

A MESSAGE FROM THE COMMISSIONER

GOOD NIGHT, GOOD BYE



This is the last Message from the Commissioner that I will write. Over the past 12 years, I have enjoyed the opportunity to utilize this vehicle to communicate with you. On a monthly basis, I tried my best to focus on current issues, keep you updated on recent developments, provide food for thought on ideas for the future, and touch on topics of interest relevant to you and to our organization. Sometimes these messages were about celebrations, sometimes they were about challenges, and others on all things in between.

In this final one, I want to express my gratitude to all of you who embrace the importance of education-based athletics and have devoted so much of your time in service to young people. I am so thankful for the spirit of cooperation and collaboration that has resulted in significant changes to the way we have administered to our student-athletes, and I am extremely proud of what we have been able to accomplish by working together. Included at the end of this message is a look back at the years I have spent with you in this office, highlighting some of the advances we have made in the effort to be the very best we could be. I hope you will enjoy the trip down memory lane. As I move on, I would like to offer my sincere thanks to the following...

Member Schools – To our principals, athletic directors, coaches, and school communities. I have travelled the length and breadth of our section in the 23 years I have worked here, and the number of people I have met who are doing outstanding work with students and student-athletes is incredible. It was so inspiring to meet so many great people, doing great things, all over our massive geographic footprint. The friendships and relationships I have been able to forge with so many of you are treasured memories that I will take with me forever.

Executive Committee – To our Executive Committee, present and past, for their leadership, vision, and oversight of our organization. The contributions that our Executive Committee members make by representing their constituents are invaluable to us in identifying what needs to be done, engaging in meaningful discussions on the direction we want to go, and then implementing the plan to see those ideas come to fruition. The Executive Committee have helped me tremendously as mentors, sounding boards and sources of knowledge. I am indebted to them for doing so.

Staff – As I have said many, many times, whenever I speak of them, our staff is second to none. I am so grateful to them for their dedication to our membership and to our organization. They are much more than loyal and trusted colleagues, they are family to me and to my family, and we have been through so many things where their unwavering support has meant everything to me. I have been fortunate to be able to come to work every day with people who I know truly care about what we do, but even more they care about who we do it for. You are Superstars!

COMMISSIONERS MESSAGE NO. 12 - GOOD NIGHT, GOOD BYE

2-2-2

ROB (Cont.):

I leave you with this...In 1978, the acclaimed film director Martin Scorsese made a movie called, "The Last Waltz." It was a documentary about a group known as The Band, who were very accomplished musicians, but got most of their notoriety as the back-up band for singer/songwriter Bob Dylan. This was a concert film from their last live performance in San Francisco and they were joined onstage by several famous artists that night who celebrated with them. As the last song ended, the final note was played, and the crowd was cheering, the leader of the group, Robbie Robertson, summed it up by simply saying, "Good night, Goodbye." As my service with the CIF Southern Section comes to an end, I say to all of you, Good night, Goodbye.

A LOOK BACK – 2011-2023

Since becoming the Commissioner of Athletics for the CIF Southern Section on August 2, 2011, working together with our member schools, the Executive Committee, and our staff, I believe we have been able to accomplish many things that have moved our section forward. Since we began 12 years ago, here are some goals that have been achieved...

- Expanded communication with all our stakeholders through social media, specifically Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter, which have seen our followings on those platforms increase over 120% in our first year and continued to show significant increases in our social media presence each year after. (2011-12 and subsequent years)
- Significant growth in coverage and revenue distribution to our member schools through television and webcasting rights. Each year, we have over 300 events broadcast over television and the Internet, and we distribute over \$200,000 in rights fees to our member schools. (2011-12 and each year after)
- Sold out the Champions for Character Golf Tournament, approximately 150 golfers, for the first time in 2011-12 and have continued to do so each year since. (2011-12) (Tournament not held in 2020 and 2021 due to COVID-19 pandemic.)
- Created new Commissioners Committees such as the Athletic Trainers Advisory Committee and the Private School Leadership Advisory Committee to open a dialogue with these specific groups and establish relationships with them in the effort to be proactive regarding relevant issues involving our section. (2011-12)
- The CIF Southern Section celebrated our 100th Anniversary, highlighted by the 100th Anniversary Gala, held on April 13, 2013, the publishing of our 100th Anniversary Yearbook and the selection of our 100 Athletes for 100 Years, a collection of the finest athletes that have attended CIF Southern Section member schools. Also, through the incredible work of our historian Dr. John Dahlem, we have created a historical library in our office which includes a written history of the CIF Southern Section, films from our past that have been transferred to DVD's, information on All-CIF Southern Section teams through the years and Championship Game programs from various sports, among other items. Our library is available to our member schools, the media, and the public in assisting them in their research. (2012-13)
- Implemented a web-based communications system for our member schools called CIFSSHome, which has enabled us to accomplish virtually all our processes electronically: membership directory information, payment of membership dues, transfer paperwork, input of schedules, rosters, and scores, submitting playoff information and entries, etc. (2012-13)
- Established scholarship program for student-athlete Champions for Character Award winners (2012- 13, we began by awarding \$500 to each student-athlete. It grew to \$750 for each student-athlete in 2013- 14 and 2014-15 and is now \$1,000 for each student-athlete award winner in 2015-16 and each year since.) (2012-13)

- MORE -

COMMISSIONERS MESSAGE NO. 12 - GOOD NIGHT, GOOD BYE

3-3-3

ROB (Cont.):

- Facilitated 6-year extension of the Fox Sports West partnership resulting in increased revenue and expanded coverage of CIF Southern Section events on live television and on the Internet. (2013-14)
- Enhanced championship experiences for student-athletes, coaches, fans, and communities by conducting our inaugural CIF Southern Section Girls Wrestling Championships, and for the first time, combining our Individual Golf Championships and Team Golf Championships into one showcase event. (2013-14)
- Implemented League Compliance Officer position for the 86 leagues within the CIF Southern Section to serve as a liaison between the CIF Southern Section Office and each league focusing on better communication, training and education related to the CIF Southern Section Constitution and Bylaws. (2013-14)
- Established CIF Southern Section Hall of Fame/ Distinguished Service Awards Luncheon to honor Hall of Fame and Distinguished Service Award Winners. The event has grown each year. (2013-14)
- Returned the entire amount of membership dues from the 2014-2015 school year, approximately \$475,000, to member schools. (2014-15)
- Returned record playoff revenue from the 2014-2015 school year, approximately \$1.4 million, to member schools. (2014-15)
- Implemented credit card process for all CIF Southern Section Championship events, making it much more convenient for people attending. (2014-15)
- Instituted the Athletic Administrator Summit, with 431 attendees in the first year. (2015-16). (A record number of 634 attendees in 2022-23)
- Established the CIF Southern Section MVP AD Certification Program with 163 athletic administrators taking the inaugural MVP AD Exam. (2015-16)
- Implemented Competitive Equity Playoff Groupings for select team sports: Baseball, Boys/Girls Basketball, Football, Boys/Girls Soccer, Softball, Boys/Girls Tennis, Boys/Girls Volleyball, Boys/Girls Water Polo. (2016-17)
- Doubled travel reimbursements to member schools: mileage, meals, and lodging, in all playoff sports. (2016-17)
- Introduced the Principal's Track at the Athletic Administrator Summit, with 171 attendees in the first year. (2016-17)
- Launched online ticketing option for select Southern Section Championships events. (2017-18)
- Developed mobile version for CIFSSHome. (2017-18)
- Entered state-wide Marketing program with CIF Sports Properties, resulting in guaranteed revenues and revenue sharing for the CIF Southern Section. (2017-18)
- Implemented Digital Media Coordinator position. (2018-19)
- Conducted inaugural Traditional Competitive Cheer Championships. (2018-19)
- Conducted inaugural Unified Sports Track and Field Championships. (2018-19)
- Achieved revenue share in Year 3 of the state-wide CIF Sports Properties Marketing Program. (2019-20)
- Conducted inaugural Boys and Girls Lacrosse Championships. (2020-21)
- Conducted inaugural Girls Dual Meet Wrestling Championships. (2020-21)
- Implemented Competitive Equity model for Boys and Girls Team Golf Championships. (2020-21)
- Implemented Competitive Equity Championships model for an Individual sport for the first time. (Swimming/Diving, 2020-21)
- Instituted online ticketing requirement for all sports and all rounds. (2020-21)
- Implemented current year data for the first time in formulating Football Playoff Divisions. (2021-22)

- MORE -

COMMISSIONERS MESSAGE NO. 12 - GOOD NIGHT, GOOD BYE

4-4-4

ROB (Cont.):

- Conducted inaugural Girls Wrestling Masters Meet Championships. (2021-22)
- Approved a landmark three-year Official's Fees Agreement, restructuring the format and creating new formulas for the payment of officials. (2021-22)
- Returned the entire amount of membership dues from the 2021-2022 school year, approximately \$750,000, to member schools. (2021-22)
- Waived membership dues for the 2022-2023 school year, approximately \$750,000 in savings for member schools. (2022-23)
- Implemented an updated and modernized CIFSSHome system called CIFSSHome 2.0. (2022-23)
- Conducted inaugural Beach Volleyball Team Championship and inaugural Beach Volleyball Individual Pairs Championship. (2022-23)
- Added Girls Flag Football as a CIF-approved sport for implementation as a Fall sport in the 2023-24 school year. (2022-23)
- Waived membership dues for the 2023-2024 school year, approximately \$750,000 in savings for member schools. (2022-23)

Thank you very much for your continued help and support, it is truly appreciated.

All the best to you always,

Rob Wigod



- END -