

in the lead

football (as of Oct. 5)

TEAM	W	L	T	PCT
ON	5	0	0	1.000
LFS	4	1	0	.800
SMW	4	1	0	.800
SMNW	3	2	0	.600
OE	3	2	0	.600
OS	3	2	0	.600
ONW	2	3	0	.400
SMN	2	3	0	.400
SMS	2	3	0	.400
SME	1	4	0	.200

upcoming games

Football:

Fri. Oct. 16, against SMW, 7 p.m. at South stadium.
 Fri. Oct. 23, against SME, 7 p.m. at North stadium.
 Fri. Oct. 30, Homecoming game, against SMN, 7 p.m. at North stadium.

Boys Varsity Soccer:

Tue. Oct. 13, against Olathe South, 7 p.m. at ODAC.
 Thu. Oct. 15 against Olathe East, 7 p.m. at CBAC.
 Tue. Oct. 20, against Olathe North, 7 p.m. at SMDSC-Field 1.

Cross Country:

Sat. Oct. 10, Haskell University Invitational, 10 a.m. at Haskell University.
 Sat. Oct. 17, Sunflower League Championship, 9 a.m. at Rim Rock Farm, Lawrence.
 Sat. Oct. 24, 6A Regionals, time and place TBA.

Tennis:

Fri./Sat. Oct. 16-17, State, time and place TBA.

Gymnastics:

Thu. Oct. 15, against SME, 5:30 p.m. at SME.
 Thu. Oct. 22, League Championship, 5:30 at SMS.
 Tue. Oct. 27, Regionals, 5 p.m. at SMNW.

Volleyball:

Tue. Oct. 13, Free State Quad, 5:30 p.m. at Free State.
 Sat. Oct. 17, against Emporia, 8 a.m. at Emporia High School.
 Mon. Oct. 19, against Mill Valley, 5 p.m. at Mill Valley.

Golf:

Mon. Oct. 12, Regionals, time and place TBA.
 Mon. Oct. 19, State, time and place TBA.

Live it up

Injuries happen; they are a major part of sports. But don't let the fear of being hurt keep you from exploring all the opportunities high school sports provide. You're only in high school once.

The night was cold and foggy; the turf was covered with dew. I stood with the freshman football team, waiting for the only chance I would have to play "under the lights." It would be my first night as running back for the Cougars. Adrenaline rushed through my body. The setting was almost too good to be true.

The start of the second quarter had just begun. We ran the same successful play for the third consecutive time, however, this one ended in disaster. A cheap shot, a dive right at my ankles and I was carted off the field with a shattered growth plate in my left ankle and a broken tibia and fibia in my left leg. I'll never forget coach Mike Cooper coming to the hospital to see me after the game.

"Well, there's always next season," he told me before leaving. Little did anyone know, that night would be the last time I would ever play the game of football.

As I've matured over the past three years here at Northwest, I've come to the realization that there's not always another tomorrow. My freshman, sophomore and junior years have vanished in the blink of an eye. As a senior, I've seen and

experienced a high school sports career that some people may never have the opportunity to be a part of. On the other hand, I have also made decisions that I regret, and possibly will for the rest of my life.

What I don't regret is giving my 100 percent during that play that landed me in the hospital.

As an athlete, I've learned a few things on my own. Play every game to the best of your ability. Leave it all on the field. Take advantage of the opportunities that high school athletics provide. Play every game like it's your last, because you might not have another chance. True athletes do this without being told. The others will be the moms and dads who will reminisce about what they could have done in high school.

In the words of former NW athlete Mark Fancher, "Soak it up." Chances are most of us won't play at the collegiate level. Don't base athletic decisions on what Mom and Dad want. You're in high school now; you can make your own decisions. If you want to play

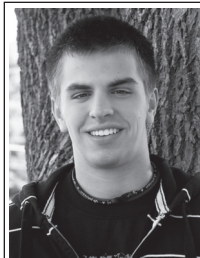
a sport, do it and don't ever look back.

Every Friday night, I sit in the football stands like a lost puppy, just another face in the crowd.

Sure, I have friends who stand with me, but I feel out of place. I look on the field and see nearly all of my best friends having the time of their lives, making memories to hang onto for the rest of their lives.

If I could go back, I would do a few things differently. I would have gotten my butt out of bed to lift every morning for summer weights; I would have suffered through the grueling days at Emporia State for the team camp; I would have continued to be a three-sport athlete throughout my high school career; I would have continued playing the game I love. I would have "soaked up" every opportunity I had.

The chance to play high school sports only comes around once in this lifetime. Believe me — for athletes, there's not always "another tomorrow."



NICK FEIGNER

inside the numbers

300

dollars spent on tennis balls during each season of tennis at Northwest

106.35

Olathe East's final score to win last year's state gymnastics meet

100.5

the average score of the gymnastics team this season

6

percent of games girls' tennis has won compared to last year at this point