

The Greatest Game
by Harry Zirkelbach 02-01-2010

Children learn every moment after birth.

**In every age, each taught initially by those older, then peers,
then in encounters hither and yon.**

**In close knit societies, games are the great teacher, whether between parent
and child, between children, later when the role is reversed, the child is
teacher.**

**First the rules of the game,
then a sense to accept victory or defeat,
as intricacies are expanded to make the contest a challenge
of mind and will, you vs the other.**

**Later, team games, in which every individual is significant, some more so,
but any individual heroism, or misplay, changes outcome for all.
'The thrill of victory, the agony of defeat'
apt reminder of the individuals' responsibility.**

**All games begin as children's games.
When developed into sport contests, adults reign. Not just the players.
It involves, equipment, stadiums, tickets, clothing.
And worse, gambling, corruption, violence, huge amounts of money.
The concept taught the child,
It is not whether you win or lose, it is how you play the game, lost.**

**These last 43 winters has welcomed the Super Bowl,
two competing professional football teams, now playing in noisy shrines,
vie for championship.**

**Denver played Washington in the 1988 Super Bowl XXII. Hopes high.
In an interview with the Denver Water Board later, they told the game from
the view of Denver Metro water consumption.
With the start of the game. water consumption zoomed to near trickle,
remained constant until the end of the first half,
then dangerously spiking the next twenty minutes.
With with the 3rd Quarter kick off, another plummet toward nil.
Then, an early, sad unveiling of the contest result.
Toilet flushing resumed, slowly. in the 4th Quarter, no big spike in usage,
but the return to that gradual disappointing full use of Denver Water.
The rest, ugly history. I just recounted the details.
Those first 30 minutes of play, competitive; then disaster.
Final score Washington 42, Denver 10.**

Now, The Other game.

In 1964, most of the 8th grade boys of Young American League Bombers, had played together three years, never been defeated.

**Player limit, 13 years, 115 pounds. Boys.
The final game that season proved a test.**

Games were not timed, each quarter had a set number of plays.

With one play remaining, Bombers' ball.

That snap would end the game, Bombers losing 0-6.

Coaches were allowed on the field between plays. This career ending play was outlined by Coach, not much older than his boys.

Players on both teams were good athletes. Two Bomber players were more than good. One, tall really thin, could outrun the others. The other, not as tall, equally thin, could throw the ball long, accurately.

That play began 55 yards from the goal. The ball snapped, left and right Bomber ends ran straight ahead a bit, then veered diagonally left drawing the entire defense.

Potential receivers waved and yelled to have the ball thrown to them.

At last, the blocking fullback defending the quarterback, released his opponent, and slid over the scrimmage line, was tossed a short pass. He caught it, headed to the right edge of the goal. He was not fast.

The defense reacting slowly, gave pursuit.

That Bomber and pursuers crashed together at the goal, but the Bomber scored. The game was tied.

The rule allowed an extra point attempt, which was successful. These youth completed three years of competitive boys football, undefeated.

A few parents, plus myself, were witness to a fantastic game, and the sportsmanship of both team following the successful extra point.

The game by boys I knew, is forever in memory, the players still cheering louder than their fans.