



## HOOP HISTORIANS SEEING SPORTS MOVING FORWARD

Hoop Historians across the country are still making contributions to various sporting events during the pandemic. Here are a some of their stories in this month's expanded two-page edition.

## GREAT HOOPS SEASON COMES TO A HALT



**Vern Vegso** was enjoying a great season while working with the womens' basketball program at Moorpark College.

The Raiders compiled a 27-1 record was ranked the #2 team in California and was on its way to the California Community College Athletic Association Elite Eight when the disappointing news of the tournament being cancelled took place. All sports at the college were halted and all classes went to on-line instruction. School personnel were required to work from home for the remainder of the semester. Graduation was cancelled and Vern's pet-project of the Scholar Student-Athletes Awards red-carpet program would not take place. As summer approached, the staff received a 68-page booklet of Guidelines for Fall 2020 for Re-opening and Protocol and Procedures. Vern could attend work three days a week and had to go through a screening procedure every day to secure a wristband which would allow him access to the campus. Fall sports were moved to the spring, and the basketball season has been shifted to the months of February through April. Despite the uncertainties and anxieties, Vern continues to follow the guidelines of practicing safe behaviors hoping that a sense of normalcy will return soon.

## HE'S NOT MISSING A BEAT

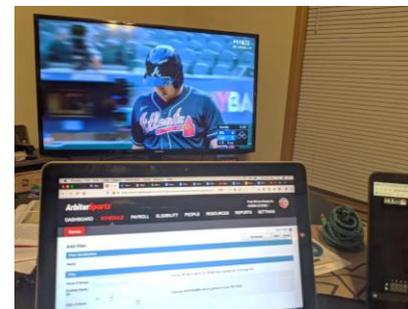
When it comes to sports during the pandemic, **Dave DeGrace** has not missed a beat. Dave managed to umpire 50 fastpitch softball games this summer in the Milwaukee area without much of a change. Although he had to, in a rare occurrence, work behind the pitcher instead of behind the catcher and occasionally wear a virus mask, it was business as usual on the diamond. In Dave's other gig, as scoreboard operator for the Milwaukee Brewers, he saw the scoreboard control room staff at Miller Park reduced to about 50% and the press box operated with only 25% of the people that were usually there. The visiting team radio and TV announcers did not travel to broadcast their games and the official scorers worked remotely from their homes instead of being at the ballpark. Spectators were not allowed to attend any regular season Major League Baseball games this year, but the league allowed a limited number of fans at the National League Championship Series and at the World Series. Dave took advantage of that by going to Game 1 of the NLCS at the new Globe Life Field in Arlington, Texas – the first game where spectators were allowed. Dave has now visited all 30 current MLB stadiums and 57 different ones during his travels.



**HE'S EVERYWHERE:** Dave DeGrace attended the first game of this year's NLCS in Arlington, Texas. He has now been to all 30 Major League ballparks

## GETTING PLENTY OF SCREEN TIME

**Fred Allman** will never forget his last year of teaching. In his 33<sup>rd</sup> year of being an elementary school physical education teacher, he went from the playing field to the computer screen for teaching 36 classes each week. His students ranged from age 5 to 11 but all of them had some mastery with their computer skills. Fred brainstormed and came up with a Remote Field Day program where his students practiced eight events during class time and then they performed all eight events at the Remote Field Day competition. The event included students entering their scores on a digital scorecard and the production of a short video that was sent to the participants families that night. This past summer was out of the ordinary for Fred as there were no summer basketball observations, officials training, or Major League baseball parks to visit. Allman's screen time remained high as he watched to the max on his MLB TV package in the shortened season. Planning for the possible upcoming basketball season has been challenging, as Fred is responsible for game assignments for 26 different schools in the suburban Chicagoland area. Each week is filled with schedule revisions and Zoom presentations covering safety protocol guidelines, rule changes and points of emphasis for officials.



**MULTI-TASKING:** Inside Fred Allman's war room, where he watches October baseball and assigns basketball games

## DAD AND SON ARE BOTH KEEPING ON THE RUN

The two **Dennis Mishkos** have been officiating more than their share of high school soccer and AAU basketball games in Pennsylvania during the pandemic. With so many officials taking time off because of the virus, the twosome has been working every day and night for the past few months. When not running on the hardwood or on the pitch, Dennis Sr. is also the local area assigner for soccer.



**ON THE GO:** *Dennis Mishko, Jr. and Dennis Mishko, Sr. have had a busy fall*

\*\*\*\*\*

## CAN'T WAIT FOR NEXT YEAR

**Ron Newton** has been a creature of habit. For the past 52 years he has been involved with some kind of basketball coaching on the court. Currently Newton is the assistant coach at Edmonds College in Lynnwood, Washington, but Ron will have to skip this season based on the advice of his doctor. This year's conference season will not begin until January, but Ron is still helping remotely by watching practices via Zoom and Facetime, as the players are working out in small groups in anticipation for the upcoming season. During this year Newton will be watching games over the internet and will monitor the academic progress of the players. Ron is looking forward to next year, where he can return coaching on the court, just where he left off.



## WELCOME BACK TO WORK



When COVID-19 hit near the end of Spring Training at Roger Dean Stadium in Jupiter, Florida,

**Don MacKay** thought it was going to be a short term thing and the minor league baseball season would start in a couple of weeks – but those plans were abruptly cancelled. Don took off some time to completely recover from his coronary bypass and then received more good news. The Miami Marlins decided to use Roger Dean Stadium as its alternate training site and he was going to part of the security force for the park. Only players, coaches and administrative staff were allowed in. People, including MacKay, were tested several times throughout the summer and had their temperature taken every day. The security team was responsible for monitoring the parking lots and checking-in players. With the Marlins having many major leaguers being affected with the virus, the facility became a busy place. Once those major league players were healthy enough to return to practice, they resumed baseball activities at the Roger Dean location. When the Marlins made the post-season, the security staff was invited to stay for the franchise's instructional camp which runs through the end of October. The young Marlins players have been recently scrimmaging against the Washington Nationals team, who plays at nearby facility. Hopefully, a full slate of Spring Training games will be in the works for next year.



**WHO IS THAT MASKED MAN?** *Don MacKay had plenty of work this summer*

## HOPING THERE WILL BE TIME TO TIME THIS WINTER

**Kevin McCann** has been a mainstay at DePaul University. As a student-manager for the basketball team, Kevin was assigned to time the Blue Demons games as a junior student and he has not left that position since. This past March, McCann was ready to continue his season with NCAA Tournament games scheduled at DePaul, but the competitions ended before the national post-season bracket came out. Kevin is looking forward to having the opportunity to be on the sidelines again this year – which would be his 50<sup>th</sup> straight season as the school's official timer. The recently released safety protocols for game day management have not been specific to determine whether it will allow existing workers to return or if they would be keeping those game day positions inside the team personnel bubble. McCann has remained busy in the hoops off-season with his Academic Advisor responsibilities at DePaul. Each day is filled with telephone calls and Zoom meetings as students are enrolling for the Spring Quarter, as the school is enjoying its largest freshman class in its 122-year history. Kevin would like to get the go ahead to return to the best seat in house for his 50<sup>th</sup> consecutive season at the scorer's table.



**QUITE A RUN:** *Kevin McCann has been on the sidelines for DePaul for 50 years*

