

This next bit of ramble talks a lot about me, but this is not about me, it's about the kids.

I guess most bios start with being born, and so I was born on Nov. 2, 1945. The Second World War was ending and life became normal again. I went to high school at Hartford Public High School where I went out for the track team. During that time I was pole vaulting with Swedish steel vaulting poles into sawdust surrounded by a 2 X 4 wood frame. The head coach was a sprinter named Lindy Remmigino. I did not have a pole vault coach. I was coached by a senior athlete who helped get me over the bar. In four years of high school with no coach I managed to do 10' 6", the State leader vaulted 12'.

I did not go to college after high school; I spent five years in the U.S. Coast Guard Reserve and upon receiving an Honorable Discharge I moved to NYC to find my way as a sculptor. After a few years in NYC I moved upstate with a group of people and spent the next ten years living in communes and communities across the U.S. After my divorce in 1979 I moved with my son and stepdaughter to Potter Valley and went to Mendocino Jr. College as a single parent.

While at the college I became the Director of Student Activities and rekindled my interest in sports and working out. While there was no track team at the time, I worked out with whatever team happened to be in the weight room. I tried pole-vaulting at neighboring Ukiah High and competed in the sub-masters competition and won first place for 35 - 39 year olds at 10' 6".

After graduating Mendocino College I went to Sonoma State where I asked to be on the track team at age 40. In my first year on the team I realized how much work I had to do to get into college competitive shape. At the end of the year I managed to eek out 11' and a first place finish, which was enough to earn a letter. Once again there wasn't a pole vault coach so I was coached by another gentleman who just happened to use the facilities. With one year under my belt and a newfound desire to become better I hit the gym heavily that winter period. Next spring I went from 11' to 11' 6" and at one meet at Davis I managed to improve my personal record four times and made it to 13' 6" at age 41, which was ranked in the top ten of active vaulters at that time and third all time at Sonoma State University. I was given the coaches award for inspiration and excellence.

My next masters competition my coach was nowhere to be seen and due to several circumstances, one my coach not being there to consult with regarding my jumps and an elderly official wanting to catch my pole while I was still on it, I had to abort the jump and landed awkwardly on the pit where I tore my ACL. I had no medical insurance so I was not able to see the doctor or repair my knee at that time. When my knee got better I got a brace and continued to vault to prepare for the World Masters Championships in Eugene, Oregon.

By the time I showed up for the championships I had a brace on my left knee holding my ACL together and I had pulled a hamstring but still took my three jumps. I no heighted at 9' but I received an ovation from the crowd anyway. Thirteen feet six inches took silver and bronze at that World Championship Meet. That pretty much ended my competitive career.

In 1989 my son was attending Cook Jr. High in Santa Rosa and had volunteered me to coach the pole vault since they had no one. I did coach that year as a volunteer walk on and the next year was asked to be the head track coach, which I accepted. There are five junior highs in Santa Rosa and they all had pole vault. The Santa Rosa School District Coaches Handbook stated that girls were not allowed to pole vault but in 1990 when Erica Hause came to me and said she wanted to pole vault I told her what the hand book said. She said she wanted to vault anyway and I told her I would teach her how to vault but couldn't promise she could ever compete. When I asked the other coaches if Erica could vault they said she could not compete with the girls, she would have to compete with the boys. At the next semi finals Erika earned a place to compete at the finals against the boys.

The next year when she went to Montgomery High, the coach there told her she would not be able to complete in the pole vault. So Erica and her Mom Linda told him that she was absolutely going to complete and started the Title 9, equity for women in sports, process. During that time, while we were writing letters to the CIF, they wrote back asking me if I actually thought girls could compete in the pole vault the resounding answer was "Yes they can!" Erica appeared in a full page picture in the Press Democrat and started to become known in Santa Rosa as the girl who wants to pole vault. The next year at the junior high level, the five schools incorporated pole vault into their schedules. Girls pole vaulted for the girls team. I had been the head coach for five years when I was asked to be the assistant coach at Piner High. Since there weren't any experienced pole vault coaches I split my season between Piner and Santa Rosa High. In 1994 I was asked to join the SR Express, a USATF youth league where I coached the pole vault. I also had some summer workshops for athletes from other schools and other clubs to come and learn the pole vault. A few years later, I started my own club, the Soul Air Pole Vault Club, which practiced at my house. We started with left over pits from the Jr. High.

When the new pit rule came into effect, in 1999, three of the five city high schools in the league did not have the pits to meet the new regulations. The district decided not to buy new pits due to budget issues so they suggested that all the athletes from the five high schools should come to one school to jump. When I heard what the district had planned I realized how ineffectual the pole vault would become with everyone at one school. How would you run meets? How would you score if the pole-vaulters were not at the school where the meet was being held? So I came up with an idea. The district had decided not to buy pits for the Jr. Highs so I worked out a system where we took the pits from the Jr. Highs added them to the high school pits and had special covers made to join the pads together. Seven of the eight schools in our league incorporated the idea and we once again had pole vault at the schools. The next year I was asked to be the district coach in charge of the five city high school pole vault programs. I went to each school, one school

a day five days a week. During this time I made sure the pits were legal and correct and I not only coached the athletes, I also instructed other adults to supervise at their schools.

In 1999 Santa Rosa High School held a conference with Sprinco Equipment Co. and invited the top Olympic contenders to coach their respective events: Amy Acuff in the high jump, Suze Powell in the throws and Jill Wittenwiler in the pole vault. I was asked to assist Jill with her demo. Unfortunately it rained, well; actually it poured that day so we had to stay indoors, in the gym. Jill was stuck for a demo, so I got some poles and she instructed the participants on drills, carries and planting. With time left and our not being able to go outside I said I could help her and brought out some PVC hurdles I had been taught how to make and use at the Pole Vault Summit that year by Bob Fraley. That helped save the day for Jill.

In 2005 due to a bond issue Santa Rosa High got a new track and with the new track got new pits. In the next couple of years the other five city high schools all got new tracks and pits. There was one problem at Santa Rosa High however, due to a constraint in moving a fence the runway was located next to the sidewalk, which went around the track. The runway faced into the wind and into the setting sun. I advised the school that this was unsafe. I was told there was no room and there was no other way to do it. So in order to have the pole vault event that end of the sidewalk around the track had to be closed so no one could get from one side of the track to the other at that end. Needless to say, the public was upset. At the Redwood Empire meet I had to bear the brunt of the complaints about safety issues. I tried to voice my opinion that the situation was unsafe and indefensible. I went to a district meeting where I presented my opinion but nothing happened. A year later with some left over bond money they asked if I still wanted to change the runway and I said yes and became the chief informational contact for the construction of the new runway. We now have a fenced in runway, completely separate from the sidewalk, with the wind, away from the sun and without concrete under the pit.

During my years as a Jr. and senior high school coach I earned the reputation of being a premier coach and official for the Santa Rosa area. The Press Democrat reporter Jim Underhill in an article in the paper gave me the nickname, "The Pole Vault Guru". I worked with athletes from many different schools from as far away as Marin, Contra Costa, Lake and Mendocino Counties including Sonoma County and worked at promoting pole vaulting and pole vault safety, getting the word out through many newspaper articles, Channel 50 the local TV station, where I was selected as "coach of the week", and Channel 7 news who did a special on a pair of my pole vaulters who were twins. Mike and Matt Tillinghast were exceptional athletes and were extremely dedicated to the sport. At 15'2" and 15'7" they won nearly every meet they went to. Matt Tillinghast was named "Athlete of the Year" two times by the Press Democrat

In the ten years with the Soul Air Pole Vault Club my athletes have qualified for and attended the National Junior Olympics Championships in Buffalo, Miami, New Orleans, Omaha, Los Angeles, Seattle, Eugene, and Sacramento. Both boys and girls have won medals at these events. At the Sacramento Junior Olympic Nationals, I met and was

asked to coach Elizabeth Boyle who was competing in the young women's age group. She subsequently broke the National Junior Olympic Record while under my direction at 12' 7".

Another notable athlete that I coached is Jake Arnold, fourth at the Olympic trials just missing a trip to Beijing. I was Jake's coach from Jr. High thru high school where he did 15' and went to the state meet.

Due to the budget crunches, the district no longer pays me but I continue to volunteer at the schools and the Soul Air Pole Vault Club. During this period from 1989 to present I have officiated at every major meet with the exception of Stanford, the National Jr. Olympic Championships and the CA. State meet, as a volunteer. This year in 2010 I became a Certified USATF Official.

In the early 90's I was asked by Jan Johnson to help coach at his summer camps, which I did and enjoyed for several years starting with Erica Hause. I am presently named in his Illustrated History of the Pole Vault (pg. 186,187) with the picture of Erica that appeared in the Press Democrat that I not only arranged for but helped stage.

I continue to support the Soul Air Club with finances and coaching at my house and continue to volunteer at Santa Rosa High with athletes from different local schools; and I look forward to officiating with the CIF and the Pacific Association Youth League in the coming years.

In the 20 plus years of coaching and officiating it has been my desire to fill a need to provide excellence in coaching and officiating for the promotion and preservation of the pole vault in the Santa Rosa area and for the safety of all the participants regardless of where they came from.

June 24, 1992

# Seeking New Heights

## A challenge to ban on female pole-vaulters

By Jane Gottesman  
Chronicle Staff Writer

Erica Hause has her head in the clouds, and her mother is determined that it stays there.

Twenty years ago, Erica's mother, Linda, rejected the Montgomery High School tennis coach's offer to play doubles for the boys team. "It just wasn't the thing for girls to do," she said. So four months ago, when her 15-year-old daughter came home from Lawrence-Cook Junior High School in Santa Rosa excited about trying out for pole vaulting, an all-boys event, Linda saw that women's liberation had worked.

Then Linda learned that Erica would be banned from high school competition.

If girls can handle the uneven bars in gymnastics, lift themselves off a mat into a handstand, dive off a 10-meter platform and otherwise compete in any athletic event, why can't they sprint a hundred feet, plant a long fiberglass pole, and sail up and over a bar?

They can't because the California Interscholastic Federation says they can't. The "no-girls-allowed-rule" is going to die, says Linda, even if it means a decathlon of phone calling, letter writing, rule deciphering, and power lobbying. Mom hustles, Erica soars.

"I'm not trying to come across as a pushy, nasty soul," said Linda. "But I'll be firm, that 'hey, this has to change and I'm not going to accept no as an answer.'"

If AB 1868 passes through the State Senate Education Committee today, Hause will be gaining some serious support in high places. The bill, put forth by Assemblyman Xavier Beccera,

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BY CHRIS STEWART/THE CHRONICLE

Erica Hause worked out on a rope climb in her efforts to improve as a pole-vaulter

JUNE 24, 1992

## VAULTER

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would eliminate gender as a basis for excluding girls from participation in any sporting event.

Meanwhile, in Fountain Valley (Orange County), 17-year-old Nicole Randall still hopes that she may get to pole-vault before she graduates next spring. For years, Randall has been kept out of pole vaulting. The track coach urged her to run, but Randall would settle for nothing less than flying.

"You need a really strong minded person to fight against a rule like this," said Randall, a competitive gymnast and diver who is going to testify today in Sacramento. "It's been pounded into our heads so much that girls can't do it."

Hause and Randall will meet for the first time in July as "Sky Jumpers" enrolled in Jan Johnson's pole-vaulting camp in San Luis Obispo. Johnson, bronze medalist at the 1972 Olympics with a vault of 17-6½, has endorsed the girls campaign, and offered encouragement saying he's sure that women can excel in the 14-16 foot range, and that the importance of upper body strength in pole vaulting is overrated.

"I'm really excited that he's not just letting me participate," says Randall, "but that he's excited about me doing it."

Wrist work, strong abdominal muscles, methodical training, good sprinting ability and mental toughness can make up for basic physiological differences between men and women. "Anyone can work on their upper-body strength," says Randall. "There can be scrawny guys and there can be buff guys, and it's that way with girls too."

Hause has already proven that she has the skill. Her 6-foot-9 vault qualified for the junior high school track and field finals for boys, where only the top eight in her division were invited.

The stands were filled with curious spectators. A girl is pole-

## A Critical Vote on Girl Athletes

In Sacramento today, the Senate Education Committee will vote on whether high school girl athletes can play on boys' teams.

Supporters of AB1868 say this is a free-choice issue — a girl who has the skills should be allowed to choose where she wants to compete. Opponents of the bill predict the downfall of girls' teams.

The legislation put forth by Assemblyman Xavier Beccera was approved by the Assembly on January 27 in a 43-29 vote. If it passes the Education Committee, it must be passed by the Senate before reaching Governor Pete Wilson.

"People would be jumping up and down over any other selection based on gender, yet people look at this and say 'Oh, this is appropriate'" said Abby Liebman of the Southern California Women's Law Center, sponsor of the bill. "A girl is not going to get on the team if she doesn't have the skill to get on the team, and she'll also learn that doors can't

be slammed on her because of gender.

"The bill doesn't require that anyone do anything. The bill says that a girl gets to decide where she wants to play if she's got the skill. Name one other extra-curricular activity where sex is the basis for separation. Sports is the last bastion where segregation is protected."

The California Coaches Association and California Athletic Directors Association argue that separation ultimately helps more girls.

"This measure would lower the overall skill level of girls teams, and it would say to girls that if you are any good at all you'd be on the boys team," said Margaret Davis, assistant commissioner of the California Interscholastic Federation, the governing body for California high school sports.

"We believe that we are providing the best program through our existing structure, and I can only say that the exceptional girl

athletes will have to get their competition outside schools. High school teams are not designed to create or promote the super individual. They are designed for the all-around student."

A nonbinding Legislative Council opinion recommended that the State adopt AB1868. The council warned Title IX violations may still be rampant in California high schools.

The California Teacher Association supports AB1868. "The CIF draws a very crooked line," said Warren Quann, the teacher's association legislative advocate. If a girls team doesn't exist in a sport, all girls have the right to try out for the boys team. Thus, under some conditions, girls and boys are permitted to compete on the same teams.

If a girls' team exists in the sport, no matter how basic the skill level, a girl is currently barred from trying out for the boys team even if the skill level is better suited to her ability.

— Jane Gottesman

vaulting? Doesn't she know that even at the Olympics girls don't pole-vault? Isn't her mother worried she's going to fall on her head?

"I think I'll be more nervous when she goes higher," says Linda. "At the same time, everything has risks. Besides, Erica sets attainable goals."

"It would be incredibly deflating to say 'no, you can't' for any reason other than girls don't do it. Anyone's self esteem would suffer if she was prohibited from competing, from testing herself."

Erica had no idea that she was sailing headlong into a battle over social mores when she strolled over to the vault mats and ran with a pole for the first time. She was a sedate bookworm and didn't enjoy

running round and round a track.

The first few days of practice were something of a controlled free-for-all, where everyone was encouraged to try all the events, and decide which ones they liked best. "I saw a couple of girls over there by the pole vaulting, and they were doing it, so I went over," said Erica. "Then, they got tired of it, but I stayed."

Jim Veilleux, head coach at Cook Junior High School, was impressed when he saw women pole-vault in a TAC-approved masters meet, so despite the no-girls-allowed tradition in the schools, he didn't have any qualms about letting female students give it a try.

"In the rule book, it didn't say they can't pole-vault, it just said that girls don't," said Veilleux. "I

wasn't even about this rule, and I said 'Look, I don't care if you pole-vault. I'll teach you how to pole-vault, and the worse thing that could happen is you won't count. I'll take you to meets, but you might not count.'"

With the support of Carol Ellis, the Cook Junior High principal, Erica was allowed to count within the Santa Rosa junior high system, and after completing the season as a finalist at the boys' championships, she was elected Cook's girl track athlete of the year.

"Erica stayed with it despite all the bangs and falls," said Veilleux. "She accomplished as much, and in many cases, more than anyone under those circumstances, and I don't mean being a girl, I mean being a beginner. Hey, she made it to the finals."

MAY 6, 1997

# Reaching for new heights



Santa Rosa High's Shall Pec-Crouse, left, and Montgomery's Amy Bei look at poles before a meet at Piner.

## Girls progressing rapidly in pole vault

By BRUCE MEADOWS  
Staff Writer

Five years ago, about the only way a high school girl could get 10 feet in the air at a track and field meet was to go to sit in the bleachers.

My, how times have changed. Thanks in large part to Erica Hause, a former Montgomery High student-athlete, girls have discovered the pole vault.

While girls struggled early on because (1) they had no history or role models in the sport, and (2) quality coaching for girls as well as boys was limited, the bar has been raised — literally — in a hurry.

Although this is just the third season the girls' pole vault has been recognized by the CIF, the state best is 13 feet, 1 3/4 inches, a mark achieved by Kingsburg's Melissa Price in 1995.

The 1997 state best is 12-4 by Brooke Lankard of Golden West (Visalla) and the 1997 national best is 12-6 by Ashley Feinberg of Reed High in Sparks, Nev.

Around the Empire, the top mark belongs to Santa Rosa High sophomore Shall Pec-Crouse, who recently cleared 10-0 at the Viking Classic. Right behind her is Montgomery sophomore Amy Bei, with a best of 9-6.

Bei says the first time she really became aware of the pole vault was watching it in the Olympics.

"I was in the sixth grade when I first noticed it," recalls Bei. "It really looked like fun, so I got a stick from the creek behind my house and started jumping

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## House led way for girl vaulters by competing against boys

By BRUCE MEADOWS  
Staff Writer

If it wasn't for Erica Hause, there's good reason to believe the closest high school girls would get to the pole vault event would be as spectators.

Hause, now attending Santa Rosa JC, was a ninth grader at Cook Junior High when she asked coach Jim Veilleux if she could try the pole vault.

"I told her my handbook said there was no pole vault for girls," recalls Veilleux, a general contractor who spends much of his time coaching local vaulters. "I told her if she was really interested, I'd work with her. . . she ended up competing with the boys and making the city junior high finals."

Hause, who cleared 8-0 as a ninth grader, recalls, "I couldn't do anything else very well and the pole vault looked like fun. . . he (Veilleux) gave me a chance."

When she moved on to Montgomery, she became aware there was no pole vaulting for girls, but a concentrated effort by her mother and father (Linda and Les), Veilleux and others convinced the CIF to allow girls to compete with boys, which Erica did on the JV

"I think I was the only girl the first two years. When I scored points — and I did — they were for the boys' team."

ERICA HAUSE  
POLE VAULTER

level.

"I think I was the only girl the first two years," she says. "When I scored points — and I did — they were for the boys' team."

The pole vault became a girls' event Hause's senior year, a season in which she missed a lot of competition with a sprained ankle, but still managed to clear 8-6.

She knows her place in Califor-

nia girls' pole vault history, even though most young vaulters probably don't.

"I went to a pole vault camp over spring break and it was announced who I was and that felt good," she says. "It made me feel good to be recognized."

The 5-2 Hause, who had a best of 8-0 for this year's SRJC team says that girl vaulters were a big thing, a novelty, when she started, but each year more and more girls discover the event.

One of her Bear Cub teammates, Shannon Pierce, has gone 10-6 this season.

"It seems like such a long time ago," says Hause when she reflects on those first tentative efforts at Cook Junior High. "There really wasn't much (pole vault) coaching for girls then and that hasn't changed that much."

But she is happy she made the initial effort and stuck to what she believed, that her mother and father never seemed to tire of writing letters, and coaches like Veilleux, Bruce Hotaling and Eddie Seese and Olympic pole vault bronze medalist Jan Johnson never quit on the idea of making a new event available to girls.

# MILES HEADED TO UTAH VALLEY COLLEGE

**M**ontgomery High basketball star, Brian Miles has accepted a full-ride basketball scholarship at Utah Valley College, a community college in Orem, Utah.

Following his freshman year, the 6-foot-9 center will go on a two-year mission for the Mormon Church. At

## HIGH SCHOOL REPORT

Bill Nichols

the end of his mission Miles said he plans to attend Brigham Young University.

This year's player of the year, Miles was the top scorer (large schools) in the Redwood Empire with a 21-point average. He also led the Vikings to the Division I semifinals of the North Coast Sections, where the Vikings were soundly beaten by eventual champ, St. Joseph, 75-51.

David Miles, Brian's brother, also graduated from Montgomery in 1983 and attended BYU on a full-ride scholarship as a wide receiver for the Cougars. Montgomery principle, Gary Miles, Brian's dad, will retire at the end of the school year and move his family to Utah.

**PASSING THE BAR:** Erica Hause, a ninth-grader at Cook Junior High, has high expectations after competing with the boys in the pole vault at the Santa Rosa Junior High track meet Thursday at SRJC.

Hause qualified in the Class C Division after clearing 6 feet, 9 inches and joined seven boys in the finals.

Pressure, nerves and a little intimidation, caused Hause to fail



KENT PORTER/PRESS DEMOCRAT

*Brian Miles of Montgomery High School, the Redwood Empire player of the year in 1992, will enroll at Utah Valley College next fall.*

at the 6-foot starting height. Eventual winner, George set a meet record with a try 8-foot-5.

Hause, who will attend Montgomery High next year like to continue competing in pole vault. But as it stands no are not allowed to compete.

CIF policy states that if a s offered to both boys and girl athletes must compete with own gender. Girls have made headway by successfully petitioning to participate in j varsity wrestling and football. Although track is offered to sexes, pole vaulting is offered to boys.

"I have lots of dreams about vaulting," said Hause. "I just can continue next year."

**EXTRA! EXTRA! . . .** Four aspiring local high school journalist/photographers have works published in Friday's *San Francisco Chronicle*.

Students were asked to copy week's Cubs/Giants game and either write or take photos. Petaluma's Dave Young (photo) and Lizzie Brown (story), and Montgomery's Brian Mal (photo) and Jason Wilson (story) were selected finalists.

**K-MARK:** Upper Lake's Mark Merchen closed out the base season with 62 consecutive without striking out.

■ **LESLIE'S QUICK:** In 5 innings, Willits' pitching ace Leslie has struck out 104 batters. He walked only 28. The 6-1, 190-pound senior has a record 6-2 and an ERA of 0.91.

■ **HELP WANTED:** Attend high school and college football athletic directors and coaches please send us your football schedules for next season.



# GAYE LeBARON'S NOTEBOOK

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**MY DAUGHTER** the pole vaulter: Linda Haase has been very supportive of her daughter Erica's unprecedented entry into this hitherto all-male field event at the junior high level. And neither mother nor daughter have given up on the possibility that Erica may vault in high school track next season. All they have to do, after all, is change the California Interscholastic Federation rules.

Erica was the first girl ever to make it to the junior high finals, held last week at Bailey Field. She didn't place, but she's not talking about giving up the sport. If the high school coaches are halfway as supportive as the Cook Junior High coaches were this year, mother Linda says, Erica's got a chance. The Cook coaches helped her, cheered her and encouraged her in an event that is not considered a "girl's sport." "No one even tried to talk her out of it," says Linda, "And that was worth a lot."

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**WHAT IS** going on out there? A spy reports a sighting of one of those old '70s bumper stickers that reads: "Question Authority" with another message stuck crosswise on it. The top one said "Question Reality." Spy thinks reality IS the ultimate authority. Kafka lives.

WINTER 1992

## Women's Pole Vaulting, or ...

# Why My Sister Played in the School Band

I remember the first time it happened back in 1985. She just about had to beg me on the phone. I was cool to the idea. I kept thinking of all the problems that could come up. Finally her mother got on the phone and assured me everything would be OK. I gave in and Kristinia Inman, of San Diego, CA became the first woman to attend a Sky Jumpers vaulting camp. I remember being very worried about how she would get along being the only girl among sixty high school and college-age vaulters. My fears, however, were put to rest—Kristinia was awesome!

After the first hour of camp, it was obvious that she was super serious about vaulting. Although not super fast, she had real good strength for her body weight and a great understanding of technique. She only bent the pole a little bit (about 45 degrees) with a 12 foot grip. Her best vault was in the neighborhood of ten feet. Later she returned to a spring camp and brought along a couple of her friends. From there, the trend has continued: an ever-increasing number of women coaches and athletes have been attending our camps.

In the past five years, over two hundred coaches have attended Sky Jumpers for coaching certification; thirty percent have been women. Among them, I know of at least ten who have coached state champions. This, of course, dispels the old myth that you must have been a vaulter to coach the vault. It is far more important to understand the basic fundamentals and require your athletes to vault by

them. Several women have in years past, shown promise as vaulters. My old friend Gary Humter (17-6, SIU 1976) coached a lady in Ohio who jumped in the neighborhood of 12 feet and the Chinese have two females jumping in the 13 foot-plus range. Actually women should be able to vault much higher than 13 feet. The prerequisites for success are exactly the same as for the men: Runway speed and jumping ability will determine pole size and grip height. Gymnastics ability, strength to body weight ratio and technique will determine pushoff in relation to top hand hold.

### The Rule Change

Recently the state of California High School Association (CIF) approved the participation of girls in boys' pole vaulting events. This decision brings up a number of questions which may shake the very foundation of pole vaulting. The rule change states that if a girl participates in track and field in California and wants to compete in the pole vault, she can no longer be told no. Although girls have wanted to try vaulting for a long time, they have been denied the opportunity due to a "boys only" restriction. That was until a young lady named Ericka Hause came on the scene last year.

Ericka and her mother Linda started a campaign based on equality in sports and soon she had the collective ears of her local school board, The Athletics Congress, and the CIF. The strategy of their campaign was simple: aggressive letter writing and phone calling straight at the heart of the California school system bureaucracy. In Ericka's case, supportive

letters from notable coaches, athletes and officials were also written. The Ericka Hause decision made it clear that girls vaulting is going to be around for several years to come.

For those of us who remember the pre-Title IX days, the choice is simple. Just imagine no girls' events—no triple jump, no throws, no distance races over 800m, no weight training. This was the way it was during my high school and college days. Both my brother and I had sports to compete in, but my sister, who was as good an athlete as either of us, had to settle for the school band.

Two years ago, I did a clinic at Union College in New York. The clinic format allowed participants to choose an event. I made the "mistake" of allowing one of the girls to vault. By the end of the day, over 20 girls had vaulted and two of them cleared eight feet. That day, I sensed some real excitement in the field house as one by one the ladies took turns with the boys. Girls vaulting was new, challenging and best of all, it was fun. Later, in reflection, I realized that those were the very same elements that had attracted me to the sport thirty years earlier when my brother and sister and I began vaulting with pitch forks over bales of hay one winter evening in our barn. I guess we didn't know any better, but no one told us girls weren't supposed to vault. Some years later my brother was two-time Illinois state champion, I made the Olympic team and my sister played in the school band.... ★

*Jan Johnson is Director Sky Jumpers Vaulting Center in Atascadero CA.*

*I realized that those were the very same elements that had attracted me to the sport thirty years earlier when my brother and sister and I began vaulting.*

by Jan Johnson



## MARKETING MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE (MMC) REVIEWS AGENCIES

The process established by the MMC to identify the marketing support agency(s) to be selected to assist the CIF in statewide sports marketing endeavors has reached an important milestone.

In response to a solicitation by the CIF, 22 sports marketing agencies submitted information for consideration in the selection process. Responding to a request for qualifications developed by the MMC, the agencies described their structure, client base, history of sports marketing activity and provided references for investigation.

Six agencies were identified as showing great promise relative to CIF goals and needs from the above screening process. Multiple reference checks were accomplished prior to invitations to these agencies to interview with the Administrative Committee of the MMC, supplemented by State CIF and Section staff members.

Interviews took place in October with five of the respondents, the sixth being unable to attend as scheduled.

Following the interviews, four agencies were invited to submit detailed proposals for MMC consideration. In addition, School Properties, USA, Inc., was invited to submit a proposal for consideration by the committee. November 20, 1992, was established as the deadline for receipt of proposals in a pre-determined format.

The expanded Administrative Committee will review the proposals and recommend to the MMC those agencies which appear to have greatest promise. The MMC will conduct a final interview of those agencies on December 21, 1992.

*Continued on page 5*

## NELSON ASSUMES ROLE AS CIF PRESIDENT

Richard Nelson, Principal of Rio Linda High School and a Federated Council member for the past five years, assumed the presidency of the State CIF on July 1, 1992.

Serving as president-elect for the last two years has given Nelson a direct leadership role in critical issues that are currently facing the CIF.

He has emphasized the importance of four critical areas confronting the organization:

1. Strategic Planning
2. Gender Equity
3. CIF governance and structure
4. Financial/Corporate support

"I'm confident that the Federated Council and the CIF Sections will

*"More than ever the unity of CIF will be the key factor in finding solutions to the issues that face us," Nelson said.*

meet these challenges," said Nelson. "We need to communicate very

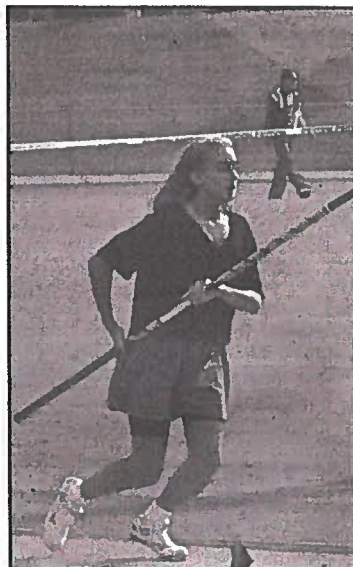


**CIF PRESIDENT RICHARD NELSON (LEFT) PICTURED WITH GOVERNOR PETE WILSON IN SACRAMENTO**

clearly to all stakeholders that CIF will move to the future with the appropriate changes that will meet the needs of our young athletes."

Nelson has expressed on numerous occasions how pleased he is with the dedication of CIF

*Continued on page 5*



## FEMALE POLE VAULTERS CAN COMPETE IN BOYS' (STUDENT) EVENT

The CIF Federated Council approved the modification of By-Law 1501 at the October meeting. The modification specifies that girl pole vaulters will be allowed to compete in boys' (student) pole vault event.

The modification of the By-Law reads as follows: "In the sport of track and field, in the pole vault, girls will be allowed to compete for the boys' team in that event without jeopardizing their eligibility on the girls' team with the exception that during any combined meet the student shall not exceed four events."

What that means for Erica Hause, a 10th grader at Mont-

gomery High, Santa Rosa (a three-year high school) is that she'll be able to continue the vault — an event she participated in at the junior high level (9th grade).

"I went out for track and saw people pole vaulting," Hause said. "It looked like a lot of fun, so I tried it. I liked it so much that I stayed with it."

Before vaulting, the most Erica got involved in athletics was participating in physical education and she avoided running, something she just didn't care for, as much as possible. It was singing that at-

*Continued on page 5*

**MARKETING***Continued from page 1*

Concurrent in-depth investigation of those potential agencies is being undertaken by CIF staff. Included in this review are Dunn & Bradstreet reports, Better Business Bureau consultation, "secondary" reference checks and investigation of standing in the primary sports marketing professional associations.

The selection process will conclude by Federated Council consideration of the recommendation of the MMC at the Council meeting scheduled February 5-6, 1993. The CIF Executive Committee has received progress reports of MMC activity throughout the process and will continue its oversight of the selection process.

**NELSON***Continued from page 1*

Section commissioners, their staff and Boards in maintaining outstanding athletic programs.

"More than ever the unity of CIF will be the key factor in finding solutions to the issues that face us," Nelson said. "We must find ways to solve our differences if we are to enhance our public image."

Additionally, Nelson commends State CIF Commissioner Tom Byrnes and staff members of the State office for the leadership role they have played in preparing CIF for the 21st century.

Nelson has a strong service of athletic leadership having been President of the Delta League and the Capitol Valley Conference. His section activities include work in the CIF Sac-Joaquin Section as both Vice President and President.

A former high school basketball coach and mathematics teacher, Nelson was the Athletic Director for five years at Highland High School. He was Vice Principal of Highland and then Principal, a position he held for three years.

For eight years, Nelson was Principal of Foothill High.

He studied at the University of Washington, the University of Montana, and Cal State Sacramento and completed his graduate work at the University of Illinois.

Nelson looks forward to the challenges that lay ahead and is optimistic about the future of the organization.

**POLE VAULTING***Continued from page 1*

tracted most of her extracurricular time, as she was a member of the school choir.

But Erica saw the pole vault as something different — not an ordinary athletic activity — which piqued her interest in the vault. She proved to be good at it as well.

Erica made it all the way to the finals in the event in junior high, besting a couple of boy vaulters in the process.

Then a problem arose when Erica wanted to vault in high school. By National Federation of State High School Association and CIF rules, pole vaulting was not listed as a girl's event.

That's when Erica's mother, Linda, got involved. She started making phone calls to find out what she needed to do to change the policy, which eventually led her to the State CIF Office.

Linda Hause followed the CIF's newly adopted procedures for reporting gender-bias complaints and eventually got the decision she, and Erica, were hoping for.

"What I found out was that frequently girls have wanted to pole vault, but found out they couldn't," Linda said. "So they shifted their focus to other events."

Erica thinks that other girls will follow suit and give the pole

vault a try.

And what do the boys think about Erica entering a previously boys-only event?

"Most of the guys think it's really great that I'm doing it," she said.

Erica likes the vault so much that she doesn't even mind the running that goes along with the training.

And there's no question Erica is dedicated to improving her marks. She is currently lifting weights and working on technique and can't wait for track season to begin.

Note: Nicole Randle of Fountain Valley High will also compete in the pole vault in the spring.

**LIFE IS SHORT.  
PLAY HARD.**

**Reebok** 

**GUEST EDITORIAL** *Continued from page 3*

the line from tough and proud to mean and arrogant. It's not a long distance.

After the L.A. riots, The Post's Michael Wilbon wrote a series of articles on the decline of organized school sports in Los Angeles in the last decade. Many of those he interviewed felt that the growth of gangs and the demise of competitive sports were connected. Earlier this year, Bill Brubaker wrote stories for The Post about the erosion of school sports in the District of Columbia over the last generation. One of the conclusions: weak sports programs create a vacuum in the kids' culture that strong gangs or flashy drug dealers are delighted to occupy.

My own experience puts me in the same corner with Wilbon and Brubaker. I covered sports in the Washington area in the 1970s. To the degree that sports flourished in a school, order was maintained. To the degree that interest in sports died — and with it the internal authority of coaches and athletes — schools invited every form of disorder.

I wish I could say that math and English instructors were the core people who held many of those schools together. I felt, even then, that the basic problem was uglier:

Who owned the school? The good guys or the bad guys? The most effective good guys were often either coaches or principals who were former coaches.

If 50 of the biggest, toughest boys in a school play on the varsity football team and many of them obey their coach as though he were a second father, you possess — to put it candidly — an army. Add a junior varsity and you are talking about an enormous presence. Twenty years ago, the bad characters almost always lost to the jocks (athletes). Now, the bad guys have guns and money.

So, the balance has shifted. I'd still like to see the jocks (athletes) and the coaches have a chance.

Our universal assumption has been that the dangerous chaotic impulses in our natures can be channeled into new forms. All the seductive trappings of our games — glamorous uniforms, flattering trophies, phrases like "state champion" — are just ways to trick our wild side into allowing itself to be turned into a mature, self-disciplined, self-respecting personality. When a society defines the word "sportsman," it's usually encircling the word "adult" too,

Many of our social problems are as big and complex as they are ob-

vious. We all know that more jobs, stronger families and better education would be forces for order. Yet knowing these problems still leaves us far from solutions.

Increasing support for school sports — at every opportunity, even in well-off Fairfax County — may only be one small part of the large mosaic of restoring order to the lives of our young people.

But it is one part, isn't it? And of all the parts, isn't it by far the least costly, the least controversial, and the easiest to implement?

On one hand, a few extra basketball games or a round of state playoffs or a couple of extra swim meets isn't that big a deal. If you're a competitor at heart, you'd probably practice all season just to play one real game.

Still, that's how athletic programs in school systems all over this country have fallen into a shambles — one cut at a time. Finally, one day, you reach a point where huge high schools have only 30 kids who come out for football, not 100.

Shakespeare is great. But if you want to run a public school that works, there's no better place to spend your money than on a strong athletic program that involves as many students as possible in as many sports as possible.