



**HISTORY OF CALIFORNIA**  
**INTERSCHOLASTIC FEDERATION**  
**SOUTHERN SECTION**  
**(CIFSS)**



39<sup>th</sup> historical “tidbit.”

**AVALON HIGH SCHOOL**

**CATALINA ISLAND**



Catalina High School opened in 1923 in the city of Avalon and is currently the furthest south school of any in the CIFSS. The school is part of the Long Beach Unified School District. The Lancers participate in the Western Athletic Conference in most numerous sports....a unique factor is they do not participate in swimming or tennis. They got their football program going with 6 man football and a cash contribution from the Wrigley family in the 1970's. The coed school of 240 students is located at 200 Falls Canyon Road in Avalon. They used to be referred to as the “Flying Prepsters” because they flew from the island to their games. Today, they take the boat like all the visiting teams. They even tried to change the name from the Lancers to the Islanders. It is expensive to run their athletic program when you have to travel to the mainland and pay the expenses travel expenses of officials at home games. They play their basketball games at the Wrigley Field House and their baseball games are well attended with rabid local rooters. Many opponents say the biggest advantage the Lancers have is the fact that some of the visitors get sea sick and don't get their land legs back in time for the game.

An article on Avalon High School in the CIFSS Bulletin.....March 1981



# CIF-SS BULLETIN



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AVALON JUNIOR-SENIOR HIGH

## CIF-SS FOCUSES ON . . . "THOSE FAR AWAY PLACES"

*Editor's Note: Every now and again the CIF-SS Bulletin will feature a story on some of the Southern Section's own "far-away places". These are the outlying areas many of us in metropolitan cities never see except for a rare visit for a playoff contest or just driving through. We hope to personalize the uniqueness of these Southern Section member schools located from the desert and yes, even across the sea!*

Avalon Junior-Senior High School is part of the Long Beach Unified School District and was established in 1923. There are approximately 200 students enrolled in grades 7-12.

The school is located on Santa Catalina Island in the city of Avalon. Students from K-12 and the evening school program come from all parts of the island.

The island is located approximately 26 miles south of Long Beach in the Pacific Ocean. It is about 26 miles in length and 8 miles wide at the widest point.

The school serves permanent residents of the island - predominately owners and operators of small businesses which cater to vacationers from the mainland, plus some fishermen and workers at the rock quarry or cattle ranch on the island. Other sources of income are the City of Avalon, the Santa Catalina Island Company, Public Utilities and our Public School.

Bill Whitaker, principal at Avalon High comments on athletics at Avalon:

"We participate in CIF competition in basketball and baseball for our boys and the girls play softball and basketball. Our athletic travel expense runs close to \$10,000 per year because of having to fly or boat to mainland games; we then incur expenses for our overnight stay. It is also difficult scheduling teams to come to the island because of their expenses. We play our basketball games in Wrigley Field House which is a beautiful gymnasium donated by Philip K. Wrigley some 20 years ago."

Officials particularly love their Avalon assignment, many of whom plan family trips for the entire weekend when officiating a contest on the island. A typical officiating trip involves a doubleheader, one game Friday night and another on Saturday afternoon. The high school at Avalon pays for transportation over and back either by plane or boat as well as one night lodging.

CIF-Southern Section officials Penny Dodd and Dean Crowley have their own stories to relate about hospitality on the island. Dodd tells of her plane ride home on the regular island to mainland hop when she discovered that the Avalon School

counselor was also the pilot for the trip. Upon recognizing each other, Dodd received a couple of aeronautical lessons and helped fly the plane home!

After completing his assignment, Crowley was invited by the school's athletic director on a tour of the island's rugged interior.

Both officials are unanimous in applauding the generous hospitality of the townspeople. Says Crowley: "When you walk around town everyone knows you were the ref at last night's high school game and win or lose the islanders are always gracious good sports".