

## The 2020 AD

Friday, March 13, 2020 - 3pm I excitedly await my meeting with the defending Section 3 championship baseball team. I stand before them trying to do what I can to discuss the uncertainty before us while keeping their spirits high as we look forward to the start of the season on Monday and their defense of the first baseball title in school history. Little did I know this would all change 24 hours later.

Being an athletic director is a special position in a school district unlike any other. For the past 19 years I have been lucky enough to enjoy this position in three different Central New York school districts. Each year, we athletic directors oversee thousands of athletes who compete in thousands of competitions under the guidance of hundreds of coaches.

Each morning, our previous night's results are plastered across social, digital and print media for all interested parties to evaluate, critique, praise or ridicule. Many times the successes of a school's athletic department define the culture our students face as they walk through our halls each day.

In our roles, our communities look to us for solutions to problems ranging from rescheduling rain outs to rebuilding struggling programs to honoring our champions.

When I interact and meet people across the country they always ask those standard questions "Are you married?" -- Yes; "Do you have children?" And I always answer Yes 2 + 2000. They look at me cross eyed and I explain my career and that I have 2 children of my own and 2,000 student-athletes that I view as my children as well.

Besides our own student-athletes, we all enjoy the process and pieces that make up educationally based athletics. We enjoy and yearn to cheer on not only our athletes but all of those that compete.

I have been lucky enough to travel this great country to cheer on our athletes as they "End on Empty" in their efforts to win another cross country national title. Then to all parts of NY to support our great teams in their efforts to win State Championships. But, I've also proudly cheered for the likes of Breanna Stewart, Katelyn Tuohy, Kevin Huerter, Alex Bono, Griffin Cook, Sydney O'Hara, Buddy Boeheim, Katie Capelletti, Katie Pascale and JJ Starling to name a few. As they too are viewed as our own athletes even if they might wear an opposing uniform.

Today marks day 44 of face masks and surgical gloves rather than catcher's masks and baseball gloves, or lacrosse sticks and track spikes or tennis balls and golf balls.

In our role as athletic directors, we are unable to provide those solutions that our athletes, coaches and community need from us--that encouraging yell or pat on the back that we normally give in those circumstances.

Our hearts break for our athletes. Our hearts break for our seniors. Our children, the student-athletes, sit in disbelief; what happened? What about senior night? What about winning a 4th sectional title in a row? What about another Penn Relays title? What about my college recruiting process?

What is next?? We simply don't know? That is a very hard answer especially during this time when we wish we had one.

One answer I do know...

We, the Athletic Directors of 2020, unite to show our love and support for our children, our students-athletes. We extend our love and support for our wonderful coaches for all that they do to lead, guide, coach, inspire and promote our students. We extend our love and support to our parents, fans and communities for what they have had to face over the first four months of 2020.

The next few months and years will be difficult; however, together we will prevail. We will succeed! We will be Champions!

We look forward to that day when we can walk into another team meeting to see our athletes. We look forward to that day we can show our encouragement after a tough defeat or cheer on that next state championship.

To the Class of 2020 you deserved better, thank you and we wish you all the best! To all our student-athletes and coaches: we stand with you during these difficult times as we look to brighter days in the near future.

Best wishes,  
Go Hornets!!  
#HornetPride

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