

On the Sidelines

New Neshaminy Coach Faces Old Pressures

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The Neshaminy High School football team has a new coach.

Peter Cordelli, who has been an assistant coach with the Redskins since 1958, has been named to the position of head coach

by the high school principal, Dr. Kenneth E. King.

The football situation at Neshaminy hasn't been pleasant in recent months. The Redskins, under coach Dom McHugh, had one of their worst seasons on record.

McHugh was much maligned during the season. Many persons attempted to place the blame for the dismal showing squarely on his shoulders.

Actually, no single person was to blame for that record. The law of averages just caught up with Neshaminy in much the same way it caught up with the New York Yankees baseball team.

Forced to Resign

But the indignation of the "supporters" of Neshaminy and other pressures forced McHugh to resign as head coach after the Redskins' final game.

One wonders what will happen to Cordelli if the Redskins have the same kind of season this year. Will new coaches become an annual sight on the Langhorne campus until a winning team is produced? Or will people begin to realize that in high school it's the kids, not the coaches who produce winning teams.

A veteran high school football coach once told me what he considered the real duties of a coach.

Winning is Secondary

"You have to give the boys direction and spirit," he said. "You must teach them the fundamentals, of course, but you aren't going to be able to make a winning team if the material isn't there. That is why boys should enjoy playing the game, and the winning part should be secondary."

Most people will agree that this is very idealistic. Of course, a coach shouldn't tell his boys that it's all right if they lose. But neither should he tell them the game is a life or death struggle and that they must win, or else.

The boys liked McHugh and played hard for him. But Neshaminy was outclassed this year, and neither McHugh nor anyone else could have turned it into a winning team. But realism is sometimes mistaken for defeatism.

Neshaminy's football players and coach didn't have a "no win" attitude this year, but many fans thought they did.

Cordelli Rated Highly

Cordelli knows a lot about coaching and from what I understand he is about the best man around for the position. He has been involved in some aspect of coaching for 15 years and he knows the game as very few people know it.

The new coach is a graduate of Blakely High School and George Washington University, both in Washington, D. C.

I hope that Cordelli will be around as head coach for a number of years—even if the Redskins do lose a few more football games.