



78th historical “tidbit.”
Dr. John S. Dahlem

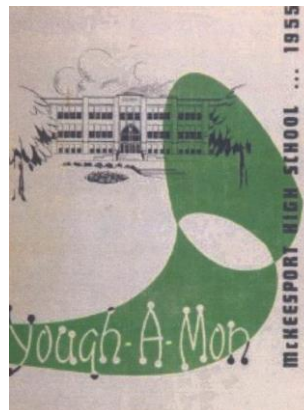
**HISTORY OF THE CALIFORNIA
INTERSCHOLASTIC FEDERATION
SOUTHERN SECTION
(CIFSS)**

CIF-SS COMMISSIONERS

RAY J. PLUTKO

Ray Plutko was born in McKeesport, Pennsylvania which is 20 miles outside of Pittsburgh. He attended McKeesport High School and was a member of their 1955 Basketball 4A Championship team. He also ran track in high school. His lifelong dream was to teach and coach. He joined the Navy in 1956 and was stationed in San Diego. He played basketball in the Navy and made the All-Navy team when he played his games at Terminal Island near Long Beach (Ken Fagans remembers officiating those Naval games). He attended Mt. San Antonio College playing basketball and was the Student Body President in 1962. He continued his education at Upland College (Azusa Pacific University) and later received his Masters from the Cal Poly Pomona. He worked at several newspapers and taught at Marian Catholic High School in San Diego. In 1970, he moved to Notre Dame High School in Riverside as a teacher and coach. His basketball record was 102 wins and 71 losses for a 71% winning average. He was also the Athletic Director and Assistant Principal at Notre Dame. In 1975, at the age of 35 years old, he became an Administrative Assistant with the CIF-SS. He was responsible for football, basketball, baseball and reorganized the football playoffs into a regional format.

He was professionally active with California Athletic Directors Association, Southern California Basketball Association, Inland County Athletic Directors Association and the National Historical Society. On July 1, 1980, he became the fifth Commissioner of the CIF-SS. In 1986 he left the CIF-SS to become the Commissioner of High School Activities in the State of Colorado. In 1991, he returned to California and did an internship at Glendora High School on his administrative credential through Azusa Pacific. He was an Assistant Principal at Charter Oak High School and became the Principal in 1992. He then became Principal at Temple City High School in 1993, opened Martin Luther King High School as a Principal in 1998, returned to Temple City High School in 2004 to 2007, when he retired.

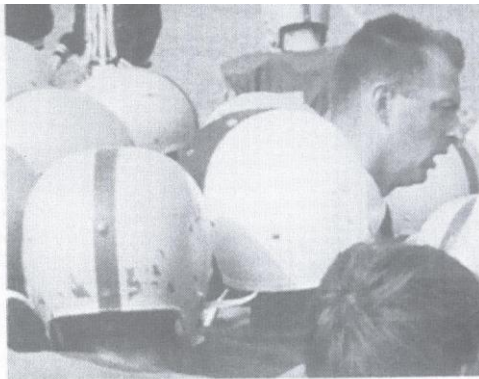
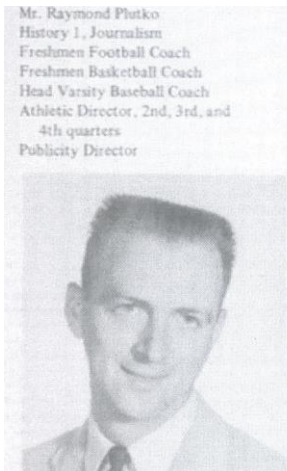


Mt. San Antonio College – ASB President 1962



Notre Dame High School - 1974

Marian Catholic High School - 1969



mr. ray j. plutko shows his enthusiasm at a pep rally. asst. principal and varsity basketball coach.



Factoids on Ray Plutko:

- When Ray was in high school his basketball team got to play against Overbrook High School featuring a center named Wilt Chamberlain. Ray said, “they beat us 75-74 and Wilt scored 46 points. They were eliminated in the Philadelphia playoffs and we didn’t have to play them again.”
- He found out about the CIF-SS Administrative Assistant position from a flyer and during the interview answered one of the questions by stating, “...my singular role in the CIF-SS is to make the Commissioner look good.”
- One of his favorite CIF-SS sports moments was when Mike Witt pitched for Servite at Anaheim Stadium and hit one out for the Friars.
- Biggest accomplishments as the Commissioner were the development of the sponsorships, promotions and marketing along with fighting off the attempt by the State CIF to split the Southern Section.
- Loves family history and genealogy tracing his Slovak heritage and searching family records in Slovakia.
- Ray was a self-admitted workaholic. Averaged only 4 vacation days a year and worked 15 hour days.
- Attended the NCAA Basketball Championships which he called, “my big get away!”
- Did not like being the center of attention...very private person.
- Earned \$68,000 as the CIF-SS Commissioner.
- When he left the CIF-SS he stated, “It wasn’t easy leaving and I did so quietly through the back door, the same one in which I entered 12 years ago. It was a great stay and a lot of memories.”
- Always loved California and wanted to be near his grandkids.
- He ran the CIF-SS like a “well- oiled machine.”
- Ray always wanted to open a new school which he did with M.L. King in Riverside.
- Was considered to be shrewd and a business-like administrator.
- He came to work early and would leave his famous “Plutko Notes” for the staff listing duties that needed to be accomplished that day.
- Married to wife Sharon with six children.
- Very busy, but never complained.
- Was very friendly and cordial and tried to get to as many League meetings and games as possible.



- Learned how to budget his time as the CIF-SS Commissioner and get more done.
- Ray said he, “could not sit still...don’t watch much T.V., would read a book and if he got bored would go do some yard work.
- Liked coaching Poly League baseball teams.
- Continues to be valuable member of the CIF-SS Seeding committee where he is known as the **Chief Bracketologist!**



THE RAY PLUTKO YEARS



1980 -
1986

Ray J. Plutko

Ray J. Plutko, who was then working at Notre Dame High School of Riverside, applied for the position of administrative assistant with the CIF Southern Section in December of 1974. As assistant principal and athletic director at Notre Dame, Plutko had the job announcement come across his desk, and after some hesitation, decided to submit an application with the confidence his background would provide just what Commissioner Kenny Fagans was looking for.

Plutko not only had been a successful basketball coach and director of athletics, but was making strides in the field of school administration as well. Before taking his position at Notre Dame, he had also developed outstanding skills as a journalist, in stints with the Ontario Daily Report and Pomona Progress Bulletin.

In the spring of 1975, Plutko was hired to replace Kendall Webb, who had accepted the commissionership of the San Diego Section. He joined Tom Byrnes and Margaret Davis as an assistant to Fagans, who was closing out his 21-year career. His office duties included media relations and editor of the monthly bulletin, in addition to administering various CIF-SS sports. Plutko was a key ingredient in the many changes and extraordinary growth of the Byrnes era. When Byrnes was elevated to the position of State Commissioner in 1980, Plutko was in line to fill his vacancy.

“Having been an administrator for five years, I was certain I had the background and knowledge for the position of commissioner, so I applied for the job,” recalled Plutko. “I

remember clearly one question which was asked during the interview process and I believe to this day it was the one that made the most impact. The question was, how would I see my role changing if I were to be named commissioner? My response was: ‘As an administrative assistant, my singular role was to make the commissioner look good. As commissioner, my role would be to make the executive committee and member schools look good.’ It was simple, but I believe very effective.”

Plutko set out to bring the organization into the new decade with innovative ideas and a progressive spirit. He immediately went to work on the formal development of an aggressive promotional program, which was established in June of his first year with the hiring of Larry Zucker as full-time director of sports marketing and advertising. The program has since matured into one of the most successful of its kind nationally and currently provides the section with a major portion of its annual operating budget.

Plutko subsequently created a full-time office position for a director of media and public relations, so that particular task would no longer have to be handled by an administrator. Further accomplishments in his tenure included development of the popular CIF-SS Athletic Director’s Symposium; several orientation workshops for coaches and administrators; regularly scheduled newsletters that provided updated communication with member schools; adjusting the always-tough relegating process from a one-year to a two-year cycle; and bringing the Southern Section back into the state basketball tournament in 1986.

Plutko was also instrumental in fighting off an attempt by elements of the state CIF to split the Southern Section, which later led both parties into a better working relationship. Other perilous situations that were met head on by Commissioner Plutko included the litigation of the Ocean View undue-influence case of 1985, which ended in confirmation of the standing Blue Book rule by the state supreme court, and a 1986 situation in the San Gabriel Valley League, which was

PLUTKO

(Continued from page 22)

solved to the betterment of all schools involved.

"I believe visiting with 58 of the 62 leagues in my first year helped us to open further lines of communication with our member schools," noted Plutko. "We also had a very unique and dedicated staff in my years, with few if any schools realizing the tremendous amount of work it was able to accomplish on their behalf."

Having been a sportswriter and coach, Plutko maintained an ongoing love affair with athletic contests of all kinds. He had a special interest in basketball and was a genuine fan. Often, the former coach could be seen scribbling down a new zone defense or offensive attack on the back of a program, just for the fun of it.

"I worked at being highly visible at countless contests involving our member schools," recalled the former commissioner. "Two of my favorite all-time CIF-SS events involved basketball, and those were the San Marcos-Long

Beach Poly 4-A final of 1981, where an 86-foot shot at the end of the first half wound up as the decisive margin. Another was the Long Beach Poly-Mater Dei overtime classic for the 4-A title in 1984."

However, Plutko's two most memorable evenings as commissioner involved the football finals. The first was the 1981 Southern Conference title game between Foothill and El Modena, which ended in a tie. According to the standing California tie-breaker rule, the game would be played off in overtime periods until a winner could be declared. Although requests from the coaches had been made to end the contest and declare the teams co-champions, Plutko enforced the rule and four additional periods ensued before Foothill prevailed, 35-28. The second was the Big-Five title game of 1983, involving Servite and Bishop Amat. Due to heavy rain on the day of the game, the CIF-SS was bumped from Anaheim Stadium at 3 p.m. on the infamous NFL "rain clause". In the ensuing five

hours, Plutko and his staff frantically moved the entire operation – including a live television crew – to Cerritos College, where the Friars and Lancers played before a packed house.

"I would describe the CIF Southern Section as simply superb in comparison to other organizations of its type," added Plutko. "The history of the organization and its previous commissioners had developed it to such a fine point, that when change was needed, it was more of a refinement, rather than change. It has always been a leader among high school associations nationally, and has never been afraid to take that lead. Being commissioner of the Southern Section was a great experience for me."

In January of 1986, Plutko accepted the position of Commissioner of the Colorado High School Activities Association. The following July, he parted company with the CIF Southern Section after an 11-year association.



RED LETTER DATES *(Continued from page 19)*

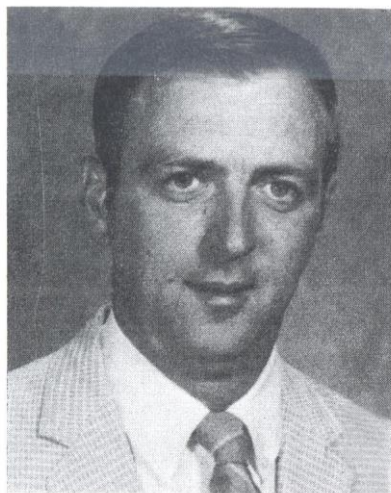
- JUNE 1980** The CIF-SS Corporate Sponsorship Program is formally established with the hiring of Larry Zucker to a full-time position as Director of Sports Marketing and Advertising.
- OCT. 1980** Under the direction of Commissioner Plutko, the CIF-SS stages its first-ever Athletic Directors' Symposium, entitled "Athletics in the New Decade".
- MAR. 1983** The CIF-SS draws its largest crowd ever for a single day of championship basketball competition, with a grand total of 17,378 at the Long Beach Arena. The evening session features a showdown between Mater Dei and Long Beach Poly, attended by a capacity crowd of 12,506.
- JAN. 1984** CIF-SS Hall of Fame Recognition Awards founded. The new program gives the CIF-SS an alternative to the Gold Life Pass – which for obvious reasons must be limited – for showing its appreciation to outstanding contributors of the organization.
- AUG. 1984** Former CIF Southern Section athletes collect a total of 44 medals at the XXIIIrd Olympic Games held in Los Angeles. Had the CIF-SS entered the Olympics as a nation, it would have placed third in the final medal count.
- MAR. 1986** Commissioner Plutko announces he will step down to accept a position with the Colorado State High School Activities Association.

MONTHLY BULLETIN

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Ray Plutko joins CIF-SS

RAY PLUTKO NAMED ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

Newest member to join the staff of the CIF Southern Section office is Ray Plutko, who leaves his duties at Notre Dame High School in Riverside to assume his new role as Administrative Assistant.

Plutko, 35, served as Assistant Principal, Athletic Director and head Varsity Basketball Coach at Notre Dame over the past four years and has been in education nine years — his previous experience having been in San Diego.



RAY PLUTKO SELECTED AS NEXT SOUTHERN SECTION COMMISSIONER

The CIF-Southern Section Executive Committee has selected Ray Plutko to succeed Tom Byrnes as Commissioner of the Southern Section effective July 1, 1980. Byrnes, the present Commissioner, will leave his post to assume his new duties as Commissioner of the State CIF this June.

When asked about his new appointment, Plutko said "This is a tremendous challenge personally, but more so, the challenge to build on the ideals that have carried this Section so far in 66 years.

"The key to the success of this organization is that the principals, Executive Committee and Council who



govern it, have been prepared to make changes when necessary for the betterment of the member schools and athletes themselves. As a result, the Southern Section has taken a leadership role nationally in the field of interscholastic athletics and will continue to do so.

"As for my personal growth, I couldn't have asked for a more skilled and talented 'master teacher' than Commissioner Tom Byrnes. He's directed an office where each administrative assistant has room to be innovative within specific goals and it's been that background over the past five years which has prepared me for the job ahead."

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NEW COMMISSIONER

(Continued from Page One)

Plutko has been with the Southern Section for five years and is currently an Administrative Assistant for the Section. Plutko also served as an Assistant Principal, Athletic Director and head Varsity Basketball Coach at Notre Dame High School for four years and had been in education nine years — his previous secondary experience in San Diego.

Specialization in the field of history led to his B.A. degree at Upland College, while he earned his M.A. at the University of San Diego. Plutko holds California credentials for the Life Secondary Teaching, General Teaching and Secondary Administrative. He is currently writing a thesis for his second Masters in the field of Athletic Administration.

A native of McKeesport, Penna., Plutko initially came to California while stationed at naval bases in San Diego and Long Beach. Following the service, he remained in California to continue his education and play basketball at Mt. San Antonio College (where he was elected Student Body President) and then Upland College.

While attending high school in Pennsylvania, he was a member of the 1955 team that won the State 4A basketball Championship. In addition to basketball, Plutko competed in track. While stationed at Terminal Island in Long Beach, Plutko was named to the basketball All-Navy team.

Professionally, Plutko is an active member of the California Athletic Directors Association, Southern California Basketball Association, National Historical Society, and is a member

of the National Records Committee. In his spare time, Plutko is writing two books on Slovak Genealogy and Slovak Immigration.

Prior to leaving the coaching ranks, Plutko recorded his 100th career basketball varsity win and overall, compiled a slate of 102 victories as opposed to 41 losses — a winning percentage of .71, coupled with five playoff appearances in 7 years.

Plutko is married to wife Sharon and they live with their five children — three boys and two girls — Greg, Gary, Scott, Dana and Kari — in Chino.



Ray Plutko is the fifth Commissioner of the CIF Southern Section

For those who have not already met him, the CIF-Southern Section takes pleasure in introducing the new Commissioner, Ray Plutko.

Plutko is the fifth Commissioner in the 67-year-old history of the Southern Section and business has changed dramatically since the first CIF-SS Commissioner took the reins in 1913. But perhaps the most significant changes in the Southern Section have occurred more recently. "Twenty years ago, we had 286 schools and 38 leagues" Plutko informs. "Now we have 500 schools and 64 leagues".

"Not only have we grown in girls' and boys' programs, but we've almost doubled in terms of schools just because of the large population growth in southern California".

As a result, Plutko explains, "We really don't have the direct eye-to-eye contact with our constituency. It's done either by phone or letter or an occasional Council session".

This being the case, Plutko has established several goals for himself and the CIF-SS.

He wants to be a visible Commissioner — a traveling administrator. He hopes to attend at least one league meeting for each of the 64 leagues now operating in the CIF-SS, an ambitious project in anyone's terms.

"I want to avail myself of opportunities to meet with administrators and to hear their suggestions and comments on how the Section should grow. In that way, we can grow together".

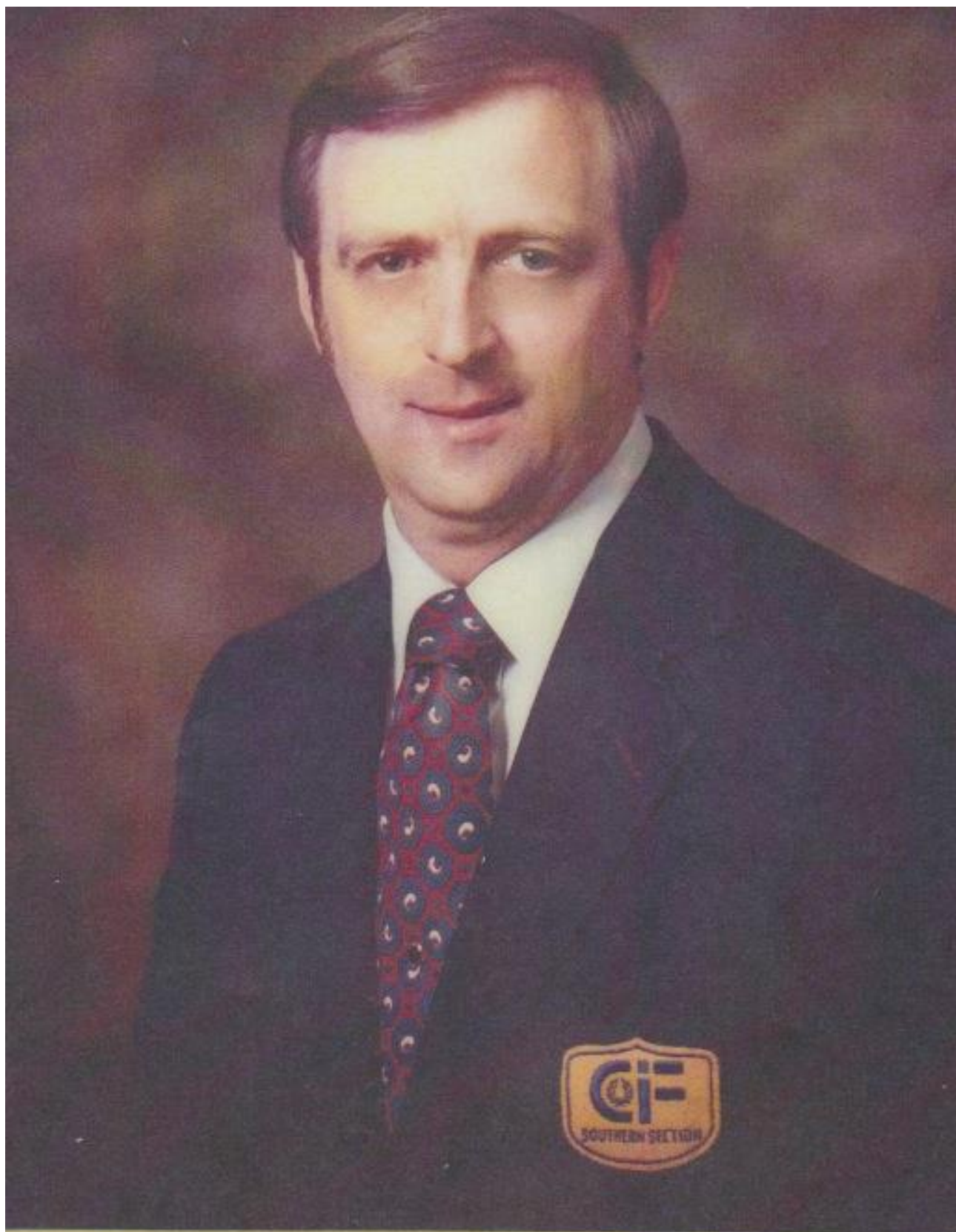
Plutko's other goals for this year include:

- * Re-orienting the public relating to the scholastic achievement, sportsmanship and wholesome entertainment high school athletics offer.
- * Pursuing promotions and corporate advertising to ease the strained budgets of Southern Section schools.
- * Encouragement and active recruitment of new officials for the high school sports scene.



COMMISSIONER RAY PLUTKO presents championship plaque to Ramona Coach Orest Stetkevich following the 1982 Eastern Conference football final at Anaheim Stadium.





RAY J. PLUTKO
1980-1986

In an administration spanning six years, Ray J. Plutko was instrumental in the introduction and maintenance of the highly successful CIF Southern Section corporate sponsorship program. Commissioner Plutko also initiated the popular CIF-SS Athletic Administrator's Symposium, developed a written account of playoff pairings procedures and several guideline reports to assist the section's athletic administrators and coaches. He was active in several functions of the National Federation of State High School Associations and served as the organization's keynote speaker at the 1982 convention in Florida. Plutko began a 12-year association with the CIF Southern Section as an administrative assistant in 1974 and became the fifth Commissioner of the organization in 1980.



Russell

Plutko

Fagans

Thomas

Byrnes

COMMISSIONERS

Byrnes

Plutko

Wigod

Crowley

Staunton

