

# A Neshaminy coed reflects on a 'winning' football team

Lois Nelson, a Neshaminy High School senior, sent the following letter to the coach of the school football team, Peter Cordelli, reflecting on a season in which the Redskins won three and lost seven. It is reprinted here:

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Dear Mr. Cordelli,

I'm sure there are many parents and many girlfriends, and many people who just have sincere interest in Neshaminy football who feel as I do but don't know how to express themselves. I would like to try on behalf of them.

Many adults (and many students, also) feel that victory is only the numbers on the scoreboard. They are so wrong! So many things count more. You know that and I am sure Mr. Swartz, Mr. Greytok and Mr. Plumeri know it, but I often wonder if the players themselves do.

The score usually shows which team had more breaks. Rarely does it show which team practiced harder, which team wanted to win more, which team played better physically and spiritually, which team most sincerely hoped that both teams would play their best, and most importantly, which team accepted the outcome and willingly shook the hands of their opponents, realizing that, even though they may have played their best, one team must "win" and one team must "lose."

This is why the Neshaminy Redskins ARE a winning team. They practiced hard, they wanted to win, they played their best, they wished the other team luck, and when they did lose, despite the disgusted looks and occasional tears, they never refused a handshake, a pat on the back, or a "Good game!!" from their opponents.

My boyfriend is on the football team and he will probably never know how proud I am of him. He didn't play much, but when he did, he played his very best and he was important to the team. That is the way it was with all those boys, Mr. Cordelli, wasn't it? And you're proud of them too. And any boy who sacrifices

one thousand hours for his school, any boy who practices three hours a day in either almost unbearably hot weather or unbearably cold weather, any boy who can take constructive criticism for thirteen weeks, any boy who can keep his chin up after defeat deserves to be proud of himself. And he deserves to be called a man.

Because by being a Neshaminy Redskin he has developed a sense of responsibility, a respect for authority, a feeling of dedication, and achieved personal satisfaction. I have a right to be proud of my man, don't I, Mr. Cordelli?

I have just one more thing to say. When it comes to expressing feelings to someone verbally, I'm sure you know most boys are inhibited, especially if that someone is someone they admire and respect. Especially if that someone is you, Mr. Cordelli. . . . and it is.

So I've taken it upon myself to say thank you for every football player, every football player's parents, and the thousands of Neshaminy football fans.

Lois M. Nelson