



**doug
stephens**

• talking sports

Coach's actions unconscionable

I've tackled this subject before, and I'll keep doing it as long as I hold the title of sports editor at this newspaper. The topic is unsportsmanlike behavior.

This time I have a recognizable figure to go after — University of Kansas football coach Mark Mangino. According to a story in the Lawrence Journal-World, the coach yelled at high school officials last Friday after a game in which his quarterback son was taken out after a hard hit. There were no flags on the play.

Mangino was asked about the incident after a Jayhawks' practice Wednesday.

"I made a statement and I will stand by that," the first year coach said. "In my eyes, it wasn't a big deal. I reacted how a responsible father should react in that situation."

WHAM! That quote hit me between the eyes the first time I read it. I read it again, and yes, he really did say that.

"Responsible father." "Wasn't a big deal."

These are words used by a man thousands upon thousands of kids might look up to and try to emulate. What kind of message is that for them?

It's OK to verbally attack referees. It's what a good dad does, and it's really no big deal.

I guess the man was saying he was trying to protect his son, an admirable goal. How he was protecting him, though, I don't know. Football is a tough game. People get hurt. Is yelling at the ref going to make his son not hurt anymore?

That poor kid. Boys admire fathers and learn from what they do. Imagine what he learned that night.

People lose their tempers. It happens to the best of us, and it looks like that is what happened to Mangino. His son was hurt, he was angry, and he lashed out.

I can understand that. If the coach had said he was sorry, that he made a mistake in the heat of the moment and understand what he did was wrong, I wouldn't consider it a big deal. Instead he said he acted correctly.

These are not actions I would want my son to look up to. Yelling at a high school official is bad enough. Failing to stand up and admit when you are wrong is inexcusable.

Thanks where thanks are due

On a lighter subject, I'm enjoying the high school winter sports season. There are a lot of teams, and a lot of games to cover, but we are doing our best.

I'd like to thank all the coaches who take the time to prepare stats and stand still for interviews. I also owe a lot to the people who man the phones at the high school and junior high, and help identify kids in pictures. Without them, I'd be lost.

Yes, I'm trying to butter them up. I'm sure they're probably tired of hearing my voice, and there's a whole lot of the school year left.

Good luck to the Cowboys against Atwood tonight and the volleyball team in Scott City on Saturday. Play a good game and represent the town well.



Cowgirl Charlie Short led a pack of Goodland High School and Mustang runners at an exhibition run at the start of the season. Short finished her two-mile run in 16 minutes 33 seconds Thursday in Ulysses.
Photo by Doug Stephens/The Goodland Daily News

Cowgirl runners win three medals

The Cowgirl Cross Country team brought home three medals and placed fourth at the Ulysses Invitational meet Tuesday, and the Cowboys brought home one medal and finished seventh.

Tiffany Thomas, Kalie Smith and Deanna Livengood brought home medals for finishing in the top 20 of the varsity two-mile run. Thomas finished 17th with a time of 14:09. Smith was 19th at 14:15, and Livengood was 20th at 14:25.

The girls varsity winner was Kalie Radcliff of Forgan, Okla., who had a time of 12:53. The weather was clear with a temperature of 75 and a wind of 20-25 mph.

Coach Don Smith said it was a very good race for the girls, and that several showed good improvement.

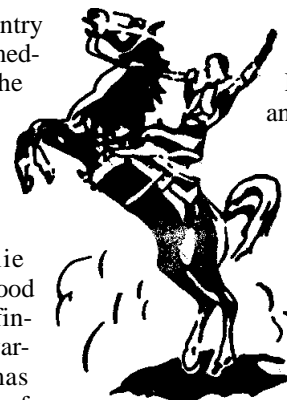
Wendy Keith was 37th at 15:53; Chelsea Ontiveroz was 41st at 16:08; Charlie Short was 48th at 16:33; and Amanda Bonsall was 51st at 16:42.

Dodge City won the Ulysses Invitational with a score of 43. Stanton County was second, 74; Ulysses was third, 86; Goodland, fourth, 95; Beaver, Okla., fifth, 110; Guymon, Okla., sixth, 115; and Lamar, Colo., seventh, 115.

Coach Smith said the Cowboys were undermanned because of illness, but felt the team did well and showed improvement.

Speedy Aguilar took second place in the varsity run with a time of 17:51. Cody Layman of Southwestern Heights was the individual champion with a time of 17:14.

Craig Mason finished 28th with a time of 19:27. Timothy Kafka was 31st at 19:33; Brandon Zelfer was 57th at 20:44; and James Cearley was 59th at



20:45.

Aaron Gittinger and Daniel Blake were sick and did not run.

Coach Smith said there were about 90 runners in the boys varsity three-mile run.

Lamar won the boys with 83 points. Garden City was second, 92; Ulysses, third, 139; Deerfield, fourth, 148; Guymon, fifth, 153; Beaver, sixth, 158; Goodland, seventh, 171; Dodge City, eighth, 201; Stanton County, ninth, 202; Hugoton, 10th, 205; Scott City, 11th, 240; Southwestern Heights, 12th, 265; Keyes, Okla., 13th, 285; and Kinsley, 14th, 362.

In the boys' junior varsity Zach Breininger was 31st with a time of 22:55, and Charles Lammers was 47th at 28:26.

The Cowboys and Cowgirls will travel to Oberlin Tuesday for their next meet.

Grant Junior High cross country

In the junior high division five boys and seven girls from Grant Junior High ran at Ulysses.

In the boys division Doug Eddelman was 18th at 8:04; Christopher Irvin was 20th at 8:11; Andrew Philbrick was 28th at 9:23; Cody Engel was 29th at 9:24; and Michael Smith was 30th at 9:56.

In the girls division Whitney Dautel was 6th at 7:18; Jillian Parker was 27th at 9:21; Mindi Keith 29th at 9:28; Jessica Lue, 31st at 10:12; Heidi Yonkey 32nd at 10:18; Tiffany Wing 33rd at 10:57 and Taylor Raile 34th with 10:59.

The Grant Junior High cross country team will hold an exhibition run Saturday morning after the Flatlander five-mile run.

Royals hold fashion show after beating Tigers

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (AP) — When avoiding a 100-loss season is the only thing left to play for, the Kansas City Royals have to look for other sources of amusement.

After Jeff Suppan pitched a five-hitter for his first win in 12 starts, 7-2 over the Detroit Tigers on Thursday night, the Royals put on a fashion show in their clubhouse for the benefit of their high-style teammate Michael Tucker.

One player after another put on a 1920s-style suit, each one more outlandish than the next, to razz Tucker and his sartorial judgment.

"Every road trip, Tuck entertains us with his outfits," Mike

Sweeney said. "He's awesome. He's the best-dressed guy on the team. We wanted to pay him back for his entertainment for us this year."

Tucker, who had no idea the joke was planned, was quite impressed.

"There's some good outfits here," he said, pointing out several he could see himself wearing. "It's about time these guys started looking good."

Sweeney donned a light blue tuxedo. Raul Ibanez was decked out in a bright yellow suit with a tie to match. Jeremy Affeldt was in a white pinstripe suit with a black shirt. Jason Grimsley

was in all purple, including a feathered hat. There were varying colors of suede. Many players had large dollar-sign necklaces.

The clubhouse atmosphere was more upbeat than usual for a team that still has a chance to lose 100 games. Kansas City (62-97), which already has tied its franchise record for defeats, needs just one win at Cleveland this weekend to avoid losing 100 games.

Suppan (9-16), backed by Carlos Beltran's four RBIs, won for the first time since July 17 against the Chicago White Sox.

Speedway takes fan suggestions seriously, tries to improve attendance

By Steve Brisendine

The Associated Press

KANSAS CITY, Kan. — Stann Tate walked through an empty infield at Kansas Speedway, pointing to one amenity after another added since the track's inaugural season in 2001.

Behind the media center, fans will be able to listen in on drivers' outdoor news conferences before Sunday's NASCAR Winston Cup race, the Protection One 400.

"We'll even let them ask a few questions," Tate said. "It'll help them get a feel for what a news conference is like."

A few yards away, a moderator will explain NASCAR's inspection process to fans — during the actual inspections. And just a few yards beyond that, fans can test their skills at changing a tire, using the same tools as pit crews use.

Behind the grandstands, there's a new paved area for merchandise haulers and a fan hospitality tent where — for a price — the average ticketholder can enjoy the same food and drink as corporate groups do.

"This all comes from fan input," Tate said. "We read every suggestion that people send to our Web site."

That fan-driven strategy has worked not only for Kansas Speedway, but for all of auto racing.

For the past two years, Street & Smith's SportsBusiness Journal — which named Kansas Speedway its Track of the Year in 2001 — has ranked NASCAR as the most fan-friendly major sport.

"It's definitely the most fan-friendly," said Brian Crow, an assistant professor of sports management at Slippery Rock University and the editor of Sports Management Quarterly. "It's an environment you don't get in

the NBA or the NFL, for example."

That's because NASCAR provides greater access to its stars — and to the ins and outs of the competition itself. For example, fans can rent scanners and listen in on radio conversations between drivers and their crew chiefs.

"That would be like sitting on an NBA bench, listening to a coach and his team draw up last-second strategy," Tate said. "You're just not going to get that kind of access."

Promotions at team sporting events usually fall into the giveaway category — with the first 10,000 people through

the turnstiles at a baseball game being given souvenirs, for example, or some lucky fan being pulled from the stands at a basketball game to shoot baskets for money or other prizes.

Fan Walks, though, require separate tickets — at an additional cost. Single-day Fan Walk tickets went for \$15 this year at Kansas Speedway, and all of them sold out.

Race fans are more amenable to the extra charges, Crow said, because they have so few chances to see drivers.

"It's definitely an event when

NASCAR comes to town, because they only come in once a year — twice, at most," he said. "With baseball, you've got 81 home games."

NASCAR also takes a different approach to its fans than major-league team sports do, Crow said.

"NASCAR is built on the model of lifetime value," he said. "It's much easier and cheaper to maintain a fan than to lose a fan and make a new one. A bobblehead doll might bring in an extra 5,000 fans for one game, but there's no guarantee they'll be back."

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