



NEWSLETTER

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ONLINE TICKETS

Online tickets for TSSAA championship events are available via GoFan.com. Member schools can sell tickets electronically during the regular season! For more information, contact pnoles@huddleinc.com.



LOSE CONTROL, LOSE THE RESPECT OF OTHERS

Self-control is a vital component of success in any endeavor. In high school athletics it is imperative that coaches, players, and parents exhibit self-control for the beauty of our endeavor to shine through.

Coaches are caricatured by a red-faced adult screaming and bending their athletes to the will of the game plan. This is often the result of what an individual assumes it means to coach, or perhaps what they experienced as a player. The reality is that coaches that use this tactic often lose the respect of their players, families and communities. If a coach uses screaming as a coaching technique on a frequent basis it loses all affect.

Coaches often get upset during games when things are not going their teams way. When plays are not run properly or the team is not executing in a manner that is acceptable. This results from a coach's ego, and they are seeking to show everyone that it is the players that are not performing, and not the plan put in place. Coaches should work hard to have the attitude that "if we win it is us", and if things don't go right they must be willing to shoulder the blame and seek a more effective way to get the team to execute.

Players must exhibit self-control to be effective peer leaders. A true leader must lead by example and always respect coaches, officials, and teammates. It is easy to get caught up in the competition and lose sight of the big picture. There is nothing more frustrating than having a player cost a team a game because they cannot control their emotions. Silly penalties such as talking back to the official or unsportsmanlike conduct are avoidable and often are extremely detrimental to a team's ability to be successful. Coaches should monitor this behavior during all activities. If a player is a poor sport during practice they will surely react in a similar way when the bright lights

are on. Be conscious of this and work with players to develop their attitudes at all times.

We have all seen and heard fans yelling at officials, coaches and opposing teams. Spectators should respect the game and the teams on both sides. Again, it's easy to lose yourself in the heat of a competition, especially when your child is competing. It is important to know that yelling unbecoming things does not inspire your child or your team, it embarrasses them. Administration and coaches must be diligent in addressing these kinds of situations. If you have a parent that acts in this manner it is best to meet with them privately and discuss what proper etiquette is in being a fan. Allowing this sort of fan behavior falls on the institution and reflects poorly on everyone involved.

The purpose of high school athletics is to build confident and strong young men and women. Athletics is a powerful metaphor for life. If we as coaches are not seeking to have self-control in how we teach, and we are not developing young people that can control their emotions, and parents that understand that their actions reflect on our institutions then we are doing a disservice to all. Let's keep this in mind as we guide our athletes and represent our student bodies, faculty and traditions in the heat of battle. Good sportsmanship and self-control helps develop championships program and communities we can all be proud of.

by Dusty Gunn, Notre Dame High School Athletic Director

DISTINGUISHED SERVICE RECOGNITION

Mike Ellson figured he would stick around the Volunteer State through college and then work his way back to the Midwest.

He would gain an education, and a basketball career, at Gallatin's Free Will Baptist Bible College, since renamed Welch College.

Now, more than 35 years later, Ellson is a fixture in the midstate and the latest recipient of the Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association's Distinguished Service Award for Ellson's work as athletics director at Nashville's Christ Presbyterian Academy (CPA).

"My wife (Mary) was from Michigan, we were married in Michigan and we thought we would go back north," Ellson said, "but we fell in love with a special school called CPA. We just took it a year at a time, and then we said we want to raise our children at this special school and we grew to love Nashville.

"The day I walk away, and I hope to go another 10 to 15 years, but the day I walk away, the number one word reflecting back on CPA is relationships, true, authentic relationships are what makes our school special."

An Indiana native whose New Castle Chrysler High School gymnasium is the quintessential image for a scene straight out of "Hoosiers," Ellson first accepted a physical education teaching position at CPA back when the school only featured grades K-through-8.

"We had no sports at CPA at that time, and I think I waited less than a week and asked, 'Can we start cross country?'" Ellson recalled. "They gave me permission, I was our first coach and I've served as our only A.D. since August 1987.

"It's been an incredible journey, really special, especially to be a part of an institution that was K-through-6 in 1985. But our founding mothers and fathers had in their heart why we started, and the most important thing we do represents the first name of our school."

Ellson, however, represents much more than CPA on behalf of modeling programs for high school athletics in Tennessee. He's

the executive director for the Tennessee Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association (TIAAA) and is heavily involved in the national organization (NIAAA) as well.

"Richard Carroll, from Sullivan North, was involved in TIAAA and Mr. Carroll basically took me under his wings," Ellson said of Carroll, a TSSAA Hall of Famer. "We would go eat dinner together, spent a lot of time together; he passed away about a year ago.

So my focus moving forward is to honor the legacy of the man who started TIAAA. He did not see public or private in me; he just saw a young athletic administrator trying to grow and get better for my school."

Ellson's school also owns another distinction: Tennessee's only institution, public or private, to have garnered the prestigious QPA designation from the national association.

"We completed the QPA, Quality Program Assessment, and are the only school in Tennessee history to have done so," said Ellson, who coached both boys' and girls' basketball at CPA and led the girls' squad to the 2010 TSSAA State Tournament. "It's a NIAAA program, kind of like school accreditation. It is built for athletic departments, and there's only about 30 schools nationwide to complete QPA and we accomplished the feat in 2018. We were honored in San Antonio, and it was a great moment, a pivotal moment for us.

"It helps us see where we are at and where we can grow and continuously improve."

TSSAA proudly salutes Mike Ellson for his years of service as an Athletic Director in Tennessee.



FIRST MEETING OF 2020 FOR BOARD OF CONTROL

The TSSAA Board of Control met on Thursday, January 16 at the TSSAA office building in Hermitage.

The Board will approved financial reports in the sports of golf, volleyball, soccer, cross country, cheer and dance, and football. The Board also voted to set the BlueCross Bowl schedule for 2020.

East Nashville Magnet School and Hillsboro High School both appealed the sanctions placed on their boys' basketball programs due to an incident that occurred during the contest between the two schools on December 6, 2019. Both schools' boys' basketball programs were placed on probation for a two-year period. The Board voted to deny the request of both schools to remove the probation.

Green Hill High School in Wilson County, which is scheduled to open next year, was approved for membership. It is a public

school under the Wilson County Board of Education. They are scheduled to open with approximately 1200 students in grades 9-12.

Highland Rim Academy requested, and was approved, to rejoin TSSAA for cooperative purposes only. Highland Rim Academy is a small private school in Cookeville with approximately 30 students in grades 9-12. They were members previously but dropped out when the Legislative Council changed the cooperative program agreement language which only allows schools to form agreements within their Division. The Board granted them permission to seek an agreement with the closest public school.

The full Board minutes can be on TSSAA.org.

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LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL APPROVES CHANGES IN DEC. MEETING

The TSSAA Legislative Council met on Thursday, December 12 at the TSSAA office building in Hermitage.

Dan Black, the Director of Schools for the Bradford Special School District, was elected to continue to serve as President of Legislative Council. Keith Turner, Athletic Director at Science Hill High School, was elected to serve as Vice President of the Legislative Council.

The first item that the Council discussed and took action was the removal of Article II, Section 23 (All-Star Games) from the TSSAA Bylaws. This goes into effect immediately.

The Council denied the proposed change to Article II, Section 7 (Repeating Rule) of the Bylaws that was submitted by Chattanooga Christian School. The proposal was to change the repeating rule so that middle school students who repeated would only lose their eligibility in the ninth grade only if they participated at the varsity level the year they repeated, compared to how the rule reads now which states they lose ninth grade eligibility if they participate at any level the year they repeat.

The Council denied the proposal submitted by Bradley Central that would have removed Article II, Section 12(d) regarding eligible transfer students from the TSSAA Bylaws. In essence, this would have gone back to the old rule that did not allow student-athletes with an athletic record in the last twelve months to go back and forth between schools without a bona fide change of residence that justifies the change in schools.

A proposal submitted by Memphis Middle College High School to move the date of first contest in golf three weeks later than it currently is on the calendar was denied.

The Council did not approve the proposal regarding the co-op rule submitted by Brighton, but they did vote to change the number of years that one of the schools could not have that program in order to form a cooperative program with another school. That was changed from five years to two years.

Additional items were taken up by the Council. The complete minutes from the meeting can be viewed on TSSAA.org.

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STUDY REVEALS WHY KIDS PLAY SPORTS

Sports are increasingly acknowledged as an important setting for accumulating needed physical activity. The National Council of Youth Sports estimates that more than 60 million boys and girls participate in organized sport throughout the United States and approximately 65% of youth under the age of 17 will participate in at least one organized sport during their childhood and adolescence.³ Indeed, the physiological health benefits of sport participation are well documented.

However, attrition from organized youth sport is alarmingly high. In fact, one-third of participants drop out annually and as many as 70% drop out by adolescence.

To a large extent, the lack of positive experiences associated with sport can explain the exodus from organized athletics at such a critical juncture in childhood. Positive experiences have been deemed the key variable for sustaining children's participation in physical activities and previous studies confirming this notion have identified "fun" as the primary reason for participation in sports teams.

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Conversely, negative movement experiences can lead children to become "progressively disaffected from physical activities" and the most frequently cited reason among youth for dropping out of sport is that it is no longer fun.

Administrators must keep this in mind when dealing with issues of athletics in their schools. The adults in and around your sports programs will ultimately determine what kind of experience your students will have. Help make it a positive one.

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