

From the Sidelines



It's how you play the game'

It was a tacky, tasteless way to end a pair of district championship basketball games.

After five days of high-quality high school hoops, these two episodes marred what should have been a successful tournament for the host school; instead, the administration, coaches, players and fans are left to sort out the silliness from the celebration enjoyed by a championship and a runner-up finish.

In the final moments of the girls' championship game last Thursday night in West Liberty, a pair of fouls on the same player should have given a clue as to the debacle that occurred in, of all places, the hand-shake line. The player, obviously upset over the loss, resorted to a selfish act that not only could have seriously injured other players and coaches but it left a terrible foot-note on the 61st District girls' final.

Swearing and slugging (I witnessed this incident and actually tried to prevent any further aggression) — this player came at the Rowan County players and if not for the Lady Vikings' quick-acting head coach, the out-of-line player would have done some damage.

Adding insult to injury, just 24 hours after what should have been a career-ending act, this player was on hand to watch the boys' final and lead the cheers for her school. Reports from the school led the media to believe she would not suit up for the first-round of the regional tournament this week. But we'll see...

And then to top off the week, a head coach reportedly I did not witness or hear this one, but several respectable sources quoted me verbatim from the district-winning coach's (my remarks) rushed to the opposing student section, that also included many parents, fans and young children, and offered up some celebratory frustration. Understandably, of course. Pastiche, absolutely.

Both of these situations leave a bad taste for everyone involved — and unlike a sporting contest, there are no winners. In the wake of the absurdity I've heard mention of canceling the postgame handshake. To me, that's worse than the incidents. Sportsmanship should be a part of all games and should be evident in defeats as well as victories. That's as much a part of playing as scoring points, making tackles, fouling out or hitting home runs. We're supposed to be teaching how to play the game and that should

See GAME on 6

Viewpoint



Commentary

'O Brother' brings traditional music home

The music from the movie "O Brother Where Art Thou?" won five Grammy awards. Oh, brother?

Dr. Ralph Stanley celebrated his 75th birthday with an award for "O Death" and the Soggy Bottom Boys won with Ralph's "Man of Constant Sorrow."

The Grammy awards are further evidence that contemporary country radio has missed the boat, though some stations did give a little air time to Larry Cordle's "Murder on Music Row," a lament about the music industry's move away from traditional music roots.

Everybody who won an award for traditional music ought to send a share of it to George Clooney for being willing to tackle his role in "O Brother," a sidestep from his macho image in other movies, and George's clowning is part of what made the film such a success.

Head of the Hollar



Garry Barker Guest Columnist

Clooney's presence also drew viewers who otherwise would never have gone near traditional music, and the new audience discovered what we'd always known.

Our music is good. Great. More than deserving of the recognition.

What passes for country music, these days in the national market, is really soft rock, crossover music so well canned that I can no longer tell one young performer from

another.

Dolly Parton came back to her musical roots and also won a Grammy, but Miss Dolly, like the Bluegrass group I'll be Time Out, can sing anything, anywhere, anytime and win an award.

Don Rigby's SPBGMA Bluegrass Song of the Year was written by Tom T. and Dixie Hall, a collaboration between Carter County and Elliott County via Nashville that is evidence that it's still happening where it's still started, in the Kentucky mountains.

Rigby, the new director of the Kentucky Center for Traditional Music at Morehead State University, is now more than a writer and performer; he spearheads an effort to preserve, teach, promote, and recognize the traditional acoustic music of the mountains.

"O Brother" made Don's job easier.

It will be interesting to see

how much of the new public appreciation for Bluegrass and traditional music carries over past the movie, the soundtracks, and the awards.

If commercial country radio will pick up on the concept and allow the traditional performers back on the airwaves, I'll turn my radio back on. Years ago I tuned out K93 and other "country" giants because they tuned out the music I wanted to hear.

The older country stars are ignored, and Bluegrass is usually relegated to very specialized programming.

Somebody in the industry should have learned something from the sales of the "O Brother" soundtrack.

Money talks.

Garth Brooks and the Dixie Chicks are not the only performers we'd like to hear on the radio.

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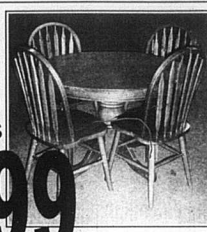
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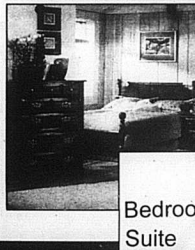
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