

Philanthropy Journal

OF NORTH CAROLINA

Philanthropic edge

Sports a winning pitch for fundraisers

From charity golf tournaments to weekend tailgate parties, sports events offer a key strategy to boost fundraising by North Carolina nonprofits. Experts say people are becoming more sophisticated about using sports as a way to bring in donors.

BY BARBARA SOLOW

Pfeiffer College Campaign Director Cindy Benson knows she faces a challenge in attracting potential donors to campus.

"We're not exactly on the main drag in Charlotte," she says of the school's location in Misenheimer - about 35 miles northeast of the city.

But Pfeiffer has an advantage that other area schools might not share.

The men's basketball team, the Falcons, has gone to the national championships for the last four years. And one of the school's recent graduates - Antonio Harvey - has been playing with the Los Angeles Lakers.

"When you have a good team, it's

like a snowball," Benson says. "Sports allows you to show off your campus and gets outsiders to come in and see what's going on. Every time you have an opportunity to do that, you are one step closer to getting a donation."

Her experience is echoed by fundraisers throughout North Carolina who see sports and philanthropy as a winning combination.

From booster club outings to charity golf and tennis tournaments, sports play an important role in non-profit fundraising - a role that experts say is likely to grow as competition for donors increases.

Strategies vary depending on whether the sponsor is a university, non-profit hospital or corporate giving program. While some organizations raise money directly from ticket sales from sports events, others use indirect means such

as inviting key donors to tailgate parties or scheduling fundraising meetings around home games.

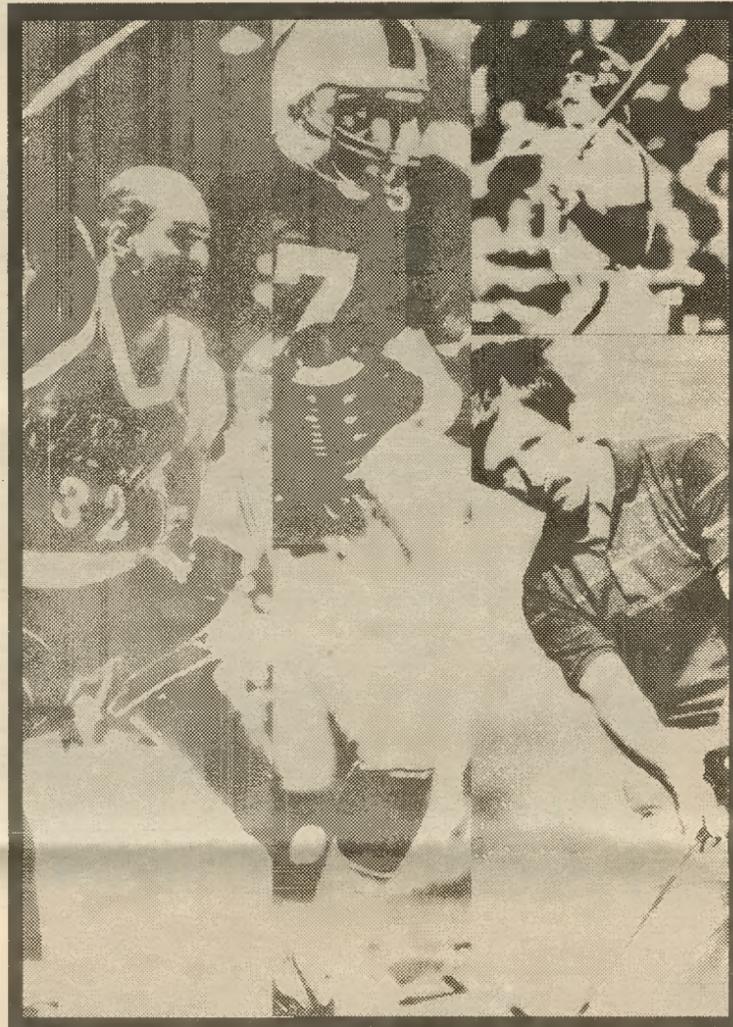
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FIELDING DREAMS
SPORTS AND GIVING
SPECIAL REPORT

Sports and philanthropy are a team. This special report examines:

- High school boosters. Page 8.
- Small colleges. Page 14.
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Getting involved Millis family mixes work, philanthropy

In building a successful hosiery business, the Millis family of High Point helped build its community. Philanthropy, in the Millis philosophy, is part of doing business and being civic leaders.

BY DAVID E. BROWN

High Point

In the latter years of the 19th century, men who didn't start with much were shaping a booming mill town around a high spot on the rail line in North Carolina's industrious midsection.

As High Point began to grow around the factories, the people who made it big were elbow to elbow with those who just got by, and they were well aware of the relatively few circumstances that separated them.

The needs in the community were easy to see, and they hit home. Charity was an important element of successful business to those who would establish their families as the town's leaders.

Jim Millis followed his grandfather and his father as the head of one of the largest hosiery manufacturers in the town once known as the world hosiery capital. By the time he came home to the mill from World War II and college, the community expected

PROFILE

something more than socks from the Millis family.

"You get asked to get involved in a lot of things," he says, "and fortunately I had the opportunity to plan my business time so I could get involved."

The mill that started as High Point Hosiery in 1904 now is in the hands of Sara Lee Corp., the giant nonpareil of the industry, and Jim Millis worries that it will be harder for the "sons and grandsons" of his generation to stay interested in local philanthropy as the family-owned businesses are sold to outsiders.

Millis tries to limit his worrying, though. He wants a visitor to the offices of the James H. and Jesse E. Millis Foundation to know right up front that he is enjoying himself very much right now. He's long past fretting about the possibility of boredom in retirement.

He and Jesse keep tabs on 17 grandchildren and a growing 5-year-

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Major leaguers

College booster clubs raise big-time dollars

Entities that support college sports are evolving into sophisticated fundraising organizations at large and small schools throughout North Carolina.

BY DAVID E. BROWN

It is not curing cancer. It is not closing the curtain on world hunger.

But it is perhaps the most overtly passionate form of philanthropy. And it can fluctuate literally on the way a ball bounces.

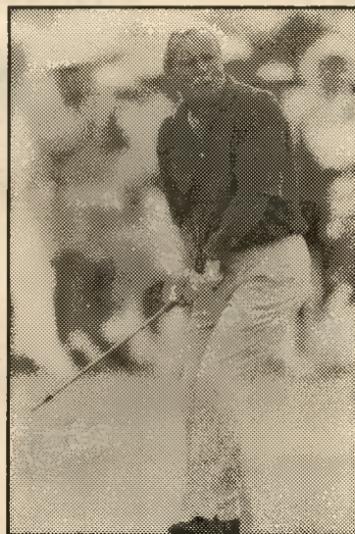
Its devotees are given to blood-curdling screams, and dressing funny. They schedule board meetings and family affairs around the organized gut-checks and acrobatics of young men known as intercollegiate athletes.

Big, big money is involved in what traditionally have been called "booster clubs" - groups that are evolving at large and small schools into sophisticated foundations.

For the most part, funding for college sports is a cycle that stays within the realm of the school's Department of Balls and Bats: Checks are written for scholarships to attract game-players of recognized potential whose degree of success on the field or the court helps determine how big the next round of checks will be.

FIELDING DREAMS
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SPECIAL REPORT

As booster organizations grow,



Wake Forest grad Arnold Palmer

they all have at least a stated goal of sharing some of the wealth with the academic side of the house - particularly at a time when athletic departments are fighting a public perception that these energetic pastimes have become too big a business.

In the older programs, it's already happening. At the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, for example, the Educational Foundation - also known as the Ram's Club - has helped endow professorships and bail out a library in a financial pinch.

At smaller schools such as UNC-Charlotte, it's an ideal.

"We've not been in a position to make contributions to the university's scholarship fund," says Forty-Niner Club Director Bob Young. "But we hope to be in that position one day."

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Weaving a living

800 Eastern North Carolina residents who otherwise might be on welfare are making it on their own producing and selling hand-made crafts.

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FOUNDATIONS

All in the family

As the Council on Foundations studies family foundations, leaders call for linking family and community foundations.

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VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers shelved

After criticizing the library director, a volunteer group was asked not to handle Wake County's annual book sale.

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FUNDRAISING

Making airwaves

After losing state funding, public radio stations are trying innovative ways to solicit financial support.

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