

Smithfield spreads lies

In just the past week, a new television ad has made an attempt to promote the image of the corporation it represents. That corporation is Smithfield Foods, the owner of the largest hog farm in North Carolina and one of the major meat industries on the East Coast.

From the Editor

The ad depicts an older man talking to his grandson, telling him of the importance of respecting the environment and the necessity of preserving what we have.

That's right, Smithfield Foods is now trying to get environmental, as if any company that produces meat in mass quantities with little regard for production methods could actually consider itself environmentally conscious.

Only a year after the torrential rains of Hurricane Floyd and the flooding in its aftermath, Smithfield Foods, whose North Carolina plant is only miles from Raleigh, wants us to forget the inordinate amounts of waste that flowed into the waters of Eastern North Carolina. The company wants us to forget about the environmental problems it created last year from its so-called hog "lagoons."

But who could forget the pictures in the newspapers of the dead hogs floating in the water, the pictures of the bright-pink water itself, swollen with waste? Anyone who could forget those images and instead believe the ad's self-promoting rhetoric should not even be allowed to own a television.

The ad is an appeal to sentimentality. (A grandfather and grandson? How cute.) The ad is fiction. It tries to deceive North Carolinians into thinking that Smithfield Foods is just their friendly neighborhood farm.

Wrong. Smithfield Foods is a huge conglomerate. It does not care about the environmental impact of its plants; if it does make changes, it is only because the company does not want to have to pay any more fines.

Remember the devastation. Remember the undrinkable water. Those are the things that Smithfield wants us to forget.

Meredith Herald

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Opinion: Medals not guaranteed

HILARY ALLEN
Staff Writer

For the past week, I have been mesmerized by the Olympic Games. In fact, since my childhood, I have been mesmerized by these world-famous games.

When I was younger, in the two week span of the Olympics, I found one athlete who quickly became my new hero, just like most children.

And this year, I anticipated the start of the Sydney Olympic Games like a child anticipates Christmas. So far, the Olympics have been just as exciting as in years past. However, something important is lacking from the Sydney Games — good sportsmanship.

Although this year's Olympic Games have had some genuine, heartfelt moments, positive attitudes and good sportsmanship have been the missing ingredients.

Sportsmanship serves as a window to one's character. Over the past week, several athletes have shown their true characters.

For instance, the Russian women's gymnastic team showed poor sportsmanship as

they stripped off their silver medals immediately following the medal ceremony. Many other athletes would have loved to accept those silver medals.

Like the Russian women's gymnastic team, the Chinese men's gymnastic team went into the games determined not to accept second place. Even

Let us only hope that these Olympic competitors do not become the new heroes of children around the world.

These are all obvious incidents of poor sportsmanship, but can you recall how many people were truly happy to have won the silver or bronze medal? I can recall a few.

After winning the bronze medal, swimmer Kristin Sandeno exclaimed, "Oh, my God! Thank you!" It might not have been the gold, but Sandeno was just as pleased to win the bronze.

Win is the key word there. Whether an athlete wins gold, silver or bronze, he or she is still winning a medal. A medal should not be expected. Instead, receiving an Olympic medal is a privilege, an honor earned by few.

We can learn lessons from the swimmer, the female triathlete and the

gymnast who were happy to simply compete in the Olympics and finish their respective contests.

Like athletes, every person should learn that defeat strengthens character because it better enables a person to appreciate the victories.

This year's Olympic games have shown that while a medal is nice, it is not always awarded to a true champion.

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though the team won the gold, they perceived second place as a defeat.

And prior to a qualifying heat in the women's 50-meter freestyle swimming competition, Amy Van Dyken of the United States spit into the lane of one of her fellow competitors. Following the race, Van Dyken showed her disgust by not congratulating the victor. Were her actions really necessary?

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Submissions include letters to the editor, press releases and feature articles.

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