

SPORTS WEEK

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Timothy Ramsey
Sports Columnist

Parents, please stop the madness!

About a year ago, I wrote a column about what I think is wrong with youth sports. I touched on different issues from coaches, players, refs and the parents. After another year of watching youth sports evolve from different perspectives, the main problem is the parents, without question.

I see now that it's the parents who are causing most of the issues for youth sports, on and off the court, specifically basketball. For the sake of this article, I will only reference youth basketball, because it's the sport I've witnessed the worst conduct in all of the youth sports.

Profanity, physical threats, bad coaching advice, and undermining the coach are some of the major problems that I have witnessed on the court. I thought that it may just be a small issue with certain leagues or age groups, but I see now that it is a sport-wide problem that is only getting worse.

Some of the things that I have heard from these out-of-control parents are unbelievable. I have seen more parents thrown out of basketball games in the past three years than I have in my entire life. I am not claiming that all parents are doing this, but the number of parents who are is higher than many people are willing to acknowledge.

What these parents fail to realize is that they are doing their children a great disservice by acting this way in the stands. When the kids see their parents cursing and yelling, it's only natural that they mimic some of the same behavior. As a consequence, referees are seeing more and more outrageous behavior on the floor from the players, because they see their parents doing it.

I was covering a game recently and heard a parent yell a series of obscenities from the stands that even made the crowd say "Ohhhh." For the life of me I can't understand how a parent can say things like that, especially when there were scores of children in the stands overhearing this tirade.

As a referee, some of the things that have been said to me have almost made me lose my cool a few times. From a referee's perspective, the thing that infuriates me the most is that parents have no idea what many of the rules of basketball are. They don't know what a travel is, an actual foul or even a backcourt. Parents also have a fascination with yelling "over the back" when their child gets out-jumped for a rebound. I have a message for you parents: there is no such thing as an over-the-back in the rulebook; it does not exist, so please

See Madness on B6



Photos by Alphonso Abbott Jr.

BY TIMOTHY RAMSEY
THE CHRONICLE

Last week the Parkland Mustangs were crowned the Piedmont Triad

3A tournament champions. They accomplished the feat with a 54-52 win over Mt. Tabor. With this being their third victory over the Spartans this season, the Mustangs look to use that momentum as they head into the playoffs.

Raye scores 1,000th point in historic fashion

BY TIMOTHY RAMSEY
THE CHRONICLE

Following a stellar freshman year, Marc Raye Jr. had his eyes set on higher goals for his sophomore year. One of those goals was to hit the 1,000-point threshold before his sophomore season ended and he did just that.

Raye Jr. is the first sophomore in Albemarle High School and Stanly County history to accomplish that feat. The thought of scoring 1,000 points came to Raye as he was having a conversation with his father prior to the season getting started.

"I just wanted to make history," said Raye Jr. "He (Marc Raye Sr.) told me that no one has ever hit 1,000 points down there in school and county history, so that pushed me to be the best and just make history. I just wanted to leave my mark on Stanly County and Albemarle."

Raye Jr. reached his goal on Senior Night for Albemarle High, finishing the game with 39 points. The school held a brief ceremony where Raye Jr. was presented with a game ball and plaque.

Raye Jr. got off to a



Raye Jr. embraces his father after scoring his 1,000th point.

Submitted photo

great start to begin the season, knowing he needed to average nearly 26 points per game to reach the mark. His father, Raye Sr., who also happens to be his coach, kept secret how close Raye Jr. was until the game before his record setting performance.

The nerves started to set in the moment Raye Jr. realized his goal was

within reach. On the night of the 1,000-point game, Raye Jr. says he was okay all the way until the team began putting on their uniforms.

"I was just like, this could really happen tonight, and I started getting nervous," he said. "During warm-ups, I just began sweating, because I saw a lot of my family: I told

my grandmother the week before that if she comes, I will get it, so she came and I had to hit it for her."

Raye Jr. came out on a mission that evening, scoring 8 points in the first three minutes of the game. Needing only 25 points to reach the mark, Raye Jr. scored 22 points in the first half. Less than 30 seconds into the second

half, Raye Jr. hit a three that gave him his 1,000th point.

"I couldn't believe it," said Raye Jr. after accomplishing the feat. "It goes to show that you can do anything you put your mind to and don't let anyone tell you what you can and can't do."

The impact his family has had on Raye Jr. has been significant. He credits them for much of his stellar play on the court.

"It's a blessing to be playing for your dad and if it wasn't for him, I wouldn't be where I am," he said. "He's the one that told me to stay last year and I made that decision to stay and I can't thank him enough for that."

The 2019-20 season did not go that well for the Bulldogs overall. For the season, the team finished with a 9-14 record and this was the first time Raye Sr. has not made the playoffs in his coaching career.

Even with the down season for the team, Raye Sr. was overjoyed with the efforts of his son and starting point guard. Raye Jr. averaged 26 points, 6 rebounds, 8 assists, 5 steals and only 2 turnovers per game this year. With two

See Raye on B6