

## A MESSAGE FROM THE COMMISSIONER

### THE GOOD, THE BAD AND THE BEAUTIFUL – MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 28



I am often asked about what a typical day is like for the Commissioner of Athletics. That has always been a difficult question for me to answer as I am not sure that there is such a thing as a typical day in the CIF Southern Section Office. However, let me share with you what Monday, September 28 was like. A typical day, maybe, but I would offer that it was an extraordinary day.

**The Good** - It began that morning with a league sportsmanship conference where I had the opportunity to speak to over 100 student-athletes about sportsmanship, ethics, character and leadership. I always enjoy and appreciate being with student-athletes and I commend the leagues who conduct these sportsmanship conferences for their commitment to Pursuing Victory with Honor. We need more of our leagues to do this and there are templates in place that you can use if you wish to implement this program into your league. As an example, contact any of the

following leagues: Golden West, Montview, River Valley, Sunset or Valle Vista, to name a few, and you can get some great ideas on how to start a sportsmanship conference in your league.

**The Bad** - Upon returning to the office, I was confronted with an unfortunate incident that occurred at a football game last Friday night. In that game, a player committed a flagrant foul that was unfortunately not observed by the game officials. In cases like this, there are many people who have an expectation that the CIF Southern Section Office will have the ability to review video of this incident and then impose a penalty on the offending player. The reality of this situation is that we have no power or authority under our current bylaws to eject and/or suspend players or coaches from contests after those contests are over. Therefore, we must rely on working together with the administrations of our member schools to investigate these matters and impose appropriate discipline on any student who operates outside the rules of the game. Think of it this way, if a student committed an act such as this one on campus, there would be severe consequences for doing so. We expect that standard to be upheld by our member schools when these regrettable incidents happen in an effort to prevent them from occurring in the future.

**The Beautiful** - That evening, we held our 12th Annual Jim Staunton Champions for Character Awards Dinner. At that event, we honored student-athletes, coaches, administrators and schools who exemplify the very best in sportsmanship and character in our section. For the first time ever, due to the success of our Champions for Character Golf Tournament, we were able to give each of our student-athlete award winners a \$1,000 scholarship. One of those student-athletes, Jack Koulos from Long Beach Wilson High, has decided to take it one step further. Jack is dividing his \$1,000 scholarship into two \$500 scholarships and will award those scholarships to two of his football teammates who best represent the ideals of Pursuing Victory With Honor. Also, the Koulos Family will continue to support this program by funding two \$500 scholarships for Wilson football players in the years ahead. What an incredible gesture by Jack Koulos and his family and we thank them for illustrating what it truly means to be a Champion for Character.

Now, back to the idea of a typical day. You can see that there is good, there is bad and there can be beautiful, but I assure you that September 28 will certainly be one day that I won't forget.

I thank you for your continued help and support and wish you good luck always.

All the best,

*Rob Wignel*

