

**By Larry Pritchett**

*Past PCHS Activities Director*

Being a coach was what I wanted to do from the time I was a sophomore in high school. Being able to coach for the number of years that I did was for the most part very enjoyable.

I miss doing it a great deal. I miss being around the players, the other coaches in the school, the rest of the faculty, and the players and coaches of the schools we competed with in our conference and non-conference schedule.

I know that after you are away from the profession for just a little while, and you think at times that you wish you were still doing it, you sometimes have a tendency just to remember the good things that happened. I was lucky. There were way more good things that happened than bad things.

A week or so ago, Coach John Cook the volleyball coach at UNL had one of those events that coaches dread. One of his players got in trouble with law enforcement.

The player as of the first of last week had yet to be charged with anything, but was accused of leaving the scene of an accident, and driving on a suspended license. The player apparently hit a couple on a motorcycle and one of the persons had a broken leg.

Leaving the scene of an injury accident is a felony, punishable by up to five years in prison. So this wasn't just a minor run-in with law enforcement. Just to make this even more of a problem, the player was Coach Cook's daughter who is a starter on a very good, nationally ranked, Husker volleyball team.

Then Coach Cook made a comment to the media that, at times like this, it made him wish his daughter was a sorority girl and if she was this wouldn't be a big deal. But being a high profile volleyball player, it was a big deal. Now it appears that Coach Cook irritated the UNL Greek community, and I would bet that wasn't his intent at all.

I don't know what will become of the situation. I am pretty sure that Ms. Cook didn't play in this last week's contest, but it remains to be seen what will happen to her in the courts. It doesn't help that she has had six speeding tickets and failed to show up for the required defensive driving classes.

The point here is—these are the things outside of coaching that drive coaches nuts. When it is your son or daughter you are really under a great deal of scrutiny and everyone is waiting on how you are going to handle it.

Again in my coaching career, I was lucky. I coached both my sons. I am the first to admit that it was the best eight years I had in coaching. It wasn't the easiest eight years, but the most fun.

It wasn't easy on them but they got through it and I don't think they were scarred by the experience. The best part was that they didn't get into much trouble during that time. At least not enough to worry about felony charges, etc. I am not saying they were choir boys and I know they will read this column, but they knew because they were the coach's sons, more was expected of them and every night they went home with the coach and sometimes discussions followed practices.

I think coaching gets harder every year. There are so many things outside of the X's and O's that you have to do and everyone outside of coaching seems to be an expert.

I wonder sometimes now that if I knew in 1958 what I think I know now, would I have gone into education and coaching. I hope I would have done that. I do think it will become a rare thing for people to coach for 40 years anymore.

But I know for me it was worth it!