

Hook, Line and Sinker

With Tony Hooker

There has been a lot of talk during the first week of the NCAA tournament about Michigan State coach Tom Izzo dressing down one of his players on the sidelines during their opening round game against Bradley.

It seems that many took umbrage at the vehemence of his display. Likewise, there are some in social media circles who think that Brad Underwood's old school coaching style is making prospects shy away from signing up to play for the beloved Orange and Blue.

When I think back to my own less than illustrious playing days in this context, I smile. One of the coaches I played for, Hall of Famer Russ Ghery, would let you know what he thought of the effort you were putting forth in no uncertain terms, often demonstrating the desired technique for full effect. Villa Grove Heritage now plays their home games on a field that's borne his name since 1982. Coaches Homma and Shepherd would also get after you on occasion, as would Coach Boyer, my freshman coach. Coach Boyer, however, faced the Herculean task of teaching over thirty (that's right, there were more than 30 frosh football players in my class) knucklehead freshman boys the art of football. This was in the days before JFL, so this

was the initial foray into organized football for almost all of us. He did so with amazing restraint, given the circumstances. I probably would have thrown each and every one of us into the river at one time or another during that plebe campaign, 40 years ago.

Coach Don Waltrip, who served as head coach when Coach Ghery faced medical problems during my time in high school, used methods that were more psychological in nature, including enticing one player who shall remain nameless to eat an earthworm in lieu of running additional wind sprints. In hind sight, maybe we should have just taken the chewing out.

Of course, we can't always equate things that happened back in the dark ages of my youth with today's kids, right? Having no firm answer to this question, I solicited the opinion of an expert, my daughter, who has been a part of the amazingly successful Devilette dance team for the past six years. "Of course, no one LIKES getting yelled at," was her reply. "The team did tend to respond better, though." So, there you have it. A very limited sample, but a valid one.

My dancer and cheerleader had a very limited career as a softball player, but

when she did play, she was coached by Kerry Cheely and Julie Woller, two of the architects of the Elite softball program, and their coaching style was very laid back. She didn't play for the Elite, as dance and cheer has always been her jam and so stick and ball sports took a back seat, so I can't say with absolute certainty, but I don't believe their coaching styles ever changed dramatically, and their records speak for themselves. Multiple state championships with the club team. An IESA state title in 2015. More importantly, the Elite softball program continues to blossom and grow to this day, with a 2018 World Series title under their belts, and it will look to be one of the state's best for years to come.

So there you have it. From yelling and screaming to laid back and instructive, to cerebral and psychological. Coaching styles run the gamut, but what doesn't change for the good ones is their love for the kids. Coaches like Jeana Block and Heath Wilson might have different styles, but the message is the same. The true secret is letting the kids know that you have their best interests at heart. You get that point across and the method of delivery becomes mute.

WEEKLY SPORTS WRAP-UP

VGH Baseball
Fall to Sages
The Hawks were no hit by Monticello on March 18, falling 9-0.

Horse around with Trojans
Evan Wilson pitched a one-hit shutout, fanning 12 and walking only one, as VGH defeated Armstrong 11-0 on March 19. Nick Coffin drove in 3 runs and Logan McKee tallied 2 RBI's for the Hawks, who also got doubles from Noah Davison and Carson Howard in the win.

Overcome Sullivan
The Hawks plated 4 runs in the 6th inning of a 5-3 win over Sullivan on March 20. Nathan Chewing picked up the win, throwing 2 shutout innings in relieve of starter Keagan Patterson, who fanned 6 in 4 innings of work. VGH was led at the dish by Carson Howard, who drove homered and drove in 3 runs. Noah Davison doubled and added an RBI for Villa Grove Heritage.

VGH Track and Field
Girls take 3rd at Arcola
Samantha Campbell won the 800m and the 4x800 quartet of Sophia Wegeng, Isidora Davis, Katherine Eisenmenger and Isabella Caceres also finished first for VGH on March 20.

Meike Herbrandt finished 2nd in the 100 and 200 meter dashes and the long jump to help the Blue Devil cause. Other individual point scores for VGH included Liberty Floyd (4th in High Jump) Kirsten Foreman, (5th in Long

Jump). Wegeng also finished 4th in the triple jump for Villa Grove Heritage.

Boys finish 4th at Arcola
Trevor Reberger steamed to a first-place finish in the 200m to lead VGH on March 20. Chase Burwell finished 2nd in the shot put and in the discus for VGH, and Will Wilson took home 3rd place in the high jump and 800m for the Blue Devils. Zayzen Price and Daelin Price finished 3rd and 4th respectively in the shot put, while Sam Reno finished 5th in the 400m, Liam Barr leaped to a 5th place finish in the high jump, and Kehm Shirley hop, skipped and jumped to a 3rd place finish in the triple jump. Ashton Harrison rounded out the VGH scoring with a fifth-place effort in the long jump.

VG softball
Fall to Warriors
Tuscola scored 3 times in extra innings to defeat Villa Grove 6-3 on March 18. Kyleigh Block took the loss in relief of Jordyn Ray for the Blue Devils. Ray pitched 5

innings, fanning 4 and giving up 2 earned runs and also doubled and drove in 2 runs. Vanessa Wright smacked a double to help the cause.

Glared by Rockets
VG fell to Unity 10-9 on March 19. Reagan Cheely took the loss, giving up 3 earned runs. Overall, 3 VG errors led to 4 unearned runs. Cheely was the offensive catalyst, going 4-4 with a double and a triple and scoring a pair of runs for the Blue Devils. Maris Eversole doubled, drove in 2 and scored a pair of runs for Villa Grove, Chelsea Harrison had two hits, including a double, and Vanessa Wright doubled for VG.

Cage Tigers
Maddie Burwell slammed a pair of homers and drove in 4 runs to lead VG to an 11-2 win over Urbana on March 20. Jordyn Ray went the distance, fanning 13 and giving up 2 runs on 5 hits for the Blue Devils. Kyleigh Block went 2- and scored 3 times to help the cause.



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Tony HOOKER
Write in Candidate for Alderman, Ward I
April 2, 2019

Life long Villa Grove Resident
Former Alderman, Ward I

WHY AM I RUNNING?
I believe that Villa Grove is at a crossroads. Too many towns of this size are being left behind as our great nation becomes more and more urbanized. We need to be fiscally responsible while also recognizing the need to update structures and facilities to entice young families to move to and/or stay here, in our town. We need to continue to promote our local businesses while exploring all options at our disposal to attract new ones. I also want to look for ways to improve our digital footprint. We live in an ever changing digital world, and I want to help continue the good work that is being done while doing my best to serve the people of Ward I.

Candidate A
 Candidate B
 (Write in) Tony Hooker.
Please consider writing in my name on the ballot.

VOTE

Tony Hooker

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2019 VILLA GROVE/HERITAGE HAWKS BOYS BASEBALL SCHEDULE

Date	Opponent	Record	Result
Mar 11	SJO	0-1	0-1
Mar 12	@ Marshall	ppd	0-1
Mar 13	@ Salt Fork	ppd	0-1
Mar 14	Urbana	ppd	0-1
Mar 16	Paris	W,L 6-5, 8-11	1-2
Mar 18	@ Monticello	L	0-9 1-3
Mar 19	@ Armstrong	W	11-0 2-3
Mar 20	Sullivan	W	5-3 3-3
Mar 22	@ BH	L	8-11 3-4
Mar 26	@ Judah Christian		
Mar 28	Oakwood		
Mar 29	@ Arcola		
Mar 30	@ Blue Ridge		
Apr 01	ALAH		
Apr 02	LSA		
Apr 04	Georgetown Ridge Farm		
Apr 05	@ Martinsville		
Apr 08	@ Cumberland		
Apr 10	Oblong		
Apr 11	@ Fisher		
Apr 12	Tri-County		
Apr 16	Schlarman		
Apr 17	@ Hutsonville		
Apr 18	Arthur Okaw Christian		
Apr 22	Martinsville		
Apr 23	@ Tuscola		
Apr 24	Cumberland		
Apr 25	@ Oblong		
Apr 29	@ Tri-County		
May 04	Neoga (DH)		
May 08	Cerro Gordo		
May 09	ALAH		
May 11	@ Unity		

HEAD COACH Jason Conn

2019 VGH Girl's Track & Field Schedule

Mar 09	@ EIU invite
Mar 13	@ Uni High (Armory)
Mar 19	@ Arcola
Mar 26	@ Arcola
Mar 28	@ Tuscola
Apr 05	@ ALAH
Apr 09	@ Salt Fork Invite
Apr 12	@ Unity (girls)
Apr 19	@ Tuscola
Apr 23	@ ALAH
Apr 26	@ Monticello
May 03	@ Arcola (LOVC meet)

HEAD COACH Heath Wilson

2019 VILLA GROVE Blue Devils GIRLS SOFTBALL SCHEDULE

Date	Opponent	Record	Result
Mar 12	@ MS	L	4-7 0-1
Mar 13	@ Salt Fork	ppd	
Mar 14	@ ALAH	ppd	
Mar 18	Tuscola	L	3-6 0-2
Mar 19	@ Unity	L	9-10 0-3
Mar 20	Urbana	W	11-2 1-3
Mar 21-24	@ TENN	LLLLW	2-7
Mar 26	Georgetown-Ridge Farm		
Mar 27	@ Argenta Oreaana		
Mar 28	Windsor		
Mar 29	Okaw Valley		
Mar 30	@ Rantoul Tourney		
Apr 01	@ Cumberland		
Apr 02	@ SJO		
Apr 03	Tri-County		
Apr 05	@ Oblong		
Apr 08	Martinsville		
Apr 09	Champaign Centennial		
Apr 10	@ Hut-Pal (DH)		
Apr 11	@ Fisher		
Apr 15	vs Heritage		
Apr 16	@ Casey Westfield		
Apr 17	Cumberland		
Apr 18	@ Blue Ridge		
Apr 19	@ Tri-County		
Apr 22	Oblong		
Apr 24	@ Martinsville		
Apr 25	@ Arcola		
May 01	@ Heritage		
May 02	Armstrong-Potomac		
May 08	Cerro Gordo		
May 10	@ PBL		

HEAD COACH Heather VonLanken

2019 VGH Boy's Track & Field Schedule

Mar 13	@ Uni High (Armory)
Mar 16	@ EIU invite
Mar 19	@ Arcola
Mar 26	@ Arcola
Mar 28	@ Tuscola
Apr 05	@ ALAH
Apr 09	@ Salt Fork Invite
Apr 12	@ Unity (girls) M
Apr 19	@ Tuscola
Apr 23	@ ALAH
Apr 26	@ SJO (boys)
May 03	@ Arcola (LOVC meet)
May 11	@ Shelbyville

HEAD COACH Heath Wilson

HERITAGE

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