



FOLLOWING THRU IN 2020

BY JEROME SINGLETON

As I reflect on the past seven months, I am reminded of an African proverb, *“If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.”* I am amazed with the resilience, compassion, and cooperation exhibited by the people of the SCHSL member schools. Faced with a COVID-19 pandemic in March that cancelled schools and interscholastic athletics for the remainder of the 2019 - 2020 school year, you embraced the idea of creating the NEW normal for the 2020 - 2021 school year.

As expected, (and appreciated), you cautiously rose to the occasion without hesitation. Countless hours were contributed to collaborating, creating, and implementing a plan for return to school and interscholastic athletics. You resisted the temptation of trying to create a quick fix for a problem that is an ever evolving/changing target, took the time to pay careful attention to details and solicit input from all stakeholders that would be affected by decisions made, and stuck to your commitment even when it was very unpopular to some.

Your hard work and diligence have rewarded the start of this school year with a Fall sports season. While some of the member schools have had to adjust their schedules for quarantine precautions, it is my hope that the Fall sports season will be completed with little to no interruptions. I witnessed the focus shift from wins and losses to providing safe and healthy opportunities for student athletes to experience teachable moments through participation in sports.

Through it all, the health and safety of those involved in athletics programs have not been and should never be compromised. I appreciate the efforts of the member schools in making decisions to help mitigate the spreading of the virus by suspending their athletics team(s) competition when learning that the virus exist within its team(s). Athletes, coaches, and staff are all vulnerable to this pandemic. All share the responsibility for and obligation to protecting the athletics participants of the member schools.

It appears that the earlier hard work of our member schools has created a great opportunity for a great Fall sports season. While we are off to a steady, sturdy start, be mindful that it will not take much to create a setback. You are encouraged to continue practicing the safety and sanitation guidelines that helped to create this opportunity. Everyone must continue to be conscientious of the way the virus is contracted and spread as well as continue to be responsible for and obligated to protecting all athletics program participants of SCHSL member schools.

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Have a great season and know that your efforts
are recognized and much appreciated.

