or go home. I never swore at him."

Hobbs said that after Superior defeated Arlee on Friday evening, thus eliminating Arlee's hopes for the state tournament, Pierre and his son cornered him in a hallway. "I put my head down to kind of go around him," Hobbs reported, and that's when Pierre allegedly punched him.

Doctors closed a cut near Hobbs' ear with two staples. Hobbs, said Monday he was sore, his jaw remained swollen and he was thinking about getting X-rays.

Francis Pierre said he witnessed Hobbs "waving his arms around" at his son during the game. "After the game, I stopped my son and asked him what he [Hobbs] was saying," Pierre said. "That's when [Hobbs] came through the door and he pushes me. And I think as a reaction, I ended up hitting him."

Libby police ticketed Pierre on suspicion of disorderly conduct and assaulting a sports official. Both are misdemeanors. Pierre was released from jail after posting bond.

Rik Rewerts, Libby High School principal, said it was the worst display of sportsmanship he has seen during his 28 years as a high-school educator. "Parents tend to lose sight of right and wrong during sports events," he continued. "Sports tend to bring out the best and worst of people involved." - *By Gwen Albers, Daily Inter Lake, February 20, 2007*

Monday, Feb. 26, the Arlee school board held a special executive session in which members voted unanimously to ban Pierre from all extracurricular activities at the Arlee school district, and Arlee superintendent will try to have activities directors at other districts also enforce the ban.

Mad dad threatens to shoot coach at church basketball game

MEMPHIS, Tenn. -- Youth league basketball is supposed to be fun. But Saturday, "I was scared," says Eric Watson. Watson was coaching a team when he says the father of a player on the opposing team, Greater Community Temple lost his temper. "When the tables turned and we started winning--he couldn't take it," says Watson.

Watson says the furious father threatened to shoot him and several others, then went out into the church parking lot and pulled a handgun out of his pick-up truck, pointing it at about 20 people.

Church officials say neither the man nor his son attend Greater Community Temple; the son simply plays for the team. "It was an unfortunate incident," says Assistant Athletic Coordinator Mildred Wimbley. "It is unacceptable and at this point we're trying to figure out exactly what happened."

Memphis Police say they know who the mad dad is, who faces aggravated assault charges. They want witnesses to make a positive identification before they charge him.

"I guess he takes youth sports real serious," says Watson. He hopes he never sees him at another game. - *By Jason Miles, WMCTV.COM. February 26, 2007*

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