

40 Sports Feature Ideas

Ideas from www.highschooljournalism.org

Source unknown: expanded by Steve Row, Journalism Education Coordinator, Richmond Newspapers Inc.

- 1.) Athletes and health; conditioning during season, during off-season; prevention and care of injuries; protective equipment; weight control; contact lenses and braces; medications and steroids
- 2.) What it's like to: warm the bench, lose eligibility, be injured for a whole season, be a referee, be a trainer, coach the opposite sex, lose in the finals, scout an opponent (day in the life of...)
- 3.) Changes in athletic program that affect the school and its athletes (from state legislature, from state athletic or high school league, etc)
- 4.) Why one sport always is successful and another always is mediocre; why some girls' sports always do better than the boys' counterpart; relationships among athletes in various winning and non-winning, boys' and girls' programs
- 5.) Recreational and "extreme" sports--SCUBA diving, go-karts, snowboarding, skydiving, hang-gliding, target shooting, karate and taekwondo, physical fitness and muscle building, learning to fly, biathlon and triathlon, marathon participation, commercial climbing businesses; sports and athletic opportunities available from local recreation and parks agencies, state parks
- 6.) Decline in the interest in particular varsity sport; sudden growth in popularity in varsity sport
- 7.) What it takes to start a new varsity sport; starting a new club sport; what the process would be to start a new sport, and what the process would be to end a sport
- 8.) Coaches' spouses: what they go through as their spouses coach in a season; how involved are they in the sport, how have their views changed over the years about the extent of their involvement
- 9.) Rising cost of high school sports--equipment, insurance, officials, transportation
- 10.) Drugs, steroids, alcohol, tobacco--what the rules are at your school, what happens to those who violate the rules, what happens to those who use any on weekends or away from school
- 11.) Athletic trainers--how qualified are they, what else they do, what they earn for being trainers, what time demands they face, how they train students to help
- 12.) Conflicts between coaches and parents--what rules some coaches lay down about parental involvement, what some coaches say their best methods are for dealing with parents
- 13.) History of your school's teams (past championships, great games, great individual performances) and history of main rivalries
- 14.) How coaches become coaches, why they become coaches, qualifications set out by school, school district; what values coaches have; what pleases and disappoints coaches most
- 15.) Locker room security

16.) Maintaining the athletic fields, courts, playing surfaces, scoreboards, etc, who takes care of these areas, how much it costs, what happens between contests

17.) A look at the weight room; what's available, hours of operation, benefits and dangers

18.) Generations of athletes in the same family (current athletes who are sons and daughters of former athletes; older brothers and sisters who played, grandparents who played, etc)

19.) A look at the school's physical education program and why some students are still out of shape; do any students fail PE?

20.) How athletes in your school are influenced by professional athletes--mannerisms, methods of dress, team loyalties, involvement in gambling (sports, pools and contests)

21.) High school students who ref and coach youth sports--time demands, money earned, reasons for being involved, honors earned as refs and coaches

22.) A look at your athletic booster club--what they do, how they earn money, what influence they might have on your school's athletic program, if any (sometimes called parents' club)

23.) Student pep clubs, bleacher rowdies, "sixth man" clubs, etc--the semi-organized student sports fanatics at your school, how traditions began, where they draw the line

24.) The most loyal sports fans--those who have not missed home game in 50 years, etc; are they parents of former players, are they former players themselves, why do they keep coming back?

25.) How athletes make the transition from one sport to the next--changes in mental approach to the new sport, changes in conditioning, training, exercise, diet, etc

26.) How athletes make the transition from playing in one season to not playing the next--what kind of letdown there might be at the end of a season

27.) How athletes approach the final game of the high school career and what they think about not playing any more

28.) How athletes prepare physically and mentally for the next match, game, meet, including any personal rituals; does coach get involved in the pre-game preparation? Compare competition preparation for individual sport with team sport

29.) Team rituals beyond the pre-game ritual

30.) Rise of "one-sport" athletes (those who excel in and play only one sport)

31.) Coping with sports injuries, from the perspectives of an athlete who is about finished with rehab and about ready to resume playing and an athlete who has just begun rehab and must sit out several months.

32.) Students who excel in off-campus sports--club soccer, AAU basketball, equestrian, club swimming, ice skating--especially those who have advanced to all-star, statewide, regional talent pools

33.) How wrestlers maintain weight (the only sport with this kind of requirement), the dangers of questionable diets, temporary starvation, etc

34.) The growth of "in-your-face" athletics, on the field and on the sidelines and in the stands--what coaches can do about it, what local refs are doing about it--and other sportsmanship issues; has your school ever been cited for either poor sportsmanship or exemplary sportsmanship?

35.) The college recruiting process, from the perspective of an athlete who is a subject of college recruiting efforts; current college eligibility requirements and the NCAA Clearinghouse process

36.) How coaches keep up with former athletes back to help with current team?

37.) Coaching one's son or daughter; playing sports for one's mother or father

38.) What sports current coaches played in high school and college; accomplishments, embarrassing moments, most memorable moments

39.) Pre-season conditioning--suggested or requirement (fall conditioning for spring sports, for example)

40.) Sports camps for individuals, teams--suggested or requirement, and what happens if an athlete cannot go to camp that his or her team is going to