

# Sign of times?

Thursday, January 14, 1988 O&E (F-5D)\*5D

## Incidents at high school games are real

**M**AYBE IT'S ONLY MY imagination, but have you noticed a proliferation of incidents of late at high school sporting events?

I've read over the weekend about the violence and subsequent arrests at two different basketball games, one of which appears to be racially motivated.

Frankly, I was surprised to hear about an incident involving the basketball teams at Bloomfield Hills Cranbrook and Harper Woods. The Inkster-Robichaud game was also disrupted last Friday by fights.

And those who think it can't happen in peaceful Overland have another thing coming. Just the other night I learned of another donnybrook, this time between the Franklin and Stevenson basketball teams in which players were ejected from the game. The same thing happened last month between the same two schools in hockey.

Without being accused of overreacting, the recent wave of incidents is very real. They can't be swept under the rug.

**OUTSIDERS HAVE** caused some of the problems. During last spring's Wayne-Westland John Glenn basketball game, "non-student" types started inci-



**Brad Emons**

dents in the parking lot and at a nearby fast-food restaurant.

"Outsiders" also caused problems at the Bishop Bergess-Cass Tech basketball game earlier this year, prompting Bergess officials to admit only those students from the participating schools for future games unless accompanied by an adult.

But the problems are not restricted to outside agitators.

Jack Roberts, the new Michigan High School Athletic Association executive director, warned member schools earlier this year about "negative" cheering. He was not only talking about such chants as "air ball," but put-downs which incite rival student bodies.

Some schools in Overland have been guilty of these tactics.

**BUT IT SEEMS** the root of these problems start with the sportsman. The day and age of sportsmanship has become obsolete.

Certain things we abhorred 20 years ago are now accepted as part of the game.

I've noticed several disturbing trends in the past year or so:

• I recently watched a player make a free throw, then defiantly point a finger at the opposing cheering section, which had been goading the same player all night long.

• In another game, I watched a player slam dunk a ball and then "talk trash" to his victim as they walked down the floor.

• In a hockey game, I watched players being harassed as they headed toward the penalty box. The player being penalized was usually greeted with an opposing finger or stick being waved in front of his face.

• Dancing in the end zone and flipping the ball in a defender's face after scoring a touchdown. This must be "new wave" celebrating.

• "High fives" have become "high dives." Some of these "new acts" should be saved for the high school drama class.

Tobacco-chewing high school baseball players. (Just a total lack of discipline.)

• Once I witnessed a gang of soccer players corner, and then threaten officials physically after losing a match.

### WHERE DOES IT STOP?

Society is guilty of many of these problems. We often don't teach our kids how to act at an early age, particularly in sports. Losing with dignity is a lost art.

We seem to go along with these antics as long as we win or can back it up.

Of course, we have a different set of role models to choose from these days: Brian Bosworth, Jim McMahon, Antoine Joubert, Scott Skiles, Bob Probert, John McEnroe, the Miami Hurricanes, Buddy Ryan, Dexter Manley, Mark Gastineau and Bobby Knight.

As long as these people are successful, we condone their actions. And it's that kind of attitude, unfortunately, that filters down to the high school ranks.

It appears that we've gone beyond the stage of being flamboyant. The late Pistol Pete Maravich used to put on a show, but he did it with class.

**THE JOB OF** coaching and administering high school sports is very difficult. Some coaches believe they have control over their teams when they really don't.

We're going to have to keep a closer eye on our high school athletes because things are not in balance.



The pushing and shoving in the game can often lead to problems in the stands at high school sporting events.

And that's why a community newspaper as ours will continue to keep close tabs on developing trends positive and negative.

When the trouble starts, we won't look the other way or hesitate to identify the instigators. Somebody has to do it.

## Author offers positive approach to sports



**D. Steve Fair**  
sports author

By Brad Emons  
staff writer

**A**S A YOUNG ATHLETE in high school, D. Steve Fair experienced both success and failure.

He thought he knew how to handle success, but he found out he didn't know how to deal with failure.

"Sports was the most important thing to me," he said. "During high school in my junior year I was an All-Stater (in basketball), but I came back as a senior and didn't have a good season. It took years of searching, and all I knew is that the coaches said it was my attitude."

Fair graduated from Southgate Aquinas High in 1978 and later played for Wayne State.

Twelve years later, including a stint as an insurance salesman for AAA in Texas, Fair has become a budding author where he has devoted nearly all his time and energy. He

spent a year doing intensive research for his first writing.

His book, titled "Attitudes, A Vehicle to a Winning Attitude," is a compact, 100-page text with inspirational and profound thoughts expressed by Fair himself, outstanding athletes, successful scholars and famous leaders.

"I WANTED to find an inspirational thing that athletes put into words which can lead to a happy and productive life," said Fair, who lives in Garden City. "Most athletes don't have an idea of mental dynamics. I had no regrets about my athletic career, but I wanted an answer so I started reading books."

"When I was growing up I didn't have anything like this. I needed material to relate to as a young athlete."

Fair got inspiration from such sports figures as Bill Bradley and Willie Stargell. He also took ideas from Ross Perot, Socrates, Einstein, Vince Lombardi and Julius Erving.

### people in sports

There are many more. "I wanted to merge good literature with a positive mental attitude about sports," he said. "The information is geared for the athlete to improve mentally. It's for those who have already succeeded, and for those who are feeling a little low."

Fair stresses a theme throughout the book: balance.

"We need balance because some

people approach things so one-dimensional," he said. "I've spent a lot of time studying physics and how it relates to the athlete."

FAIR'S BOOK has sold 3,000 copies and is in its second printing. The book has been sold through direct mailing.

"This is for anybody 12 years and up," he said. "I think everybody can get something out of it. I hope some day that it will be found in school libraries."

While Fair was gathering his material, he'd often ask for feedback from young athletes, including players from the Farmington High girls

basketball team where his wife, Diana, is the head coach.

This spring, Fair plans to conduct a seminar for student-athletes at North Farmington High.

Fair's topics might range from goal-setting to team play.

Here is a sample of Fair's book: "You'll realize how **ATHLETICS** and all other aspects of **LIFE** relate to each other. Learn from the high achievers and you'll develop your **WINNING ATTITUDE**."

After reading the book, you would use it like a devotional time with the Bible. The more you read, the more you'll get out of it.

### the week ahead

**BOYS BASKETBALL**  
Thursday, Jan. 14  
Luth. Westland at Wald. Huron Valley, 6 p.m.  
Friday, Jan. 15  
Liv. Churchil at Liv. Franklin, 7:30 p.m.  
Wald. John Glenn at Liv. Stevenson, 7:30 p.m.  
Ply. Canton at Northville, 7:30 p.m.  
H. Farmington at Ply. Salem, 7:30 p.m.  
W.L. Central at Farmington, 7:30 p.m.  
Farm. Harrison at W.L. Westland, 7:30 p.m.  
Redic. Union at Garden City, 7:30 p.m.  
Red. Thurston at D.H. Ann Arbor, 7:30 p.m.  
Bellevue at Wayne Memorial, 7:30 p.m.  
Clarenceville at D.H. Cranbrook, 7:30 p.m.

Bish. Bergess at H.W. Notre Dame, 7:30 p.m.  
St. Agatha at Fort Holy Rosary, 7:30 p.m.  
OC United at Heritage Christian, 7:30 p.m.  
Saturday, Jan. 16  
PREP HOCKEY  
Thursday, Jan. 14  
Liv. Franklin vs. B.H. Andover  
at Detroit Skating Club, 6 p.m.  
Friday, Jan. 15  
Liv. Churchil vs. Liv. Stevenson  
at Livonia's Edgar Arena, 6 p.m.  
Saturday, Jan. 16  
Catholic Cent. vs. Brother Rice  
at Redford Ice Arena, 8 p.m.

### Swim list will debut Thursday

Attention all coaches. The Overland high school boys swim listings will begin again on Thursday, Jan. 31.

Plymouth Salem coach Chuck Olson will take updates (starting today) from 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. at 451-6600, Ext. 295 (on weekdays). He can also be reached from 4 to 5:30 p.m. (weekdays) and 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. (Saturdays) at 451-6447.

Schools eligible to participate in the weekly listings include Plymouth Salem, Plymouth Canton, Farmington, North Farmington, Farmington Harrison, Redford Catholic Central, Redford Union, Redford Thurston, Livonia Churchil, Livonia Franklin, Livonia Stevenson, Garden City, Westland John Glenn and Wayne Memorial.

### Cage stats will appear

The Observer will begin publishing a list of the area's boys basketball statistics leaders on Thursday, Jan. 21. Tom Negoshian, varsity coach at North Farmington High School, will compile the weekly list. "Varsity coaches are asked to call Negoshian at 353-4284 between 7 and 8 p.m. every Monday, starting Jan. 16, with information on their team leaders in points, rebounds, assists, free-throw percentage and shooting percentage.

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