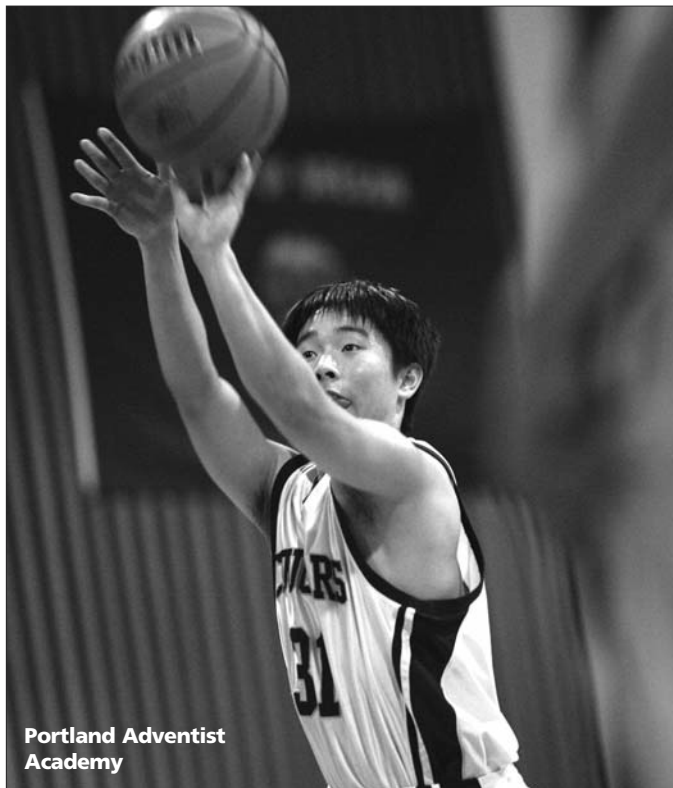


Game On: Church vs. Schools | BY WALT HAMERSLOUGH

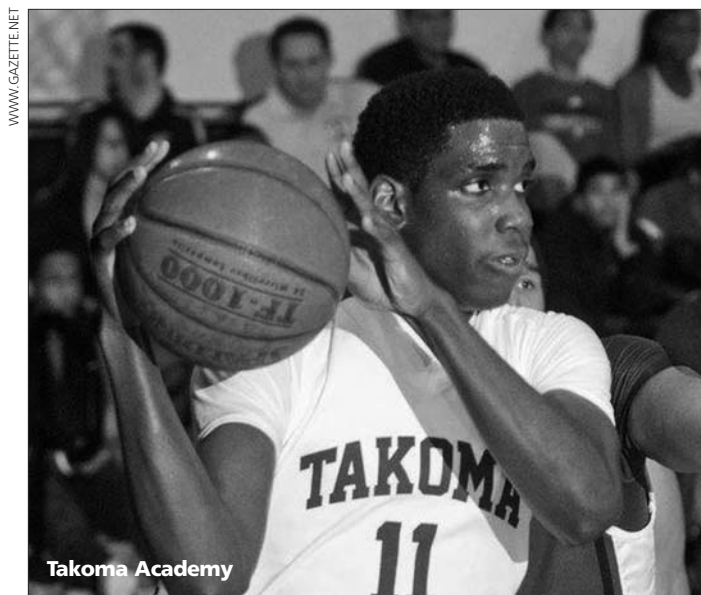
In 1976 the Department of Education of the General Conference published the pamphlet titled *Guidelines for Activities with Elements of Competition*. The pamphlet presents an analysis of competition and rivalry from the viewpoint of the Scriptures and the Spirit of Prophecy and provides recommendations for such activities. Under the section on Inter-organizational Sports, reasons are given as to why Seventh-day Adventists are opposed to an organized program of interschool athletics or inter-organizational sports among Adventist institutions or churches. These guidelines do not voice a new church philosophy but articulate what has been the accepted position for many years.

Thus the position of the church was put in print, and it was generally recognized that this was the official position of the church. Since these were guidelines and not policy, many schools and churches felt that they could set their own rules with regard to their athletic programs. A study done in 1986¹ showed that approximately 80 percent of the colleges, more than 25 academies, and scores of churches were participating in such competitive activities.



MOTOYA NAKAMURA/THE OREGONIAN | WWW.OREGONLIVE.COM

Portland Adventist Academy



WWW.GAZETTE.NET

Takoma Academy

Takoma and Portland Adventist academies were some of the pioneers in this area and had varsity teams in the early 1950s. In the 1980s, more and more schools instituted varsity programs in direct opposition to General Conference counsel.

The Seventh-day Adventist Health, Physical Education, Recreation Association (SDA-HPERA) gave this issue serious study for some three years in the 1980s. In its yearly national meetings, papers were presented and dialogue took place between individuals and in small groups. The Association made presentations to forum meetings, conversed with academy and college faculty, and wrote articles for church periodicals. Their concern was that a dichotomy existed between the church's position and what was taking place in church institutions.

The SDA-Health, Physical Education, Recreation Association

SDA-HPERA was founded in 1980. It is composed of physical education personnel from academies, colleges, and universities. In April 1986 the Association met at Kettering College for its annual conference, and one of the topics of discussion was the role of interschool sports in Seventh-day Adventist academies and colleges. A number of physical educators were troubled that while the church had taken a position that there should be no interschool sports, a number of academies, colleges, and churches had been engaging in competitive athletic programs for years.

The question was asked, if the church is so strongly against interschool athletics and yet these programs are rapidly growing in our schools, should not practice come into line with the church's position? The church should either develop a policy that would, with carefully constructed guidelines, permit interschool programs, or create a policy prohibiting such programs and establish means to enforce the policy.

After considerable discussion, a recommendation was made to the General Conference that a study group be formed, to be composed of members selected by SDA-HPERA and the General Conference, which would carefully examine the role of sport in the Seventh-day Adventist Church structure. It was suggested that this meeting be held at the earliest possible date. In a letter I wrote as executive director of SDA-HPERA to George Akers, General Conference education director, on May 27, 1986, the recommendation read as follows:

WHY THEY PLAY Adventist Students in Competitive Sports

BY RACHEL LOGAN

Name: Derek Baker

School: Union College

Class standing: Senior

Sport, position: Union College Gymnastics, base

Major: Business and sports management

It took until his senior year for Derek to join the Gymnastics, the acrobatic gymnastics team at Union College. He had watched the team from the sidelines for years, but his heavy course load didn't allow him to join. When he finally accepted a place on the team at the beginning of the 2014 school year, Derek knew it was worth the wait.

"I didn't want to do it until I could commit one hundred percent," said Derek. "This year it worked out."

The twenty-five-member team meets eight hours a week to practice their high-flying routines. Then they take to the road to perform for churches and schools, sometimes performing for Friday-night vesper programs or Sabbath church services.

"When we go on tour, that's when we really focus the spiritual side of the sport," said Derek. "It's more than a show [for us]. One of the big things we are always saying is that we are not doing this for ourselves; we are doing this for God."

Derek's position on the team is a base, which means he is responsible for lifting, tossing, carrying, and catching some of the other performers.

Working with such a large team can cause personality conflicts, especially on long road trips in a bus, but Derek insists that this is one of the benefits of team sports: teaching patience and teamwork. "We've all come from different walks of life, but we all have one common goal of doing the best we can and working hard every day."

One way the team comes together is by conducting worships before each practice.

In the wake of the recent 23-foot fall of one of their teammates, Heather Boulais, during a practice, Derek says the team has grown even closer.

"Every program is going to have ups and downs and dealing with adversity. The incident that happened has rallied us closer. Tough times don't last, tough people do—and my team's tough."



Derek and Heather Boulais



LSAK12.COM/HHS/UNIVERSITY.HTM

“We do not promote sports for all schools. But there are some, due to their location and unique situation, where such can exist.”

Historically the policy of the SDA Church regarding interschool sports has been one of nonparticipation. However, there are presently a number of schools engaged in interschool sport programs, and we see a double standard.

As professional educators we see a need to prayerfully study whether or not sport can be used as a tool for personal growth and Christian witness. If, as a result of this study, we conclude that sport can be a positive influence, we would then recommend that guidelines be established to aid in the development and control of such programs.

The church reacts to the request from SDA-HPERA

During the General Conference Annual Council held in Rio de Janeiro in October 1986, delegates approved the formulation of a commission to study the appropriateness of competitive sports in Adventist colleges, academies, and churches. The commission was to report its findings to the 1987 Annual Council in Washington, DC.

Upon receiving notice of the study commission, I recommended the names of fifteen physical educators, including faculty from colleges, universities, and academies, to be included on the commission. If funding were not available for this size of group, a smaller group of seven individuals was identified. The information was sent in a letter to George Akers on May 27, 1986. Included in that letter was the following paragraph: “Physical educators feel strongly that this is an issue that must be resolved. The existing guidelines should be followed by everyone, both schools and churches, or they should be rewritten so that actions fit the guidelines.”

As a result of this request, the church established the North American Division Committee on the Role of Interschool Sports in Seventh-day Adventist Academies and Colleges. Two meetings took place, one on February 12, 1987, and the second on June 22–23, 1987 at the General Conference headquarters in Washington, DC. An international interschool sports committee was also established to study the issue and met on August 5, 1987, at the General Conference headquarters.

North American Division Committee on Interschool Sports

The North American Division Department of Education selected four individuals to represent SDA-HPERA on the North American Division committee: me (Walt Hamerslough) from Loma Linda University-La Sierra (LLU-LS), and executive director of the Association; Barbara Friesen from Andrews University and secretary of the Association; Ingrid Johnson, a retired professor from Andrews University; and James Roddy from Oakwood College. The president of the Association, Vernon Scheffel (LLU-LS), was not selected.

SDA-HPERA was quite frustrated with the makeup of the committee, and on February 9, 1987, I wrote about the concerns in a letter to Calvin Rock, chair of the committee. Following are some of the observations:

While there are four physical educators on the committee, only two adequately represent SDA-HPERA (Barbara Friesen and Walt Hamerslough). The other two are not representative for the following reasons: Ingrid Johnson, while an outstanding and fine Christian person, has been out of the profession for some

years and, therefore, would not have the feel of current thought. She has also not attended our convention for the last several years when SDA-HPERA has been discussing this topic. James Roddy has also been an infrequent attendee and likewise not privy to the pulse of the Association. . . . [Both were left on the committee.]

There are no academy physical education instructors on the list, although the committee is looking at sport for academies. It is recognized that there are principals on the committee, but we feel that it would be wise to have at least one academy physical educator with the group. They would then feel that they had a say in whatever the outcome of the study.

We recommended the names of Randy Norton from La Sierra Academy or Dave Davies from Portland Adventist Academy. Neither of these individuals was appointed to the committee. For better representation, we also recommended the names of Stacy Nelson from Atlantic Union College, Bob Kamieneski from Southern Missionary College, and Tim Windemuth from Walla Walla College. Stacy Nelson was added to the committee.

The Association felt that the Division of Education was not cooperating but going its own way. As a result, SDA-HPERA wound up with five representatives on the committee but only three it had recommended.

At the NAD committee meeting, Stacy Nelson and I made presentations supporting SDA-HPERA's position. An important outcome from the work of the study committee was that it affirmed the 1976 *Guidelines for Activities with Elements of Competition*. It also voted that exceptions to this policy would be handled by the respective Union committees, with constraints and guide-

WHY THEY PLAY Adventist Students in Competitive Sports

BY RACHEL LOGAN

Name: Courtney Jenkins

School: Washington Adventist University

Class standing: Freshman

Sport, position: Women's basketball, forward

Major: Early childhood education

There were two big reasons Courtney chose to attend Washington Adventist University: God and basketball. Before attending WAU, Courtney had never studied at an Adventist school. In the past, it had sometimes been difficult to juggle athleticism and religion when many sport programs schedule games on Saturdays. Courtney knew that at WAU her religious beliefs to keep the Sabbath holy were not only respected but in line with campus sport scheduling policy.

"I knew it would be a good fit [at WAU]," says Courtney. "I could achieve my goal to become more spiritual, and I could play basketball. God works in mysterious ways!"

As a freshman, sometimes it is difficult to find balance between homework and practice, but Courtney says that she feels very supported by her school. "The teachers are friendly, and everyone is very homey here; we're one big family!" she says, laughing. "As long as they see you put forth effort, they are willing to work with you."

During the season, the basketball team practices two hours a day. Although challenging at times, Courtney believes the work is teaching her valuable lessons in the long run.

"I've learned to be more responsible—how to handle certain situations. When times get rough, I can't just run away. I've learned to respect my coaches and work with my teammates. Basketball has really helped discipline me."

In addition to playing for fun, Courtney feels called to the sport by God. "I'm still trying to figure it out, but I really feel like God wants me to be a witness for Him on the court."



Courtney

lines to be developed. In addition, it voted that the outline generated by SDA-HPERA, which set the guidelines for schools who chose to participate in inter-organizational sports, be accepted. The result was that, where appropriate, an institution could participate in inter-organizational sports and be within General Conference policy. In essence, the entire proposal developed by SDA-HPERA on interschool sports was accepted by the committee.

International sports committee meets

When the North American Division Committee on the Role of Interschool Sports was established and the meeting time set, SDA-HPERA was not aware of the international sports committee's existence. When SDA-HPERA became cognizant of this committee and obtained a list of the members, it was noted that there was no representation from the Association, nor were any physical education teachers included. We thought that this was somewhat strange, since a committee dealing with an issue so central to our

profession had no Association representation. A letter to Calvin Rock, chair of the NAD committee, dated July 10, 1987, requested that an invitation be extended to SDA-HPERA to send a representative to the international committee. Several days before the August 5, 1987 meeting in Washington, DC., SDA-HPERA received an official invitation stating that one of its members could be present. As executive director of SDA-HPERA, I attended the meeting.

I was asked to make a presentation explaining the viewpoint of SDA-HPERA. I presented both the anti-sport as well as the pro-sport views. I stated that the majority of the members of the organization favored a policy that permitted interschool sports but with tight controls written into the policy.

After a day of intense discussion, the international committee voted to affirm the 1976 *Guidelines for Activities with Elements of Competition* and also voted that requests for exceptions (institutions that wanted to participate in interschool sports) be made at the Division level. Except for the administrative level where the requests were to be sent, this was the same recommendation that came out of the NAD committee.

Akers's presentation to SDA-HPERA

George Akers was asked to give a presentation at the 1988 SDA-HPERA conference. He did not attend but sent a recorded message with Humberto Rasi from the General Conference. Following is an abstract of his message:

Reasons why we should cease and desist from interschool league sports:

1. It is an affirmation of a false god of this age (sport mania). For our schools to be leading out in this misdirected emphasis represents a corporate apostasy. It goes directly against the inspired counsel specifically given us regarding this matter, which we neglect or defy at our peril.
2. It provides an almost incontrovertible argument to the critics of the system that our schools have become look-alike to secular, worldly schools.

“For our schools to be leading out in this misdirected emphasis represents a corporate apostasy.”



3. It introduces into our schools an uncontrollable element, reorganizing them around the play/amusement principle instead of the traditional work/witness/service mission of SDA education.
4. It is a gladiatorial model, inherently anti-biblical and anti-Christian, for it idealizes an adversarial view of and relationship to other human beings—God’s children. It generates a spirit of rivalry and animosity.

Needless to say, this message prompted extensive discussion. While Dr. Akers presented a number of profound thoughts, the tone of the message was strident and left many with a bad taste in their mouth.

Outcome of the interschool sports question

The final reports of the NAD and international committees differed little. Both voted to affirm the 1976 Guidelines and to raise them to the level of policy, but included a statement that allowed for exceptions which would permit institutions to participate in interschool sports. Thus, the goal of SDA-HPERA was achieved. The Association felt that at last the church’s policy and actual practice would be in concert.

Action taken at Nairobi, Kenya

The recommendation presented to the Annual Council that met in Nairobi, Kenya, October 4–11, 1988, was *not* the report that was approved by the two committees. Before it got to Nairobi, the report was changed—evidently by the brethren at the GC—so that the exceptions clause was taken out. The following report is from the *Adventist Review*.²

“The item that provoked by far the

WHY THEY PLAY Adventist Students in Competitive Sports

BY RACHEL LOGAN

Name: Kyle Chaisson

School: Walla Walla University

Class standing: Senior

Sport, position: Walla Walla Wolf Pack Hockey Club, forward

Major: Marketing



Although Kyle had played inline hockey before, he had never played the sport on ice. It was his sophomore year at Walla Walla University when Kyle’s friends convinced him to consider joining the WWU Wolf Pack Hockey Club. They needed more players and hoped he would join the team.

Unlike a school-sponsored sport, the hockey club operates much like any other club on campus,

as a student-run entity. Participants are responsible for buying their own equipment, funding their trips, scheduling their games, and conducting their marketing.

“It costs \$700 to rent the ice for a game,” said Kyle. “And hockey equipment is pretty expensive.”

When games are away, the team members cover their own gas and food and charge tickets at the door to help pay for expenses.

Although this might turn some people away from wanting to join, Kyle points out that being a club versus a sponsored sport gives the hockey team more freedom. They schedule practices if they have time or cancel them if they choose not to practice.

“A club team is not as time consuming as your standard athletic program, such as basketball,” Kyle said. “But I still get to play a sport I love, be a part of a team, and enjoy the brotherhood it brings without spending fifteen hours a week in practices.”

Kyle believes athletes can play competitive sports while still acting in a Christ-like manner. “It’s all about how you carry yourself. Playing is an opportunity to be the light to competitors and show a good attitude.”



WWW.COLLEGE.EDU

A study done in 1986 showed that approximately 80 percent of the Adventist colleges were participating in such competitive activities.

most discussion and debate was a set of new guidelines governing interschool sports. [Note: Actually these were not new at all but the same guidelines that were published in 1976.] The approved guidelines were adapted by the General Conference and division officers from a report submitted by the General Conference Interschool Sports Study Committee . . . , which was commissioned by the 1986 Annual Council.

“The new guidelines were approved with the understanding that the action would be presented again in 1989, at which time the document could be voted from guidelines into official church policy. The measure opposes interschool league play but allows occasional friendship matches at social gatherings.

“The approved guidelines differ from the study committee’s in the areas of ‘exceptions.’ The study committee’s recommendations allowed for exceptions, and outlined a full process for getting an exception approved (final approval to be given by the respective division). But the adapted and voted action does not allow for such exceptions, other than occasional social matches.

“Another difference between the two documents is that the new guidelines focus exclusively on educational institutions, whereas the study committee recommendations would have influenced sporting events by local churches and all other denominational organizations. Many Black conferences, for example, have operated organized leagues for more than 20 years.

“Acceptance of an amendment made from the council floor (to make the document serve as

guidelines rather than policy for a year) will give North America—where many Adventist schools engage in interschool sports—a chance to debate this issue fully.”

What remains a mystery is why the denomination would rule that a school, located adjacent to a church, and with many of the same young people, cannot participate in a sports league, while the local church can operate such a league. This is difficult to explain to our young people. It does not instill confidence in the decision-making ability of our church leaders.

NAD meetings in Minneapolis

SDA-HPERA asked to send a representative to the North American Division’s year-end meeting in Minneapolis October 30–November 2, 1988 to participate in the discussion. The request was denied. Results of the meeting concerning interschool sports as reported in the *Adventist Review*, are as follows:

“With some dissenting votes, the committee voted to accept as guidelines for one year the 1988 Annual Council recommendations on limiting interschool sporting events to occasional friendly matches at social gatherings.

“The new guidelines oppose league sports by Adventist colleges and academies with other Adventist or non-Adventist groups, although they permit league play among local Adventist churches.”

“These guidelines will become official church policy if so voted when discussed at the 1989 GC Annual Council.”³

1989 Annual Council— final vote

At the 1989 Annual Council, which met October 3–10 in Silver Spring, Maryland, the church leaders gave final approval to raise the guidelines for interschool athletics to policy status. From the *Adventist Review*:

“A new policy, established as guidelines last year at the Nairobi Annual Council [Note: again, these were not new guidelines but the ones published by the church in 1976], sets forth the Adventist Church’s stance on interschool league play within its educational system. The action does not allow interschool league play, but allows occasional friendship games at joint social gatherings. And the new policy is interpreted as allowing churches to continue their interschool leagues.

“The measure, approved with a 157–49 vote (more than a three-to-one margin), ignited considerable opposition from North American Division (NAD) college presidents and NAD union conference presidents, who chair the college boards. Many of them spoke against the action because it excluded churches from the restrictions. . . .

“To restrict the competition by campuses and yet allow competitive leagues in our churches is inconsistent,” said Larry Geraty, Atlantic Union College president. “I am troubled by the questions I’ll be asked when I get back to campus,” said John Wagner, Union College president. “What biblical principle is working here when we allow sports in a church league as opposed to [an Adventist college] playing a Baptist, Methodist, or other Christian [colleges]?”⁴

WHY THEY PLAY Adventist Students in Competitive Sports BY RACHEL LOGAN

Name: Chris Spears

School: Pacific Union College

Class standing: Senior

Sport, position: Men’s basketball, forward

Major: Exercise science with a teaching emphasis

When Pacific Union College recruiters told Chris he had a shot at playing basketball in college, he could not believe it. He had always thought high school would be the end of his basketball career.

“When you love the game, you want to play as long as you can,” said Chris.

As a freshman athlete at PUC, Chris worked hard to put everything he had into the sport. During preseason, the team practiced five hours, six days a week to condition their bodies; once school started, practices dropped to three hours a day. Sabbath offered a well-earned rest the players needed to recuperate.

The basketball coach encouraged his players to attend the local churches when the teams travelled over the weekend, but he often left it open as optional; not every player was a practicing Adventist. In fact, one year only five or six of the fifteen players identified themselves as Seventh-day Adventist, although many considered themselves Christians.

Even though Chris had felt passionate about basketball for most of his life, the hectic practice and travelling schedule eventually became overwhelming. After two years on the team, Chris had to quit to keep up with his studies.

Despite his experience, Chris feels very strongly about the benefits of physical activity and education. He plans to look for a job teaching physical education after he graduates in June 2015. Although he is open-minded, Chris hopes he can find a job at a public school, because often the health and fitness programs have more funding than Adventist institutions.



“Playing sports should be a celebration of the athletic gifts God has given us,” said Chris. “It’s great when you play an opponent and instead of being upset when you lose, you can laugh and say ‘see you next time.’ That’s the best way to play.”

Chris



Today the church's policy is "no interschool sports in our academies and colleges."

Again, church leaders say one thing but do another

The Board of Higher Education was scheduled to meet at Loma Linda University on February 9, 1989. I had asked to make a presentation at the meeting and was given permission to do so. However, two weeks before the scheduled meeting I received a letter saying that the board didn't think it would be appropriate to have only one side represented, so they cancelled my invitation. The letter said that the board would be meeting again on June 14, 1989 at Pacific Union College, and I could make my presentation at that time. But again, shortly before the scheduled date in June, the board said that circumstances were such that I would not be able to meet with them. They suggested that if I so desired, I could write a short paper and they would read it to the board. I have no idea if the paper was ever read to the group. The gist of the paper was as follows:

We (SDA-HPERA) promote a general statement that says SDA institutions (note I say institutions and not only schools) are better off not being involved in inter-organizational sports. We believe that! However, we maintain that there should be an exception clause that legitimizes what is being done at present. We do not promote sports for all schools. But there are some, due to their location and unique situation, where such can exist. In addition, we need controls established by professionals to insure that programs will continue at the desired low level, will be administrated by Christian coaches following Christian principles, and will be reviewed at appropriate intervals.

It is interesting that this is exactly the content of the reports that were generated by the

North American Division committee and the international committee on sports that were established by the General Conference in session at the Annual Council in Rio de Janeiro.

Uncooperative church attitude

As a result of living through this experience, one can conclude that our church leaders do not always live up to what they say and are not always cooperative. Some examples from this experience:

1. When selecting members from SDA-HPERA to serve on the interschool sport study committees, church leaders pretty much ignored the recommendations of the Association. They placed two people on the committee that were not recommended. They finally added an important individual when requested to do so by the Association.
2. Originally, no SDA-HPERA members were appointed to the international study committee. When the Association appealed, the executive director of SDA-HPERA was added to the committee.
3. Church leaders ignored one-half of the report from the NAD and international committees. The reports from the committees contained two aspects: (1) raise the guidelines to policy; (2) permit interschool athletics, when requested, but with carefully itemized guidelines. At the Nairobi Annual Council, when the report was presented to the attendees, church leaders took out the exception clause, so that interschool athletics are not permitted at all. Basically they ignored the work of the two committees.

It is also important to note that church leadership blocked every attempt by SDA-HPERA to make a presentation at official church meetings. They also never invited the Association to participate in any decision-making process leading up to this policy. We worked for many weeks trying to get permission to attend the Annual Council in Africa. We were put off again and again. Finally, ten days before the session was to begin, we were told that we could send a representative. This short time period made it impossible to raise money for the trip and to make the necessary arrangements. The General Conference offered no assistance.

Furthermore, we asked for permission to be present at the NAD meetings held in Minneapolis, but were flatly told that the interschool sports question would not be a major item on the agenda and that it was not appropriate for us to be there. Later, we were told by a high-ranking GC official that he was looking forward to our dialogue at the upcoming Board of Higher Education meeting in Loma Linda. When we asked for permission to attend, we were told that the guidelines were not a major item and it would not be possible for us to be there. We were told to come to the next meeting to be held at Pacific Union College, but again, as mentioned before, permis-



Andrews University

Seventh-day Adventist Colleges with Intercollegiate School-sponsored Sports

PACIFIC UNION COLLEGE

Men: Basketball, cross-country, soccer

Women: Basketball, cross-country, volleyball

LA SIERRA UNIVERSITY

Men: Baseball, basketball, soccer

Women: Basketball, softball, volleyball

WALLA WALLA UNIVERSITY

Men: Soccer, basketball

Women: Volleyball, basketball, softball

CANADIAN UNIVERSITY COLLEGE (Burman University)

Men: Basketball, ice hockey, soccer, volleyball

Women: Basketball, soccer, volleyball

UNION COLLEGE

Men: Basketball, golf

Women: Basketball, volleyball

Coed: Gymnastics

SOUTHWESTERN ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY

Intramurals only

SOUTHERN ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY

Intramurals only

OAKWOOD UNIVERSITY

Men: Basketball, soccer

Women: Basketball, volleyball

ANDREWS UNIVERSITY:

Men: Basketball, club ice hockey, soccer

Women: Basketball, soccer

WASHINGTON ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY

Men: Basketball, cross-country, soccer

Women: Basketball, cross-country, soccer

Coed: Acro Airs

**“The adapted
and voted
action does not
allow for . . .
exceptions,
other than
occasional
social
matches.”**

sion to attend the PUC Board meeting was revoked, and we were told that it would not be fair to have one “interest group” present when the “other side” would have no one to represent them.

When one considers the promises that were made, the counsel that was provided, the excuses that were used to keep us away from the decision-making process, one is not endeared to the governance of the church. Certainly the power resides with those that make the decisions, and they are not compelled to follow advice provided by committees they establish.

The following news item appeared in the November 16, 1989 issue of the *Adventist Review*:

*“After more than four hours of discussion and dialogue on October 12, the North American Division executive committee voted overwhelmingly to accept a new interschool sports policy that prohibits intermural league play in Adventist colleges and academies. The same policy was adopted by the General Conference during the recent Annual Council session, October 3-10. . . . The policy is interpreted as not affecting interchurch leagues” (emphasis added).*⁵

A point to consider

While some suggest that sports provide false idols, it is interesting that church publications have frequently featured famous sports personalities on the cover and reported ways in which these individuals have witnessed either for their church or for a lifestyle that the church promotes. We are certainly giving the message that there are positive lessons that can be learned from these individuals and from the activities in which they participate.

Finally

The church set up two committees to study the sport question. However, leaders almost totally rejected the reports of the committees and chose to go their own way. Why did the church even set up those committees if they were not going to follow their recommendations? A lot of

church money was wasted for nothing! Today the church's policy is “no interschool sports in our academies and colleges.” Do our schools follow this policy? Very few do! What does the church do when schools go against this policy? Absolutely nothing! What does this do to respect for our church leadership?

SDA-HPERA is not opposed to a policy that prohibits inter-organizational sports⁶ but is opposed to the hypocrisy that exists in having a policy that prohibits such and does absolutely nothing to enforce the policy. ■

Walter S. Hamerslough, EdD, is professor emeritus of



La Sierra University, having taught there for 42 years. He taught for five years at Loma Linda Academy. He was the founder, president in 1985, and executive director for 17 years, of the SDA-Health, Physical Education, Recreational Association (SDA-HPERA).

Rachel Logan is a 2014 graduate of Walla Walla University, where she studied creative writing.



While living on campus, she was a page editor for the campus newspaper, *The Collegian*. She now lives in Sacramento, where she is interning at *Spectrum*

magazine. During her free time she loves to travel the world and learn about other cultures.

References

1. Presented at the NAD Committee on Sports at Washington, DC, June 22, 1987.
2. Carlos Medley, “Annual Council Brings Excitement to Nairobi,” *Adventist Review*, October 27, 1988, 6.
3. Myron Widmer, “NAD Meetings in Minneapolis Make History Too,” *Adventist Review*, November 20, 1988, 9.
4. Carlos Medley, “Role of Women, Sports Top Annual Council Discussion,” *Adventist Review*, November 9, 1989, 7.
5. “NAD Leaders Adopt GC Sports Policy,” *Adventist Review*, November 16, 1989, 7.
6. As the church had developed no guidelines for inter-organizational sports, SDA-HPERA filled the void and produced *Guidelines for Seventh-day Adventist Athletics*. They can be found at <http://www.lasierra.edu/sdahpera>. On the menu, click on “Athletic Guidelines (PDF).”