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DECEMBER 2012

**Winter Coaching
Articles**

**NAIA -- An Option
For Your Athlete**

**Fall All-State
Selections**

**TRIUMPHANT
TIMBERWOLVES**

Darcy White, Exeter-Milligan

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Kurt Polt, Volleyball Coach, Giltner, gives instructions to his players during a timeout at the 2012 State Volleyball Championships. The Hornets captured third place with a 30-3 record. - Callam Sports Photography



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Volleyball Coach Peg Heis, Wood River guides the Eagles to a Class C1 State appearance. The Eagles finished the season at 25-8. – Callam Sports Photography

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SEPTEMBER 2012

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UPCOMING EVENTS

January 27 – Board Meeting

February 2 – NCA Track Clinic -- NSAA Building

February 14-16 – State Wrestling Hospitality Room -- Century Link Omaha

February 15 & 16 – State Cheer & Dance Championships -- Grand Island Event Center

February 22 – State Swimming Coaches Pizza Feed -- Devaney Sports Center

February 28-March 2 – Girls State Basketball Hospitality Room -- Devaney Sports Center

February 28-March 2 – Girls State Basketball Sportsmanship Awards -- Lincoln

March 7-9 – Boys State Basketball Hospitality Room -- Devaney Sports Center

March 7-9 – Boys State Basketball Sportsmanship Awards -- Lincoln

April 28 – Board Meeting – NSAA Building

July 23-25 – NCA Multi-Sport Clinic – Lincoln

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“The Game Plan”

Words from Darin Boysen, NCA Executive Director:

Thanksgiving is my favorite holiday and my wife knows how to push my buttons. While at the NCA Football Clinic (November 18) my 9-year old daughter texted me; “Dad, just so you know, Mom is putting up the Christmas tree and lights.” Thanksgiving – the forgotten holiday? I think I also need to remind my wife that the real holiday of the week isn’t “Black Friday.” We don’t seem to commercialize the Thanksgiving holiday. The marketing gurus just can’t seem to monopolize the thought of pausing to be thankful. Maybe Santa is just “sexier” than Tom Turkey? My thought: it’s just “not cool” to stop and give thanks for what we have.

Thanksgiving might be in our rear-view mirror, but I’d like to share an example, one of the countless many, of why the Nebraska Coaches Association continues to grow and why I give “thanks” as your executive director.

After three long exciting days of State Volleyball Championship action in Grand Island, over 20 volleyball coaches entered the Northwest High School library Sunday morning. Many of these coaches had just finished an exhausting three days of competition. Some were making the three to four hour, or more, round-trip to Grand Island for the fourth time in as many days. Some had not been home in four days. Some had just coached in championship matches that were won or lost the day before. These coaches were giving up their only day off before heading back to school on Monday to help select two balanced NCA All-Star teams for next summer. What did they get in return personally? – Absolutely nothing. Talk about giving back to their profession, sport and association.

Coaches like this can be found up and down the NCA membership roster and as board of directors. I give “thanks” for coaches like this every day. These are the true faces of the Nebraska Coaches Association. I can only hope that my daughters will be coached by individuals that give so much.

After this same volleyball selection meeting, Minden Head Volleyball Coach Ed Rowse posed a question that I’m asked nearly every day. “How’s the job Darin?” I responded, “I love what I’m doing – I’m very blessed.” But Coach Rowse had a very insightful thought that really struck me in a positive way; “Darin, you’re the Candy Man! You get to give out honors, awards and do all the positive things athletes and coaches love.” Wow, how right he is. Again, how thankful I am.

Best wishes to all on a great winter season. Give thanks every day and enjoy the upcoming Holiday season.

“In everyone’s life, at some time, our inner fire goes out. It is then burst into flame by an encounter with another human being. We should all be thankful for those people who rekindle the inner spirit”. - Albert Schweitzer



COACHING WITH QUIET INTENSITY

TONY SISKE - HEAD BOYS BASLETBALL - SCOTTSBLUFF

Just as personalities differ in people, there is a wide range of coaching personalities. Some coaches are very boisterous and animated on the sidelines, while others tend to be more reserved. Every coach has their own unique coaching style that is unique to them. As coaches, we often times emulate each other in certain ways, but no two coaches are exactly alike. A coach must have their own way of doing things and their style must fit their personality. I have learned that a coach cannot trick their athletes to pretend to be someone that they are not. For example, consider Nebraska football coaches Tom Osborne and Bo Pelini. These two University of Nebraska football coaches demonstrated two very different coaching styles on the sidelines. Coach Osborne could not have coached with Coach Pelini's demeanor and been as successful as he was in his tenure as head coach. Likewise, Coach Pelini would not be successful trying to coach using the same demeanor as Coach Osborne. This demonstrates how there are many successful coaches on every end of the spectrum.

I believe that sometimes there is a misconception that coaches that are not as animated on the sidelines might not be coaching as "hard" as one who appears to be more reserved on the sidelines. The most important aspect is that your players are receiving the message that you are trying to deliver to them. You must also know your players and you may have to change your delivery depending on the player. I feel there are many advantages to staying calm on the bench during games. I do realize there are times when a coach needs to raise their voice in order to deliver a particular message to their players. Through my experience, I have found success in taking a quiet approach. I have found that the less often I raise my voice, the more effective it is with my team when I do.

A coach's expectations are set at practice so that players know what effort is expected of them. If my players are not performing up to those expectations during a game, most times I can let them know without yelling at them. I tend to be more reserved on the sidelines and I believe there are advantages to keeping a calm demeanor. My voice is heard more often at practice than it is during a game. We try to make practices very intense and we put our players in situations where success is harder to come by than it is in the games. We also try to have them compete in many different game time scenarios during each practice. Although a coach cannot prepare their players for every possible situation that might occur in a game, if you practice enough scenarios, there is a chance you may just need to make minor adjustments to one that you have covered. When we prepare our players during practice successfully, they will require less intensive instruction during the game. I have found that the more instruction that I try to give during a game, the less that is actually received. If a coach is constantly giving directions to their players during an actual game situation, their voice tends to eventually not be heard or some directions are not received.

During intense and stressful situations the coach can be a calming influence for the team in the way that they handle a huddle and act on the sidelines. Often times, a team mirrors the personality of its coach. I want my teams to be focused and confident. The coach needs to set the example and keep the focus on what is important and what can be controlled. For example, when I spend time worrying about the officiating during a game, my team seems to be affected by calls more than they should. I have found that when I stay calm through adversity, my team has a better chance of handling adversity themselves. If the other team is on a run and gaining momentum, it is up to the coach to settle a team down and prevent them from panicking. Staying calm as a coach is a way to model the way your team should play to overcome the opponent's momentum rather than feed into it. At the end of a tight game, it is important to be able to deliver your message in a calm way that gives your team confidence in what you are doing. Preparing for these situations at practice will help you as a coach, and help the players know what should be done in any given situation.

In our program we stress moving on to the next play. We do not want our players to allow one mistake to turn into two mistakes. It is easier for kids to get over mistakes when they are given a subtle reminder rather than when they are yelled at in front of everyone in the gym. Most of the time, kids recognize when they have made a mistake. I do not believe that making a big deal out of the situation will help the player move on to the next play. When a player makes a mistake during a game and gets yelled at by their coach, there is a chance that they will possibly get angry or embarrassed. I do not believe that players play their best when they feel this way, and they are more likely to continue making mistakes when their confidence and concentration has been negatively affected.

Throughout my 14 years of coaching experience, I have found that I can have a more positive and lasting impact on our players, while still demanding intensity, by using a calm demeanor. There are many coaching styles and strategies that can be effective to achieve success, and every coach needs to use what works best for them. I am comfortable coaching this way and I have experienced many advantages to coaching with positivity, a calm demeanor, and quiet intensity.



Courtesy Photo

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BUILDING A POSITIVE CULTURE IN YOUR BASKETBALL PROGRAM

BY: TOM TVRDY – HEAD GIRLS BASKETBALL COACH, SEWARD

Over the course of my coaching career I have come to realize that maximizing the potential of each year's basketball team has a lot more to do with the intangible things we do than the X's and O's that are implemented. In this article I would like to share with you five components of our basketball program that I believe have been the key to our ability to reach our potential each season.

Before the start of each season our coaching staff puts a great deal of time into selecting a slogan that will be a constant reminder to everyone what our guiding belief system is. The slogan is always rooted in the belief system that the team comes before self. We print it on our team t-shirts that we wear on every game day, it is made into a poster that hangs in our locker room and it is stated prominently on the daily practice schedule. We refer to it often as a constant reminder of what we expect from the chemistry of the team. Simple slogans such as "Team First, Self Second" and "There is no I in team" have worked very well to keep our player focus constantly on what is best for the team and denying oneself for the betterment of the team. It does not seem like a big thing but we make it big in our program and it serves as a good starting point in shaping the culture of our program.

After the coaching staff selects the team slogan we then have a meeting with our senior team members to express to them our desire for the culture of the team and their role in leading the team to create the positive culture we envision for the season. This meeting begins, of course, with a meal (I love to eat!) after which we sit down with the seniors and discuss our vision for the team. At this meeting, we share with them what we see as each player's strengths they can bring to the team and how the group needs to lead the team as a whole. I believe it creates a bond amongst the players and coaches to share these things in front of their senior peers and coaches. We then have four or five other special team meals throughout the season, usually before an important game or week, to build upon our positive culture. At each meal we conclude by having some type of positive team building activity.

Once we get into the daily practice routine, we again build into our slogan for the year and our culture with a "Word for the Day" before each practice begins. I collect articles from the newspaper that are good examples of people doing or saying things that have made a positive impact on their team or other people in general. These articles are not limited to sports stories. They can be any person saying or doing something that serves as a good example of how we want them to act or be like. Some key word from that story then serves as the "Word for the Day" as a reminder throughout that practice of the positive value we discussed about that person.

On a weekly basis we have come up with a way to recognize a team member who has been demonstrating the values we want in how our players are to practice and treat their teammates. At the end of each week of practice, team members nominate one of their teammates for what we call the "Practice Player of the Week" and write down why they nominated that player as it relates to our team culture. We tally the results up and announce the winner at the start of the next week's practice. Then we read it to the team and award a special practice jersey for that player to wear during that week of practice. There is real power in this recognition in that it comes from their peers and that is special to them. We also print up a certificate to display in the locker room for each player who receives this special team award. We have found that players really strive to win this award and by striving to do so they are living out in practice the positive cultural traits we want to build in our team.

That last thing I would like to share is our Unity Council system. We feel this kind of ties everything together and serves as a backup plan to keep negative cultural traits from disrupting our positive team culture. Once a week one of our volunteer coaches (or assistant coach) meets with one representative from each class as voted on by the team after the first week of practice. They then meet once a week and express any concerns that have arisen within the team that could potentially interfere with a positive team culture. Any issues are then passed on to me (no names given) and I give my feedback then to the team. I may agree with the issue and make changes or disagree but express to the team why we are not changing the situation. We have found that communicating with the team one way or another often times resolves any of these issues. It is not addressing an issue that eats away at your team's positive culture.



Photo credit - Lincoln Journal Star, Francis Gardler

My hope is that the things I have shared with you in this article can in some way help you to build a more positive team culture with your team this upcoming season. We feel these things have been a key to our program's building a positive culture each season. And, without a positive team culture, I believe it is nearly impossible for a team to reach its full potential.

THE CULTURE OF ISLANDER WRESTLING

by Mike Schadwinkel, Head Wrestling Coach, Grand Island

When I was approached about writing this article, I thought to myself...How do I show wrestling technique in a written article without pictures or video? Then I got to thinking more in depth and thought I would discuss some of the most important skills we teach in our program. Funny thing is, they don't have anything to do with being on the mat. Don't get me wrong, in our program we drill and practice our techniques religiously but we also take our culture, our mindset, and our overall approach to wrestling very seriously. I believe that there are many reasons we have been so successful and it has little to do with the actual technique we teach. We have developed a strong culture, a strong mental approach, and a strategic plan of attack to reach our goals.

This all started several years ago when our coaching staff made necessary changes to develop our program into one that could compete for state championships. The first change we had to make was our culture. It wasn't that our program was in bad shape or needed a complete overhaul we just needed our kids to recognize that we could achieve more. It was that the standard of what was acceptable in the daily life of a wrestler in our program needed to be elevated. We had to push harder and we had to develop a team culture out of a bunch of talented individuals.

The new standards morphed into a new culture centered around Eleven Core Values: Commitment, Attitude, Teamwork, Character, Sacrifice, Trust, Confidence, Courage, Toughness, Accountability, and Champion. I felt like the first thing a coach has to do is define what he or she believes in. I thought after outlining what I believed was important that I had to have a commitment from our staff, kids, and parents. If we all pledged to make the commitment to the program and to do our best we were on our way to changing the culture.

We are ultimately in control of our attitude. People are generally in charge of certain things in their lives, we must control those things and we can't spend time worrying about the things we aren't in control of. We try to spend daily conversations with kids talking about the importance of letting go of those burdens that they have no control of and to worry about the things they can do better. Teamwork is another necessary component and part of our culture, which is developmentally centered on the idea that the program is more important than each individual's needs. To develop a strong culture, any organization has to have a common set of values, ours are: honesty, fortitude, and integrity. I believe that if we all commit to these values we can have the character we desire, which ultimately builds our culture upon a common set of ideals.

We, as wrestling coaches, all know our sport is one of if not the toughest and our sport is very unique in many ways; but there are some similarities to other sports, and general organizations, that we must not ignore. Obviously, to be great at anything a person has to make sacrifices. We talk regularly about what sacrifices are necessary to be a part of our culture. Sacrifices such as the discipline to set priorities is a must to be in our program. One must be able to deny oneself certain types of food, social engagements, late nights on the computer or phone in order to maintain a healthy lifestyle, get academics taken care of, and keep oneself away from trouble. As anyone who has followed our program can attest to, we have certainly made our mistakes, but we strive to live up to our program's overall culture.

The other core values are more tangents to our culture, but have a direct connection to our performance in competition and in our daily lives. One of the most important core values is trust. I believe if our wrestlers and coaching staff haven't built strong relationships everything else will be in vain. Our wrestlers need to know that our staff has their best interests at heart and be able to rely on one another and in qualities such as fairness, truth, and honor when dealing with each other. In terms of building a mentally tough wrestler our kids must trust each other and the coaches but there is much more than trust that goes into this portion of our program. I have found that true self-confidence is a virtue that many kids these days lack. I define true self-confidence as having the poise and self-assurance in times of extreme stress. It's when a kid can come out of it in a successful manner and with an outward showing of composure. Being under great physical, mental, and emotional stress that comes with being in a challenging big match in front of a crowd of one's peers, family, and friends can be very difficult to remain poised. That is what we hope to develop for all of our kids.

Confidence is being able to understand and accept ones ability to accomplish what one sets out to do. Honesty is a big factor in this. This statement really leads me into the question we all have asked at one time or another, how do you build confidence? Confidence I believe has a lot to do with building the trust we work very diligently on. We spend a lot of time talking with our wrestlers individually building trust with them through honest conversations and dealings. Our staff also works very hard to let the wrestlers understand we care about them as people first, but also that we have high expectations for them. We talk about goals, vision for the wrestler, and hopes and dreams. We believe in being honest and with that honesty builds confidence.

One of the most powerful of our core values, and also one of our greatest focuses in competition, is courage. Our staff believes that fear is one of the strongest detractors from a successful performance. We have seen it time and time again in sport when the over-talented, over-skilled, over-touted, over-etc. athlete or team goes out to a match and falls flat. Every wrestler feels fear, whether it's from fear of failure or fear of pain or fear of consequences of a sub-par performance. The objective is not to run or hide from fear it's about recognizing it and being able to deal with it. We do a lot of mental strategies, as I call them, with our wrestlers. We talk about how to recognize the fear when it creeps in. We have all felt the feelings of inadequacies or the nervousness that comes with competition. We talk about the physiological aspects of fear or anxiety, such as butterflies in the stomach, sweating, and the urge to use the restroom, cold clammy hands, elevated heart and breathing rates. How we deal with this fear is to handle the physiological aspects first: control breathing and heart rate. I tell our kids that it's your heart if you want it to slow it down, make it. You have to consciously have to do this to make it work. At the same time we talk about relaxing and getting positive mental thoughts by using three mental strategies: mental imagery, self talk, and talk with someone you trust. Mental imagery is simply picturing positive results and focusing on them as if they are real. We also tell our kids to talk to themselves, tell themselves of the many positive skills or talents they have; brag to yourself! Finally, if our kids need help, more often times our rookies, we tell them when the fear creeps in, to come talk to a coach. Then we can give them the positive talk they need to reassure them into a successful performance.

Once we have developed the desired self-confidence in our wrestlers and each can rely on the skills we have taught them. They can wrestle with courage we can begin to focus on the



Courtesy Photo

toughness that almost naturally is a result of the previous skills being developed. Toughness is not the ability to fight, but more the willingness to fight. What I mean is that we train our kids hard to be in great physical condition. I am proud of how our kids battle to the end of matches and continue to score when it is late in periods. This isn't from the development of a technique or skill, but more the mental and physical agony we put our team through. It develops toughness and a willingness to fight on or press through a match when it is stressful. When a wrestler breaks down mentally due to stress you can see it in his eyes. We try to develop habits that exhibit toughness through repeated stress being put on them during practice and we force them to fight through it. It is sort of tough love but we do not allow them to quit then it starts to build a lot of confidence and it flat out makes kids tough.

The next core value, accountability, is one that sort of goes back to our culture, but it is deeper than that. It also relates to our mat presence as well as our presence around the community and school. We want our young men to perform at a high level. We also want them to know they are special and very important to more than just our program. This can be a delicate balancing act, as we all have seen the arrogant wrestler who is bully-like and can't get enough of himself. So while we want to build our wrestlers up, we want them to have humility and understand there are consequences for everything we do. We also want kids to understand they are accountable to lots of different people and their actions affect more than just themselves. They affect their family, team, fans, little kids who look up to them, the community, school, and generally everyone who they have a relationship with.

Our final core value is the all-encompassing term "champion". It is meant to be vague, but also to tie everything together. Many programs have used the slogan "champions for life" and we in the coaching profession should all have our own version of helping young people develop into great people in all phases of their lives. I guess we've shortened the cliché and made "champion" ours.

The final skills I want to discuss that piggy back onto our courage, trust, and confidence building techniques, are the mental preparation we do and our goal setting work. Mental preparation, as sports psychologists speak of, is reaching the "peak" while not over shooting it. We talk about being mentally relaxed, emotionally focused, and physically ready to compete. Mentally relaxed is recognizing and controlling one's fear while having a positive mental frame of mind. Being emotionally focused is having a clear plan, knowing what to expect, and keeping focused on controllable issues that may arise. Being physically ready is warmed up-body sweating from sustained activity and a raised core body temperature. All of this is aided by a sound goal setting performed well in advance to any practice or match.

We talk to our wrestlers about goals and dreams. I ask our kids what they want to achieve and start by dreaming about the many possibilities. Its kind of tricky, but it is a delicate art of putting pictures of grandeur in their minds, then helping to convince them they can achieve it. Then we begin the process of devising a plan of how to get there. If a kid comes to me saying he wants to be a state champion, I first of all honestly tell him what is available to get there. I sell them on how rare it is and how hard it is to win a state championship. Then we start laying out a yearly plan with seasonally, monthly, and weekly benchmarks or short-term goals to go after. I absolutely love this process and I believe it is one of strongest reasons I coach. It is truly about dreaming, then formulating their dream into a goal by setting up an ending point. Then we work our way back by setting benchmarks or shorter-term goals that the wrestler should try to hit along the way. Finally, we put together a plan of what its going to take to start reaching these short term goals on the journey to reaching the long-term, pie-in-the-sky goal. This system brings a quote to mind our football coach uses, "Success is simple, but not easy." This is a great example of this quote. The hard part staying the course, this is when the coach, family and support systems for the athlete must kick in. I tell our kids to tell many people that they care about their goals, that way they help them stay the course.

Ultimately we want the young men in our program to feel good about what they are doing, understand the team and program come first, but individual development is at the forefront of our planning. Through trust building activities, sticking to our core values, skill development, goal setting, and physical, emotional, and mental preparation our program has achieved much. More importantly we have helped develop young men capable of dealing with what the world can throw at them, all while enjoying some success on the mats.

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The advertisement is a collage of sports photography services. It features several images: a soccer player in a blue jersey, a volleyball player in a white jersey, a basketball player in a blue jersey, a football player in a blue jersey, and a group of cheerleaders. Text overlays include 'ACTION PHOTOS', 'PHOTO BUTTONS', 'PROVIDING THE VERY BEST SPORTS PHOTOGRAPHY SERVICES FOR SCHOOLS, CLUBS, AND ORGANIZATIONS', 'TEAM & INDIVIDUAL PHOTOS', and 'PHOTO COLLAGES'. At the bottom, contact information is provided: 'EMAIL: CALLAMSPORTS@GMAIL.COM', 'PHONE: 402-419-6218', and 'WEBSITE: CALLAMSPORTSPHOTO.COM'.

LEADERSHIP & TEAM BUILDING

by Rich Hood – Head Boys Swimming Coach – Omaha Burke



Let me begin by saying that very little that I have to offer is original. Every idea or program that I have used in the past I have been blessed to beg, borrow or steal from one of my colleagues in the swimming world. What I have to offer today is not swimming specific but evolved from an idea that was given to me by the volleyball coach at the University of Nebraska at Omaha, Rose Shires. Coach Shires and I talked about coaching and team building and what she had done with her captains in the past. From our conversations I decided to not only include the captains of our team but all of the juniors and seniors as well. Many coaches do something of a similar fashion. Some are more extensive and require a number of meetings to complete. What I would like to propose to you is something that can be completed in a few hours instead.

Before the season even begins I like to take a look at the calendar and find a Saturday early in the season to schedule a breakfast “meeting” for the junior and senior swimmers. I found early on that I had to limit the number of swimmers attending the “meeting” if we were to accomplish everything I felt we needed to in a reasonable amount of time. The leadership of the team is most likely to come from the juniors and seniors but should not be limited to them. I believe that I have found a way to include ALL of the members of the team in the end. The final product is a poster that is signed by every member of the team. It is their commitment to abide by the decisions of the team “leadership”. The poster is then laminated and posted as a constant reminder of this commitment.

I let the swimmers know ahead of time that I will be expecting them to work following the breakfast. I bring a number of Post-it notes and writing utensils to the meeting along with the season schedule and a copy of the previous year’s poster. The meeting is divided into three parts. I first of all ask each person in attendance to write one word on a post-it that defines the team or their teammates. These are then posted for everyone to read. I remove duplicates and combine words that have a similar meaning. Those in attendance then decide if what remains is applicable. The result is a lively discussion which results in the elimination of some terms and the addition of others. Terms that have been used in the past include: family, determination and supportive.

I next ask that they list a goal or goals for the season. They can list as many goals as they like. Each of these is then posted with a discussion of each to follow. Some of the possible goals are eliminated and others are added or revised. Ideally we look to have 5 to 10 goals for the season. Goals can be performance, academic, behavioral or social in nature.

We finally look to complete the following statement, “We commit to.....to accomplish our goals.” Basically these are the rules that the team commits to follow. Teams in the past have completed the statement in the following ways, “We commit to be well rounded young men to accomplish our goals.” “We commit to be supportive or our teammates to accomplish our goals.”, and “We commit to lead our team in our own way to push us past our limits to accomplish our goals.”

I then compile all of this information into a single poster that is signed by every member of the team. At the top I list the team goals, the middle section includes the commitments the team makes to achieve these goals and finally the terms that were initially used to describe the team and the team members. The poster is then laminated and post for all to see. It is imperative that this not be posted and forgotten. It is a “living” document that may require revision throughout the season. If it is to effective, you must refer to it often. It should serve as a constant reminder of what the “TEAM” is all about.

BURKE SWIMMING

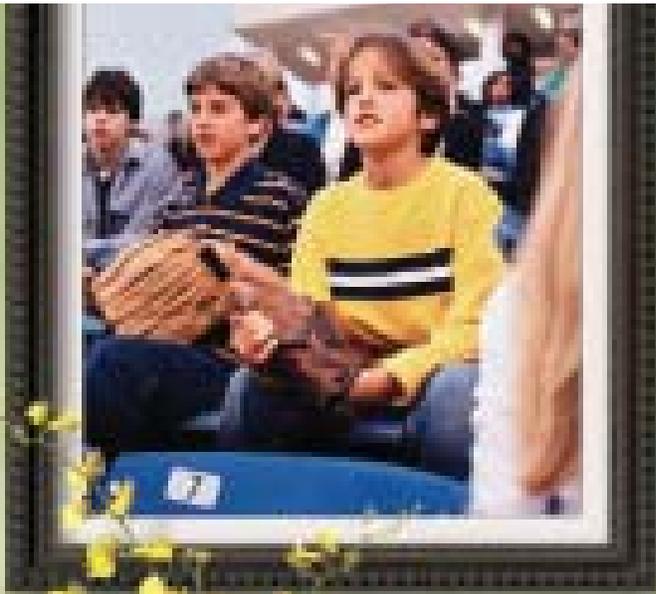
Goals:

- *Top Ten Metro Conference*
- *Every Varsity Swimmer Qualifies for Metro*
- *A winning goal meet record*
- *Team GPA 3.0*
- *Give our BEST effort in and out of the pool*
- *Be supportive and respectful of each other*
- *Be a family*
- *Represent Burke with a positive attitude*
- *Build confidence and pride in the Burke name*

“We commit to.....to accomplish our goals.”

- have respect for our environment, the personal belongings of others, ourselves and others throughout the season
- stay positive and focused in the pool and in school
- expect and encourage the best effort from ourselves and our teammates in school and in the pool
- establish goals to prepare for the season long journey and our final destination
- create both short and long term goals to help us reach our final destination

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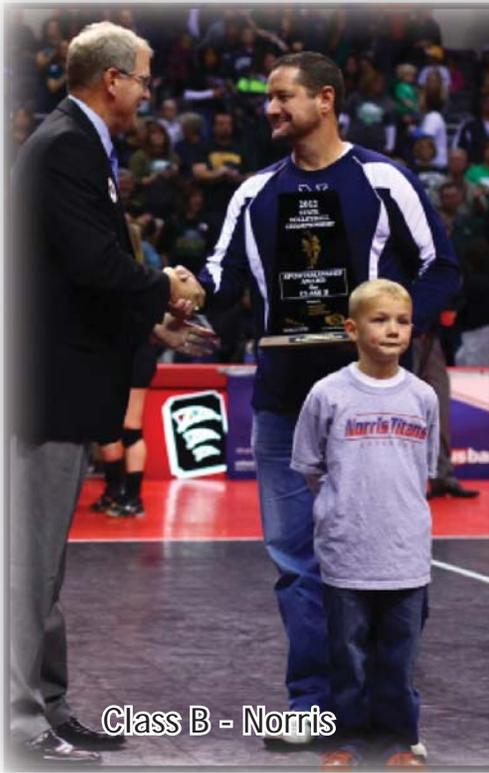


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Class C1 - Columbus Scotus



Class D1 - Alma



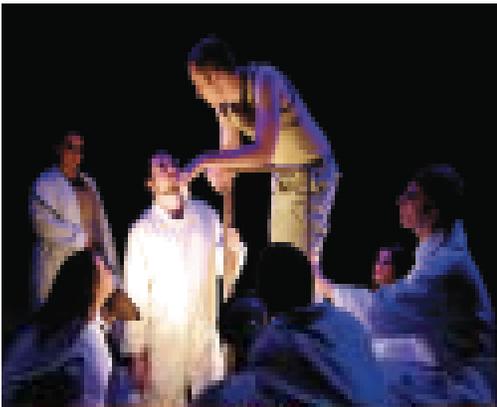
Class C2 - Lutheran High NE



Class D2 - Giltner



Class A - Lincoln Pius X



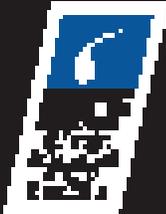
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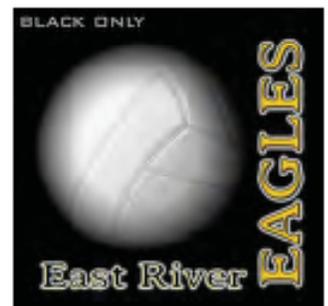
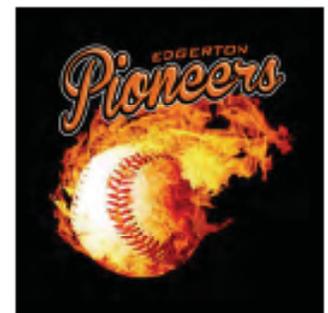
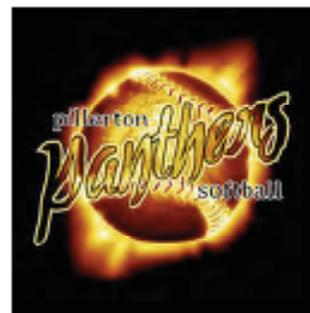


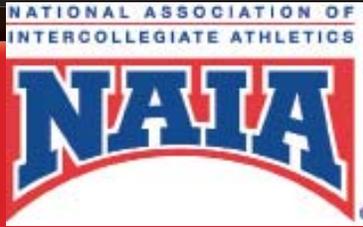
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Scholarships and Opportunities to Play College Sports in the NAIA

Opportunity to play. It's the number one factor student-athletes say influences their choice in a college. It's also exactly what NAIA schools offer more than 60,000 students each and every year.

In the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA), students get to keep playing at the collegiate level, compete for a chance at a national championship title, get a top-notch education in a small college environment and get scholarship money to do it all. In fact, NAIA student-athletes receive nearly a half a billion dollars in scholarships and aid annually.

"Playing at an NAIA school provides so many different opportunities for each athlete," said Julie Els, a sophomore volleyball player at Doane College in Nebraska. "The small schools allow people to come together as a community and support one another. We have a large number of fans at our games, along with all of the other sports. Professors and administrators attend games to cheer on the students," she said.

"And the student-athletes have a life outside of their sport that allows them to participate in many organizations on campus. The smaller number allows teams to become closer to one another and to create a family-like atmosphere. Teammates have the utmost respect for their coaches, each other, and their community," Els said.

So as someone who interacts with high school student-athletes on a daily basis, what do you need to know to help make sure your students get that opportunity to keep playing at the next level?

According to Scholarshipstats.com, fewer than 1 in 10 high school athletes will make it to the collegiate level in their sport. The chances of a high school athlete playing NCAA Division I are even lower. With competition to make it to the next level that tough, you need to make sure you are equipped with the right knowledge to help your students.

The National Collegiate Scouting Association reports that 80 percent of college sports scholarship opportunities are outside NCAA Division I. Help your students avoid tunnel vision when thinking about playing college sports. The NAIA has schools all over the country, including nine schools right in Nebraska.

Scott Mattera is the head volleyball coach at Concordia University in Nebraska.

"[NAIA student-athletes] get to be a well-rounded, happy college student with some balance in their lives. I've seen more athletes than I can count finish 4 years of college hating their sport and feeling like they missed out on the greater college experience," Mattera said. "We preach balance. We are going to work hard and play at a championship level but we are also going to recognize that athletics is a part of who you are, it should not be your entire life like it is at so many bigger schools."

It may seem like every time you get a handle on the rules and process for getting students to the next level, the rules change. In the NAIA, the rules and processes are simple and have remained consistent for years.

NAIA rules allow students to make connections with coaches and build relationships so that when students are making the decision about where to go to school, they know they are making the right decision. NAIA coaches can make contact with high school recruits at any time without worrying about down periods or exceeding a limit on the number of communications with a student. In the NAIA, the student-athlete comes first.

"I chose to coach NAIA...because of the freedom and feel. I can talk to kids and families rather than try to find ways around antiquated recruiting rules," Mattera said. "I can get to know families to understand if they are a good fit overall, not just athletically. We understand that this is about so much more than wins and losses and dollar signs."



Encourage your student-athletes to reach out to coaches and get their name out there. One way students can do this in the NAIA is through NAIA Connections. Every student who wants to play in the NAIA has to register with the NAIA Eligibility Center at PlayNAIA.org, and all registered students have the option to participate in NAIA Connections.

In NAIA Connections, students can build a personal profile with information about their sport achievements and awards, academic information, interests and community involvement. Students also can link to personal websites or social media profiles and highlight videos. Then, students are connected to NAIA schools that match their interests in a college (e.g., location, size of the student body, academic programs offered, sports, offered, etc.).

Students have the opportunity to send their profile directly to the head coach and admissions office at up to five NAIA schools. NAIA schools can also search for profiles in NAIA Connections. It's a way for students to get themselves in front of coaches and start the conversation.

The NAIA Eligibility Center also offers high school students a unique opportunity to get a final eligibility determination prior to high school graduation. Because there are no particular course requirements for entering freshmen, high school seniors with higher GPAs can meet the necessary eligibility requirements before graduation.

NAIA rules require that entering freshmen meet two out of three criteria after high school graduation: 1) minimum 2.0 GPA on a 4.0 scale; 2) minimum test scores of 18 on the ACT or 860 on the SAT; and 3) class rank in the top 50% of graduating class. Students with the minimum required test scores and at least a 3.0 GPA after junior year or 2.5 GPA midway through senior year meet early decision requirements in the NAIA.

Receiving a decision prior to high school graduation helps give students and their families the peace of mind of knowing the student is eligible in the NAIA well in advance of arriving on campus and can even help in the recruiting process since coaches want to recruit students they know will be eligible to play.

To receive this decision early, students need to complete their registration with the NAIA Eligibility Center at PlayNAIA.org, request test scores be sent directly from the testing service and have their high school counselor send an official transcript.

You can track which of your students have done each of the above items if your school has created an account at PlayNAIA.org. High schools can view a list of their students registered with the NAIA Eligibility Center from their accounts. Schools can also view a student's status with the Eligibility Center from their account to see what steps a student has completed and what records the student is still missing.

Mattera offers a final piece of advice to students about playing sports in college. "As much as we'd like to believe it and dream it, basically none of you are going pro. So go somewhere that you will be happy. Go somewhere that you will be treated as a complete person, not just an arm swing and a vertical reach. Go somewhere that will teach and nurture character as much as skill so that you can go on and lead a life that makes a difference!"

Competition for a spot on a college team may be tough, but with your help and guidance, students will have the tools they need to put themselves in the best possible position to receive not only a spot on a college team, but a scholarship and great education as well.

For more resources and to learn more about the NAIA, visit PlayNAIA.org and NAIA.org.



Photos Courtesy of NAIA

Sportsmanship

Fall 2012

Leadership

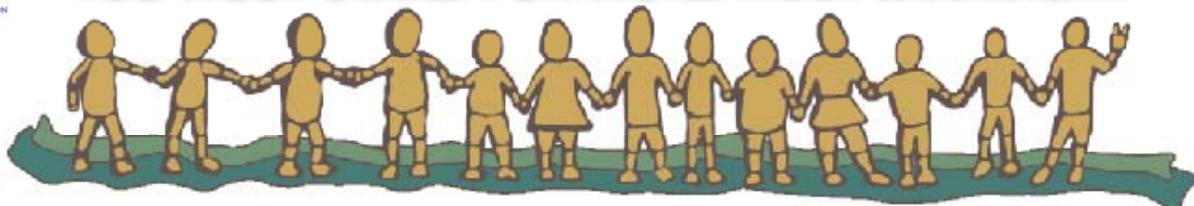


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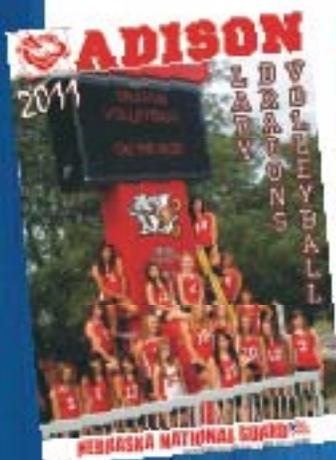


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CLASS PRESENTATIONS

- Career Exploration
- Health & Nutrition
- Conflict Resolution
- Diversity
- Drugs & Alcohol
- Communication
- Paying for College
- Heritage Outreach
- Homeland Security
- Budgeting
- Leadership
- Shaping History
- Problem Solving
- Study Techniques



Contact SGM John Valasek at (308)440-4176 or john.valasek@us.army.mil

NCA GIRLS' GOLF ALL-STATE

CLASS A

Abbie Otto, Grand Island
Maddie Koenig, Lincoln Pius X
McKenzie Essley, Norfolk
Miranda Keeler, Bellevue East
Samantha Beal, Columbus
Sarah Pravecsek, Omaha Marian
Sydney Roenfeldt, Norfolk
Tori Peers, Grand Island

CLASS B

Ann Pearson, Elkhorn South
Ashlyn Hoegh, Norris
Hannah Kunzman, Beatrice
Jacy Hawk, Gretna
Kaitlyn Krzyzanowski, Gering
Kaylee Samway, McCook
Lindsey Thompson, Elkhorn South
Megan Vetrovsky, McCook
Nicolle Barmettler, Elkhorn South

CLASS C

Amy Ahlers, Boone Central
Erin Boon, Grand Island CC
Maaika Mestl, Ogallala
McKenna Kime, Grand Island CC



NCA BOYS' TENNIS ALL-STATE

CLASS A

First Team

David Liu, Millard North (Captain)
Nikolaos Piperis, Creighton Prep
Michael Koch, Creighton Prep
Trent Gardner, Omaha Westside
Matthew Strasburger, Lincoln Southeast
Robert Curry, Lincoln Southeast

Second Team

Daniel Clare, Lincoln Southeast
Matthew Eglseder, Creighton Prep
Andrew Plamann, Lincoln Southeast
Max Cuppens, Lincoln Southeast
Joe Huston, Grand Island
Jacob Wenger, Lincoln East

CLASS B

First Team

Nikita Fomichev, Elkhorn South, (Captain)
Tyler Grove, Lincoln Christian
Jordan Nash, Adams Central
Jared Karlson, Holdrege
Brock Dillon, Elkhorn
Zahler Zandt, Elkhorn South

Second Team

Walker Hohensee, Holdrege
Alec Lubben, Elkhorn South
Brian Camody, Omaha Skutt Catholic
Jared Miller, York
Andrew Johnson, Omaha Skutt Catholic
Alex Carlson, Lincoln Christian

***NCA GIRLS' CROSS COUNTRY
SUPER-STATE***

CLASS A

Jeralyn Poe, Lincoln North Star
Sidney Hirsch, Millard West
Ellie Beiermann, Lincoln Pius X
Alexis Altmaier, Lincoln East
Megan Sughroue, Kearney
Alana Sesow, Lincoln East

CLASS B

Erin Lee, York
Molly Sughroue, McCook
Alli Ehler, Sidney
Vanessa Ambriz, Lexington
Marika Vanbrocklin, Hastings

CLASS C

Gabriella Gracia, Holdrege
Morgan Benesch, Columbus Scotus
Jacquelyn Dam, Arlington
Hannah Schmitz, Boone Central/Newman Grove

CLASS D

Marissa Dewispelare, Aquinas Catholic



***NCA GIRLS' CROSS COUNTRY
ALL-STATE***

CLASS A

Morgan Applegarth, Lincoln East

CLASS B

Lauren Mitteis, Plattsmouth
Megan Billington, Northwest

CLASS C

Sheridan Wellnitz, Gordon-Rushville
Aryn Smidt, West Point-Beemer
Catherine Davison, Auburn

CLASS D

Danielle Riesberg, Crofton
Mackenzie Gray, Winside
Logan Clark, Ainsworth
Katherine Lansman, Ord
Braska Patterson, Stanton
Kendy Kube, Crofton



***NCA BOYS' CROSS COUNTRY
SUPER-STATE***

CLASS A

Joseph Harter, Millard West
Daniel Aldaba, Fremont
Wyatt McGuire, North Platte
Mohamed Hamdan, Lincoln North Star
Trevor Wiegert, Fremont
Austin Post, Millard West
Jack Polerecky, Creighton Prep
Timothy Smith, Kearney
Jacob Holtmeier, Lincoln Pius X
Mason Brown, Fremont
Lucas Keifer, Lincoln Southwest
Colin Appel, Grand Island

CLASS B

Matthew Barraza, Scottsbluff
Thomas Kalil, Mount Michael Benedictine
Anthony Parra, Scottsbluff

CLASS C

No Qualifiers

CLASS D

Cody Franklin, Bridgeport



***NCA BOYS' CROSS COUNTRY
ALL-STATE***

CLASS A

All Selections Super-State

CLASS B

Nicholas Larsen, Omaha Gross Catholic
Trevor Rosno, Hastings
John Cronin, Mount Michael Benedictine
Ash Gandul, Elkhorn South

CLASS C

James McKeag, Ogallala
Jalen Grant, Valentine
Dereck Rosas, Ogallala
Christopher Shelton, Minden
Alexander Tietz, Fort Calhoun
Coleman Orchard, Syracuse
James Allington, Raymond Central

CLASS D

Jahn Landrigan, Nebraska Christian
Hans Epp, Nebraska Christian
Warren Dexter, Nebraska Christian
Kellan Willet, Malcolm
Andrew Fields, Ord
Garrett Perlinger, Paxton

Photos Courtesy of Callam Sports Photography

FALL CHAMPION COACHES

BOYS' CROSS COUNTRY

Sean McMahon	Fremont	A
John Gathje	Mount Michael	B
Michele Kontor	Milford	C
Janet Landrigan	Nebraska Christian	D

GIRLS' CROSS COUNTRY

Kirk Skiles	Lincoln East	A
Kurt Holliday	Seward	B
Merlin Lahm	Columbus Scotus	C
Jayne Arens	Crofton	D

BOYS' TENNIS

Mike Higgins	Creighton Prep	A
Steve Bischof	Elkhorn South	B

GIRLS' GOLF

Jerry Cover	Norfolk	A
Mimi Ramsbottom	Elkhorn South	B
Dee Hanssen	Grand Island CC	C

SOFTBALL

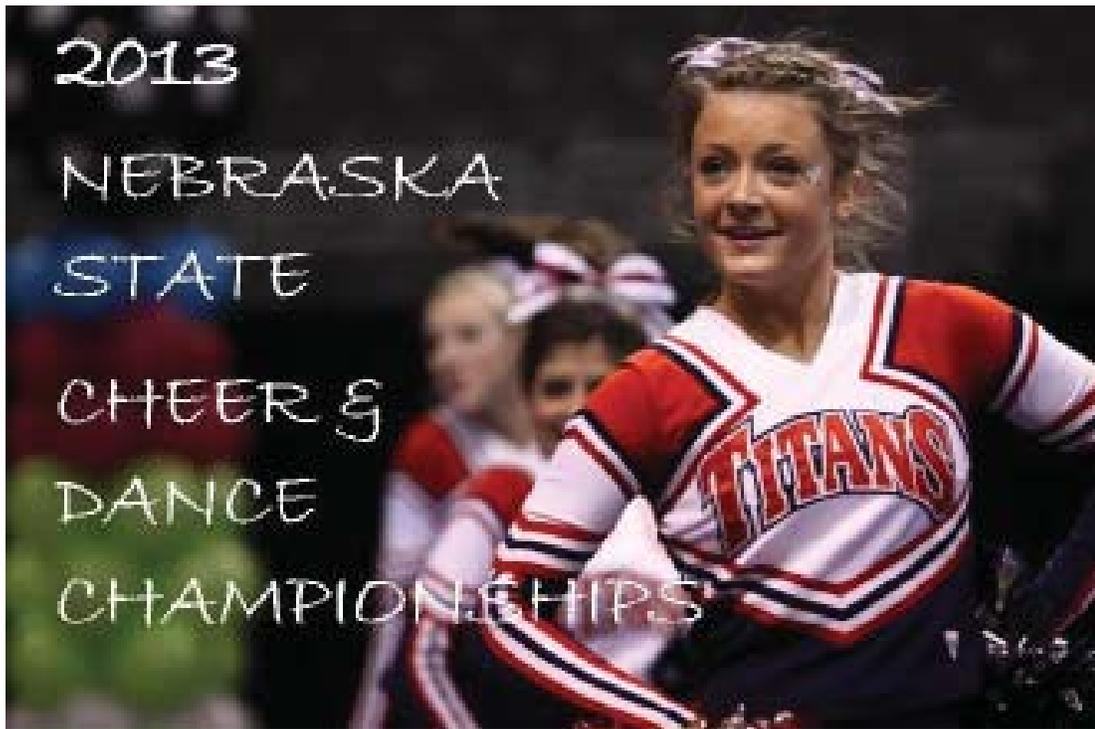
Steve Kerkman	Millard South	A
Don Rempe	Lincoln Pius X	B
Janelle Lorsch	Arlington	C

VOLLEYBALL

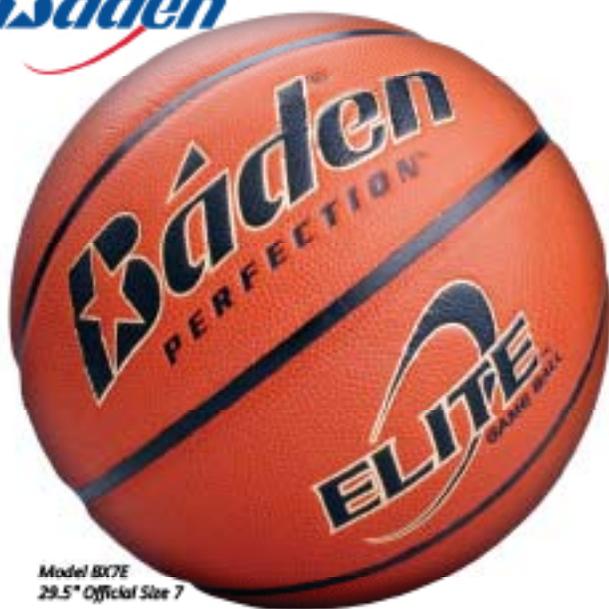
Gwen Egbert	Papillion-LaVista South	A
Diane Rouzee	Northwest	B
Kris Conner	Kearney Catholic	C1
Adam Kuntz	Hartington CC	C2
Darcy White	Exeter-Milligan	D1
Gary Bender	Humphrey	D2

FOOTBALL

Fred Petito	Millard North	A
Tim Johnk	Omaha Gross	B
Jeff Bellar	Norfolk Cathoic	C1
Ron Mimick	Aquinas Catholic	C2
Carlie Wells	Elgin/Elgin Pope John	D1
Jeff Ashby	Giltner	D2



The 2013 Nebraska State Cheer & Dance Championships are February 15th & 16th at the Heartland Event Center in Grand Island. Registration deadline is January 14. Please visit the www.ncacoach.org for further information.

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WINTER TRACK CLINIC SET IN CONJUNCTION WITH FRANK SEVIGNE HUSKER INVITATIONAL

The Nebraska Coaches Association (NCA) will host the Winter Track Clinic on the morning of Saturday, February 1 in conjunction with the University of Nebraska's Frank Sevigne Husker Invitational. The clinic will be held at the Nebraska School Activities Association (NSAA)/ NCA Building – across the street from Haymarket Park.

The NCA Track Clinic will feature both collegiate coaches and Nebraska high school coaches. A complete listing of speakers will be announced by early January. Clinic registration will be available online at the NCA web site of www.ncacoach.org once the clinic speakers have been confirmed. Clinic registration will include general admission to the Frank Sevigne Husker Invitational.

Country Inn & Suites is the official host hotel of the NCA in Lincoln. To book a hotel room, click on “NCA Members – Reserve a Room in Lincoln” located on the top right hand corner of the NCA home page. You must present your 2012-13 NCA membership card at the time of check-in to receive the \$85 standard room rate. Suites are also available for various rates.

STATE WRESTLING HOSPITALITY

The Nebraska Coaches Association and Nebraska Scholastic Wrestling Coaches Association will co-sponsor the state wrestling championships hospitality room. The hospitality room will be available to wrestling coaches and school administrators. The room will be located in the same area as previous years, on the west balcony overlooking the main entrance at the CenturyLink Center Omaha.

The hospitality room will be open throughout the course of the championship and is available for seating, storing medical kits, coats, etc. As a reminder, the Nebraska Coaches Association and CenturyLink Center Omaha take no responsibility for items stored in the area. Coaches should take common precautions to make sure that items are secure. It is suggested that items such as video cameras not be left unattended.

STATE SWIMMING HOSPITALITY

The Nebraska Coaches Association will host a pizza feed for coaches on the Friday of the State Swimming and Diving Championships. Valentino's, a longtime supporter of the NCA, helps in providing a portion of the pizza for swimming and diving coaches attending the Championships at the Devaney Sports Center.

STATE BASKETBALL HOSPITALITY

As in previous years, the Nebraska Coaches Association will be hosting a hospitality room at the State Girls and Boys Basketball Championships. The room is available for coaches and school administrators and will be available throughout the length of the tournament. There will be two rooms sponsored by the NCA and the Lincoln CVB at both Pershing (Rm. 121) and at the Devaney Sports Center. **(please note: the location will change due to renovations at the Devaney Center – location TBA)** The other state championship sites are not official NCA Hospitality rooms and are generally for workers only. The hospitality rooms at the Davaney Sports Center and Pershing will feature coffee, donuts, cookies and possibly soft drinks. We stress to you that these rooms are available for coaches and school administrators only, not that of other family members. Children, friends, family, etc. are welcome to purchase items from the concession stands. We also ask that you NOT BRING your children into the rooms. We apologize for this policy, but children have created problems for us in the past. Thanks for your understanding and cooperation.

STATE BASKETBALL SEATING

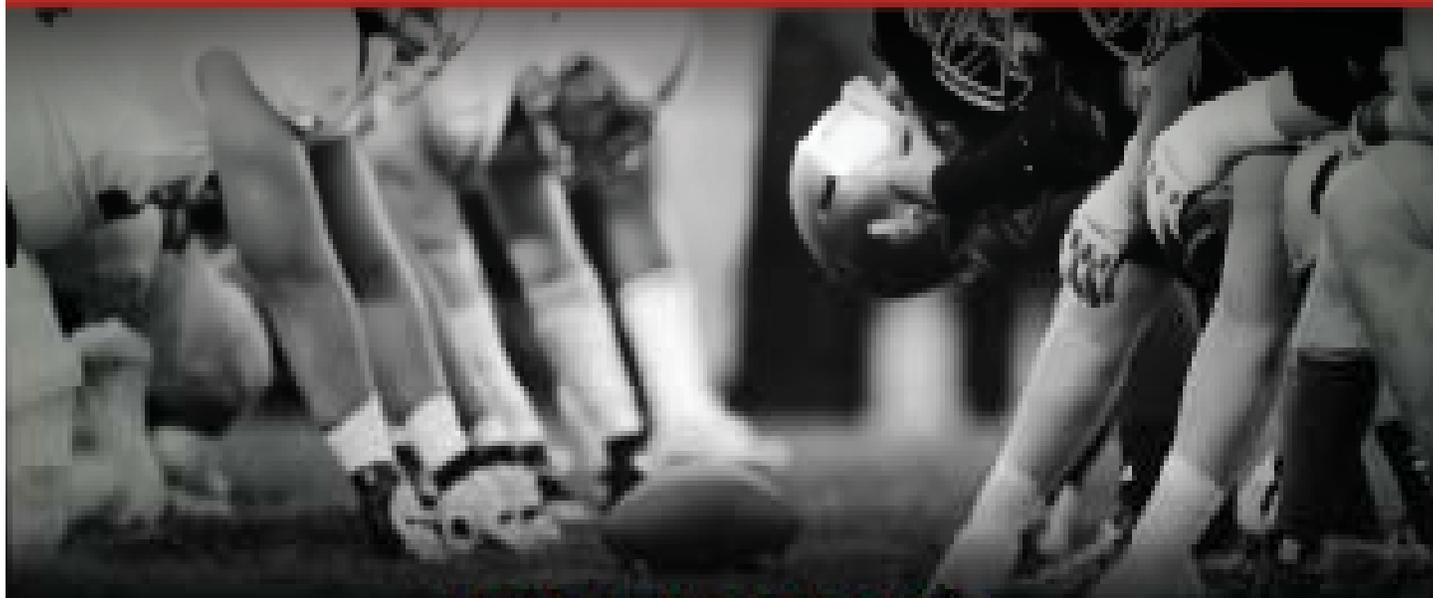
Members of the Nebraska Coaches Association and the NSIAAA are reminded that you have a reserved seating area at the Devaney Sports Center during all championship games throughout the tournament. The area is located in the northeast corner, above the scoreboard. You MUST have your NCA or NSIAAA membership card for admittance to the seating area. **YOUR CARD IS GOOD FOR SEATING ONLY, NOT ADMISSION TO THE ARENA.** Coaches/AD's are welcome to bring your significant other along with you, but children, friends or other family members will not be permitted use of the reserved section. The NCA has nearly 4,000 members in our association and just a limited number of seats. Seating for each game will be on first come, first served basis.



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STATE COLLEGES RECOGNIZE NCA/NSIAAA MEMBERSHIP CARDS FOR ADMISSION

You are reminded that the following schools will recognize the membership cards of the Nebraska Coaches Association and the Nebraska State Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association for admission to college-sponsored sporting events. This program was originally proposed in the fall of '92, and ALL college Athletic Directors responded quickly and to the affirmative. Our proposal gave them a number of options, to include a pass gate, an advance call-in, etc., but each institution was slightly different in their acceptance. Below is a list of how each school would like to handle the program.

Bellevue University Any gate Membership card required Admit member + one Good for all sports	Tickets subject to availability Excludes some games	North Platte Community College Advance call-in 800-658-4308.3701 Ask for Jackie Briley Use main door Membership card required Admit member +1 Good for all sports	when picking up ticket Good for all sports-reg. season Ticket is free
Central Community College- Columbus Campus Any gate Membership card required Admit member + one Good for all sports	Doane College Pass gate Membership card required Admit member + 1 Good for all sports, tickets are free Advanced call-in is appreciated 402- 826-8684	Peru State College Pass gate - main gate Advance call-in is appreciated (402) 872-2350 Call 2 days prior to game Membership card and photo ID Admit member + 1 Good for all sports Tickets are free	University of Nebraska-Omaha Pass gate Membership card and photo ID Admit member + 1 Tickets are free Excludes Hockey
Chadron State College Any gate Membership card required Admit member + one Good for all sports	Hastings College Membership card and photo ID Good for all sports Admit member	Wayne State College Pass gate Membership card and photo ID Admit member only Ticket is free Good for all sports (excluding NSIC/NCAA Championships)	Western Nebraska Community College Membership Card Required Advance call in - 308-635-6151
College of St. Mary Advance call-in (402) 399-2358 Admit member + 1 Good for all sports Tickets are free	Kaplan University Any gate Member + 1 guest	York College Pass gate - front door Membership card and photo ID Admit member + 1 Good for all sports Ticket is free	
Concordia University Use any gate Membership card and photo ID Admit member + 1 Good for all sports Tickets are free	Midland University Any gate Membership card and photo ID Admit member + one Good for all sports	Southeast Community College-Beatrice Main gate Advance call-in appreciated 1-800- 233-5027 ext 1232 membership card and picture ID Good for all sports Admit member + 1 Tickets are free Membership card required	
Creighton University Advance call-in (402) 280-5297 Please contact in advance Admit member + 1 no charge Membership Card Required Good for all sports – regular season	Nebraska Wesleyan University Any gate Membership card and photo ID Admit member + 1 Good for all sports, tickets are free	University of Nebraska-Kearney Will Call Gate-advance call or e-mail appreciated 308-865-1563 or smidtm@unk.edu Admit member +1 Must present membership card	
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