**Values of Sport**

By SRPA Students

Through history, the games people play have helped us to understand their core values.

The Olympic Games evolved out of the ancient Greeks' appreciation for the beauty of form and the human body. The blood sport of the Romans was a natural outgrowth of a society based on conquest. Native Americans loved contests that emphasized speed and the accuracy of their weapons, because their whole existence depended on those skills.

Which brings me to this: What will future generations think of us if they look to our sports? Basketball players brawling with fans, a college football player photographed kicking an opponent in the head on the side-lines, all this against a continuous background of millionaire players whining about money and drug testing.

We have spent a lot of time this year talking about values, but isn't it time to talk about what has happened to our sports? Too often, from the Little League level up, we have put so much emphasis on winning that we've come to accept, even encourage, the more boorish behaviour by athletes as long as they win.

The great value of sport is that it teaches us to recognize the difference between winning and striving for excellence, the better but much harder achievement. More important, sport teaches us how to handle failure, to get up and try again when we lose. That's the most valuable lesson, since we lose more than we win in life.

Somehow those lessons have been lost in modern sports. If we are blind to that and do nothing about it, then the core values which have been the strength of this country are changing. We cannot let that happen.

