Insignificance doesn't necessarily show worth, but sense of reality

Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love.

-Ephesians 4:2

Insignificance. That's a humbling word. But in the scheme of things, it is a word that should be thought of to help us keep things in perspective.

As a little kid, I played "puff" basketball all the time. I would practice on my own, goof around with my Dad, and compete against my best friend-consequently my biggest rival-Timmy Dodd.

During gym class in second grade, I would literally heave one of those red multi-purpose balls at a real hoop and then rejoice when I nicked the side of the rim.

But by the time I was eight years old, I was ready for the real thing.

In the summer of 1980, I had the opportunity to attend the University of Charleston's basketball camp. So I did. And I loved it. I played with a real ball and got to meet real players, who were guest speakers at the camp.

As I got familiar with the game of basketball, I started getting prideful in some of my natural abilities. I was an accurate shooter, could create off the dribble, and anticipated opponents' passes well. Or so I thought.

the other teams. The speakers were alright, too. Yeah sure, alright.

The first day of camp, Kyle Macy, a sharpshooter at the University of Kentucky, spoke-and stroked. He talked to us about the fundamentals of free-throw shooting while stringing together several straight shots. Then, he told us to scream and yell at him while he shot. So a couple hundred loud little boys tried to "distract" Macy as he nailed 50 in a row from the charity stripe. He was alright.

The next day, Jeff Lamp, then a rising senior guard at the University of Virginia, stopped in to "chat." Lamp gave us a tour of the basketball court, hitting shots from everywhere on the floor. He was alright, but could he sky? Never mind that his range was nearly limitless.

"Dunk it!" one camper shouted.

"I can't dunk it too well," Lamp replied. "But that guy up there will put on a show for you tomorrow.'

And stretched across four rows of bleachers in the middle level of Eddie King Gymnasium was 7'4" Ralph Sampson, then a rising sophomore at "The University" who was one of the most celebrated college basketball players ever.

Gulp.

I didn't know who the guy was, because I had sheltered myself in a "puff" basket-

ther make 40 percent of their shots. Meroth averages a quiet 7.7 points and 3.5 rebounds, while Gattuso plays a reserve role. Over the past two seasons, Guilford has posted a combined record of 33-15, so the veterans are not used to losing. Does a disappointing record take on a greater magnitude when it is your senior year?

"Definitely," Helton said. "You don't want your last season to be a losing one." Unless the Lady Quakers win four of their last six contests, these four players face that undesirable ending.

There were some pretty good players on ball world. That didn't matter-whoever this dude was, he was big!

The following afternoon, I fully took in how huge he was. Sampson dunked with ease, throwing even the lousiest of alleyoop passes through the rim. And this was before there was such a thing as "break away" rims. Pretty scary.

Then, I was selected to play with four other tykes against Ralph-five on one. We didn't score. He was alright, too.

Needless to say, I was humbled. Here I was, bathing in my new-found success in basketball and these three superstars make a mockery of me. I was the one that was "alright." I felt pretty insignificant that week.

By the time that I was 11, I already had three seasons of soccer under my belt. I started at left halfback for the South Hills Red Hawks. In the spring of 1983, we advanced to the playoffs against Teays Valley.

Early in the game, an opposing player tried to dribble through my zone, so I attempted to slide-tackle him.

Now, John Adams Junior High's upper field was a major party hangout, so it was covered with broken bottles. I wasn't a partier, but I soon met up with the refuse of one.

As I stood up after the play had gone past me, my left leg felt funny. I had been cut by a chunk of glass.



"Uh Coach, you can put in a sub for me now.'

It took five stitches to close the cut near my knee. Oh no, what about the team? Can they do it without me? Well, yeah. We beat Teays 6-2. In the next game, we won 14-1 and Every starter scored at least one goal.

You see, I didn't hold the team together; they could go on without me. Again, I felt insignificant.

Now we are in a war. And sporting events don't seem quite as important when you look at the big picture. So again, I feel insignificant-as a sports editor I report on the diversions, not the news, of the day.

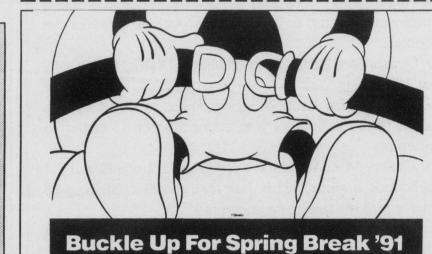
In some ways insignificance is good. When you realize that the world doesn't revolve around you, you begin to appreciate others around you. You count what you receive as blessings, rather than burdens.

Of course, insignificance may be bad. When you think of yourself as worthless, you lose sight of the fact that God can use you to do great things for Him.

For everything God created is good and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving.

-from 1 Timothy 4:4

Who: You What: The Wellness Fair When: February 21 Where: Ragan-Brown Fieldhouse Stay Tuned Why:



Lady Quakers

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to compete. That sounds like a cop-out, but...'

"It makes a difference," finished Meroth. And so, seniors Helton and Meroth, along with Tara Wilson and Beth Gattuso, have had to endure a difficult stretch to close out their careers. Helton and Wilson lead the team with 11.5 points a game each, but nei-

Sports Quote of the Week:

"I have said many times, 'I check the front page headline, just to see if we're at war, then go to the only news that really counts.' I don't have to check anymore. The sports section is what is dropped to the side now."

-Leigh Montville in the January 28 edition of 'Point After' in Sports Illustrated.

