

Coach helped kids make memories

by DAVE MAGNUSON
Staff writer

Fun on the football field can translate into fun in life. That is the lesson Mike Funderburg hopes he left with his teams after four years as head football coach at Sandy High School.

"My No. 1 coaching philosophy has always been: Make it an enjoyable experience. I'm not just talking winning. I've never felt like I should make it miserable to come to practice," said Funderburg, who resigned with the close of this season. "When I was in high school and college, I always looked forward to going to practice. I always wanted to go because it was fun, it was enjoyable."

"It's not like I didn't yell and scream once in a while, or get mad," he said of his four years at Sandy. "But I think, overall, you've got to have a sense of humor, talk about it and always joke about it."

That attitude was applied in many situations on and off the field.

"I'd say, 'We're making memories.' I'd always tell a kid, 'This is a memory. You'll remember this one. It's a memory,'" he said. "But I think that's real important. Other than getting married and my children being born, when I look back on some of the best memories of my life, they all center around athletics."

During his stay at Sandy, Funderburg accumulated a 12-24 record. But Funderburg, who is a vice principal at the high school, earned his five-letter title: coach, a title he's proud to bear.

"There's very few (people) who don't enjoy being called 'Coach.' I think everybody who's involved with athletics likes that word," he said.

Funderburg got his start in coaching at McLoughlin Junior High School in Medford as a wrestling coach. In two years there, his teams were 35-1 and were district champions both years.

Next, he moved on to Silverton High School and was an assistant

on both the wrestling and football teams.

Then, in 1979, Funderburg worked for five years as the defensive coordinator of the Ontario Tigers. For his first three seasons, the Tigers were quarter-finalists in the Class AAA state playoffs, each time losing to the eventual state champions. Additionally, Ontario never had a losing season from 1979 to 1983, when Funderburg was there, amassing a 37-14 record.

He then accepted his first head coaching job at Sandy. In 1984, Funderburg took over a team that was 1-8 the previous year and upped its record to 2-7.

His 1985 squad went to 3-6, after an 0-6 start. In that year, the Pioneers felled a tough Barlow team, 14-13, in perhaps Funderburg's best memory of his tenure at Sandy.

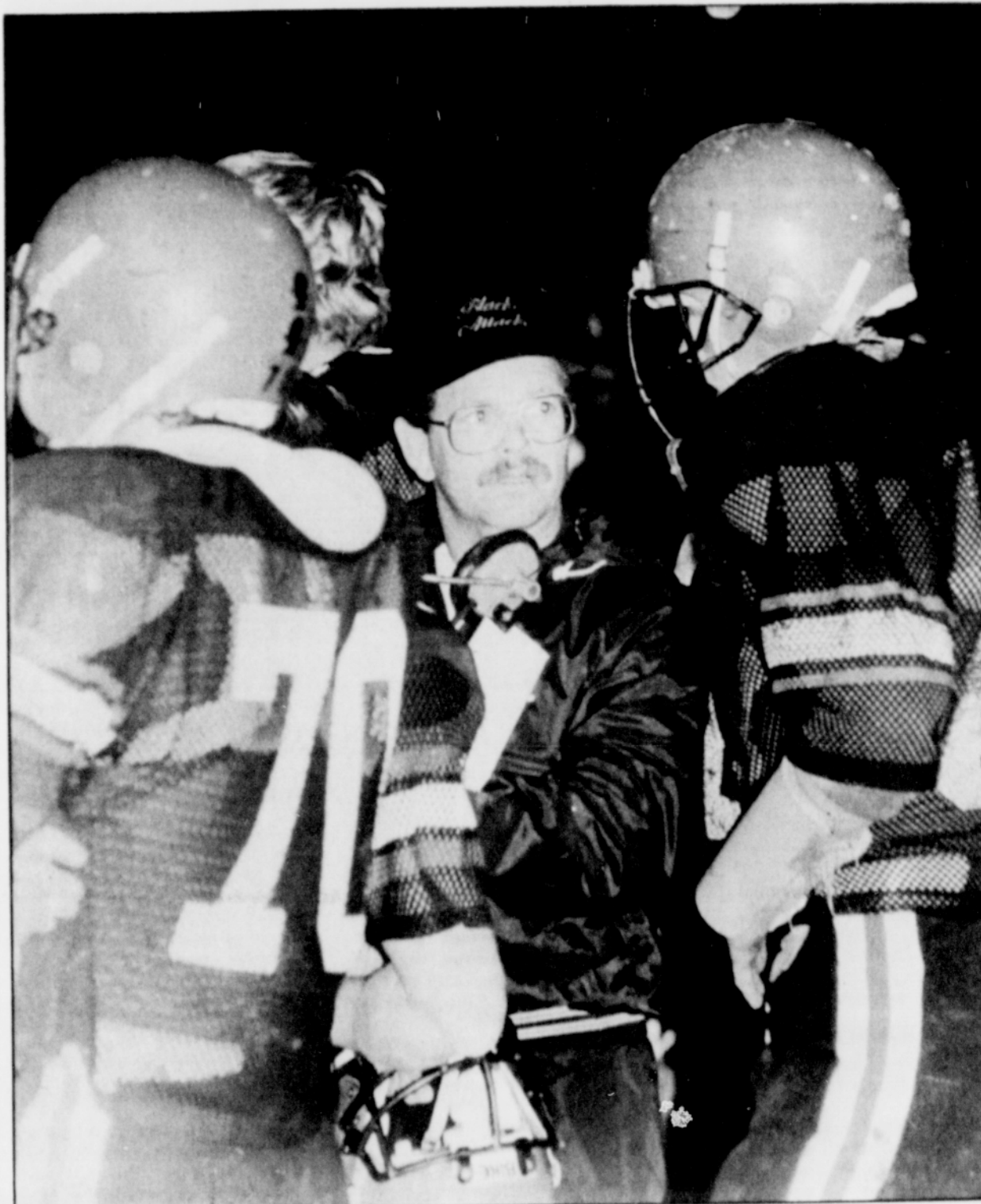
But the most memorable season would doubtlessly be 1986, when Funderburg guided the Pioneers to a 5-4 record. That record could easily have been 7-2, as Sandy lost close games to Barlow and Central Catholic.

This year, Sandy went through a year of reconstruction, losing many seniors — and experience — to graduation. Funderburg's final Pioneer team dipped to 2-7. Funderburg's final outing at the Sandy helm was a double-overtime heart-breaking loss to Barlow.

"I really felt good about the Barlow football game that we finished on a positive note. The kids played well and pulled themselves back together," he said. "That was one of our most emotional games I've been involved in. Afterwards, in the locker room, the kids were crying, I was crying. The kids felt good about pulling themselves together."

As far as getting back into coaching, Funderburg, 38, said he's not sure what will transpire. He said he will take his time in deciding his future.

Funderburg's future could include a balance of teaching, administration and coaching.



In his four years at Sandy, Mike Funderburg was a stickler for fun as the Pioneers' coach. He chose to leave the job to give himself more time as an administrator at the high school.

Aquatic club defeats nine teams at meet

The Sandy Blue Marlin Aquatic Club defeated nine teams, scoring 155 points overall, in the Tigard Aquatic Club Sextathlon last weekend.

The Salem Aquatic Club was second with 144.

The Tigard Sextathlon determined the fastest swimmer per age group in six events. Lengths would vary according to age group, but the swimmers competed in freestyle, butterfly, backstroke, breast stroke and individual medleys.

Derek Spires of the 13- to 14-year-old boys took first, while Robyn Hayball and Michelle Crane, both of the 15-18 girls, finished first and second, respectively.

Mike Malchow and Pat Crappa of the 15-18 boys were second and third, respectively. Jason Smith and Adam Hayball of the 11-12 boys also finished second and third. Stacey Stewart of the 11-12 girls completed the six-event competition in third place.

In its first home meet of the fall/winter season, the BMAC beat the McMinnville swimmers in both boys and girls competition Nov. 7 at the Sandy Aquatic Center.

The girls team outscored McMinnville 126-56, while the boys also won, 97-83.

Leading the boys team was an "A" time by Smith, who is 12 but raced in the 13-and-older 200-yard freestyle race. He finished with a time of 2 minutes, 17 seconds flat.

Six BMAC swimmers earned "B" times. They were: Nicole Kilander, 8 and younger, 25-yard breaststroke; Teresa Kilander, 11-12, 50-yard backstroke; Blake Smith, 9-10, 50-yard freestyle; Jeff Markle, 11-12, 50-yard butterfly; Crappa, 13 and older, 100-yard backstroke; and Bob Richards, 13 and older, 200-yard freestyle.

Of the 95 events that the 34 BMAC swimmers competed in, 38 had personal best times.

Nine swimmers earned first-place finishes in 19 events.

Pioneers hope to be back in playoffs

by DAVE MAGNUSON
Staff writer

The sounds of Bon Jovi's "Let It Rock" mixing with the sounds of cheers of elation ricocheting off the cement walls of a Troutdale locker room last March remain just a memory for a handful of young men from Sandy.

But the excitement from that time could linger as long as this upcoming March, when the Sandy Pioneers boys basketball team finds out if it can make the state playoffs for the second consecutive year.

That's what the handful of young men from Sandy are celebrating on Monday evening, March 2, at Columbia High School: the team's first playoff berth since 1977.

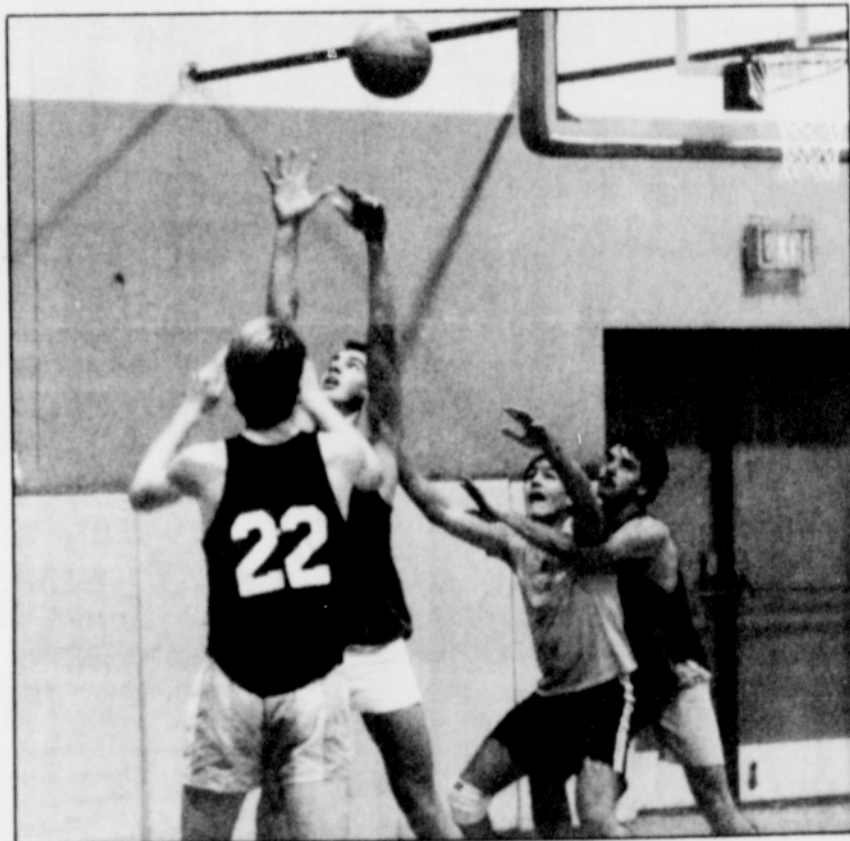
The Pioneers had taken on the Reynolds Lancers in a Mount Hood Conference playoff game to see which team would go on to play in the state tournament. Sandy came from behind to win 59-55.

Following that game, the jubilant players celebrated the playoff berth in the locker room and later defeated Bend in the first round of the playoffs, losing to McNary in the second round.

But the memory lingers on and the Pioneers could have enough talent to finish higher in the league this year than last year's 10-7 MHC record.

Five players return from last year's team, including Tony Hale, a 6-foot-3 center, who can rebound and shoot from anywhere on the court.

Also back this year is 6-foot-3 for-



The Sandy Pioneers hope to return to the state playoffs and have the potential to do it, says coach Dan Brisbin.

ward Randy Wheeler, whose leaping ability enabled him to impress the Sandy crowd with countless blocked shots and an awesome slam dunk in a January game against Reynolds last year.

Forward/guard Randy Lamm and

guards Jeff Gross and Mike Ford also return to this year's team, which will be coached by Dan Brisbin for the seventh year.

"I think we have the potential to be real successful. It's a matter of building on what we had last year,"

Brisbin said. "I'm a little concerned with our health, coming out of football." Brisbin said Wheeler's knees and Lamm's ankle need to be looked at by a doctor.

Barring long-term injuries to the Pioneers, the team's strength this year doubtlessly will be its size and ability to go after the ball. Shooting is also a plus for the Pioneers, who hope to get off to a good start with a few non-league wins at the beginning of December before regular MHC games start in late December.

"We have the potential to be a good basketball team, but unfortunately, potential doesn't win games," Brisbin said. "You've got to go out on the court and do it. It will be important for us to jump off and have some success in the preseason."

Brisbin expects MHC standouts Central Catholic, Parkrose and David Douglas to be tough competitors in this league, with possible difficulties coming from Gresham and Reynolds.

Still, the coach thinks the Pioneers can return to post-season play again in 1987-88.

"We haven't talked over team goals yet, but I'll anticipate these kids want to be in state competition at the end of the year," Brisbin said. "I guess that's what every team sets out to do."

"A personal goal is to get these guys as far as we can. As a coach, I think, game in and game out, you want them to play up to their ability levels and, most of the time, if they do that, we'll be successful."

Swim coach predicts two talented teams

Last year was a transition for the Sandy Pioneers swim team, and Coach Mark Smith says he will have to wait and see what the results of that transition will be this year.

But his initial reaction is a positive one.

"We have more talent on the team than we have in a few years," he said. "I'm excited and have good expectations of what both (the boys and girls) teams are capable of."

Additionally, the Pioneers will reinstate their diving team again this year, which could provide Sandy with 13 possible additional points.

The boys and girls teams have plenty of swimming experience, even though there are only three seniors on the teams. Seniors Troy Hilstad, Tammy Botten and Ann Hilling, a transfer student from Illinois, will provide much of the team's high school swimming experience. But most of the team's experience is the coach/athlete relationship.

Smith has coached several swimmers both on the high school team and with the Blue Marlin Aquatic Club.

"Even though it's a young team, it has a lot of talent on it. And with their experience with the Blue Marlins or other clubs, we should

be capable of a much better season than we have had in the past few years," Smith said.

The girls team finished 2-7 in dual meets in 1986-87 and sixth in the Mount Hood Conference district meet last February at Mount Hood Community College.

Last year's team had just seven girls on it. This year, that number has doubled to 14. Not only have the numbers improved, but so, too, has the talent.

"The talent is going to help us quite a bit," Smith said. "Our biggest goal for this season for the girls team is putting all these people together into a competitive group for high school competition."

Leading the girls team this year will be sophomore Robyn Hayball, who earned a bid to state with her district-leading performance in the 100-meter breaststroke. Hayball broke the school record in the event last year as a freshman with a time of 1 minute, 13.07 seconds.

Also expected to make an impact on the girls team are returnees Botten and sophomore Michelle Crane, who also competed in the state meet in the 100 butterfly and the 200 individual medley.

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Three-point rule adds nothing to prep game

by DAVE MAGNUSON
Staff writer

Aside from reading this column, stop what you're doing and listen. Listen closely. Someone is rolling in his grave.

It's Dr. James Naismith, the brilliant educator from the Great White North who developed the game of basketball. Naismith's grave is noisy with activity.

Naismith engineered the game of basketball to be fast-paced and entertaining. But he intended only two ways of scoring: field goals and free throws; two points and one point.

But now there's the three-pointer. Thanks to the now-dead American Basketball Association, every level of organized basketball now has this inane stripe gracing the hardwood —

including high school basketball, which used to be the epitome of sporting tradition.

I really do not blame the ABA for creating this Frankenstein. I don't really disapprove of pro ball using the three-pointer. The professional three-point shot is enough of a distance away from the net to create a challenge, making it less of a temptation for coaches to engrain the shot-for-three into their offense. At the professional level, that is.

But in the college and especially high school ranks, the three-pointer not only creates temptation for the coach, but also makes a coach appear crazy if he doesn't use it in his offense.

The distances for the three-pointer are the same in high school as they are in college: about 19 feet from the

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net. Nineteen feet is just four feet longer than a free throw. And you only get a single point for one of those.

When it comes to this 19-foot shot, coaches and players become like fish chasing a fisherman's line. Once you're hooked, you're fish 'n' chips.

"Last year, when they brought it in, I was really against it," said Dan Brisbin, coach of the Sandy Pioneers boys basketball team. "There have been a lot of changes in the game during the last few years. I guess I'm just a traditionalist, as far as basketball is concerned."

He said it. He's a self-proclaimed

traditionalist who doesn't like the rule. But he has been baited. He'll soon be lured.

"But when I saw us play this summer and saw that we shot the three-pointer fairly well . . ."

Oh oh. Here comes the reeling in. " . . . my opinion had changed a little."

But does the three-point rule really change anything? Sure, it opens up the middle and it makes it difficult to play a zone defense. But is it really a benefit to the game itself?

"I am not totally convinced the rule should be at the high school level," said Steve Halligan, who has been a coach with the Central Catholic boys basketball team for 14 years. "What I see as a major trend — a dangerous trend — is the rules committees trying to make high

school like college, college like pro.

"I don't believe players at the high school level are capable of doing the same things with the same consistency as players at the other levels."

Amen. It's not that high school players cannot make the shot. One game into the season would quickly prove that wrong. It's that it may be misused by coaches and players.

For years, coaches have been drilling players to move the ball inside, using the outside shot if there is no other option. This comparatively short three-point shot could easily shatter the importance of that game plan.

But, unfortunately, the three-pointer has its attractions. It is fun for the fans, it is fun for the players and it is fun for the coaches.

But what is fun quite often has a danger attached. This is no exception.

I predict that the teams which make it to this year's state tournament will be the teams that use the three-pointer sparingly, not as a part of the offensive game plan.

Although the three-point rule may be a quick way out of a late-in-the-game deficit, it is doubtful that the rule will improve high school basketball.

When high school basketball needs improving, that's when a three-point shot is necessary.

Now is not that time.

And I hope a shot clock is not in the making because, if so, high school basketball may be rolling with Dr. Naismith.