

A day In Time

By Arla J. Gourneau

I remember the time our TMCHS Boys BB Team went to their state BB Tournament in Bismarck, ND. Many of my girl's cousins played on the team & they were incredibly talented players. Both of my own daughters were active in HS sports with the older daughter playing Girls Varsity BB & the youngest daughter cheering for the Boys Varsity BB. So we were all in Bismarck at the tournament & I believe our Belcourt Team was playing against either Minot or Bismarck. However, the outstanding memories have not been erased by time. That game was incredibly reffed with so many unfair plays against our team. You could see the disillusionment in the boys' faces as well as the righteous anger of their home Fans (family, friends/youth & others). We were there to support our home Team. It was so bad that one of our players was physically kicked by another opposing team player. No fouls or personal fouls were called on that action & this despite fans yelling so loudly, "UNFAIR, Personal Foul!" Nope, no one heeded our heated calls. Our players should have taken the state at that time, they played their hearts out & were well-known for their prowess in BB skills. These same boys who as 5th Graders, shook hands on a Belcourt BB court saying some day, they'd go to state & take it.

It was so hurtful for our team. Our youth, including my daughters were so incredibly upset about our team being so badly reffed & treated so unfairly while playing their final game. It was sad. Most of our Senior BB players were so sad that one of them was even crying. I remember being so upset for them & when walking behind the opposing team's Coach (Bart); I made the comment that if their team had to cheat to win, they really weren't winners. He (Bart) turned around & looked at me but didn't say a word. Interestingly, he (Bart) did come to coach our following year's Varsity BB Team.

All of this should not have happened. Why penalize high school kids no matter their ethnicity when they're playing their favorite HS sport? There is no reason for this behavior or to treat anyone like this at all. Lord, this is 21st Century ~ whatever happened to attaining classy, good sportsmanship? The outcome of our Team's playing their state game might have been entirely different had the game been played equitably by the ADULTS managing the game – let alone the ND HS Athletic Association who were called upon then for this dreadful incident. This state is on record as are many schools to support the *Mental, Physical, Emotional, & Health well-being* of their students which is in by-laws & in Mission Statements. Let's get with this & make it real. Not a pretentious outlook that's to provide support for all students in word alone. If we don't, we're just re-perpetuating the same old problems of yesterday's racism & blatant discrimination. Thank you.

Respectfully,

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