

True character reveled

Written by Wauneta Breeze

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My first “real” job after college was at the YMCA in McCook. I enjoyed working with the kids, but the adults were another story. The line I came to hate in my time there was “Yeah, but he’s a really nice guy off the court.” Let’s face it, most of us are.

Things are normally pretty calm in our lives, but as soon as we, or the team we support, step on the court, there are a million little things that can go either way and ruin our day. It’s when things don’t go our way that we dissolve into a temper tantrum like a two-year child. The decisions of our teammates and, more often, the refs can haunt us for years. We have all sat by somebody in the stands who screamed at the ref all game long for a missed call in the first quarter.

A quote by John Wooden is much better suited to our society. “Sports don’t build character, they reveal it.” The characteristics we hide so well in our normal life are magnified when we step onto a playing field. There are so many more chances for things to go wrong during competition. But, what do we do when we do everything right and someone else makes a mistake? This is really when we reveal our true character.

Our Bronco athletes have experienced several disappointments in the last six weeks. We all remember how the boys basketball team’s season ended. Two of the three scorekeepers wrote a timeout down for the wrong team and the mistake ended the boy’s season.

Last week in Sutherland, Abbie Fanning was told by a race official that there would be two heats of the 800 meter run. She waited patiently with her coach behind the timer and picker’s stand for her heat to be called, only to find out there wouldn’t be a second heat.

We can be grateful that Abbie doesn’t have to face the finality that the basketball team did. Both instances, however, will shape the adults they turn into. Our reactions to these events will shape the adults they become.

In the end we can hopefully choose to live by the words of former University of Nebraska philosophy professor Hartley Burr Alexander, “Not the victory but the action; Not the goal but the game; In the deed the glory.”

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