

—Slug:..... COMM-0859.opin.memor.foye
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—For section..... Voices/Memoriam
—Format..... Opinions
—Dateline..... South Newfane
—Article Number:..... 43355



Notes from editor (not for publication):



HEADLINE ELEMENTS:

####BEGIN HED####

1 So long, Johnny Caldwell

####END HED####

####BEGIN SUBHED####

2 One life lesson from an incomparable coach: ‘Compare
3 yourself next week to this week, and you will see you have
4 improved more than anyone else. And every week afterwards you
5 will see more improvements.’

####END SUBHED####

6 TEXT BODY:

####BEGIN TEXT####

7 WHEN I FIRST arrived in Putney in September 1962; all
8 5’2” of me, prepubescent at age 14, I discovered that I had to
9 play a sport three afternoons a week.

10 Never having played any sport other than ice hockey on
11 local ponds north of Boston, it seemed that soccer would be

12 similar. I had never heard of the game before, and it was nothing
13 like ice hockey apart from chasing a round object around.

14 I soon found out that all my teammates were far superior
15 to me in skill, but I could run fast.

16 Johnny Caldwell was my coach. He quickly saw my
17 panic and took me aside to say, "Don't compare yourself to the
18 others. They have been playing for a few years, and you are just
19 starting.

20 "Compare yourself next week to this week, and you will
21 see you have improved more than anyone else. And every week
22 afterwards you will see more improvements."

23 This advice has served me well for 63 years. I never
24 forgot it.

25 * * *

26 LATER THAT FALL, the varsity and second team were to
27 play Deerfield Academy, a powerhouse of athletic prowess. We
28 all got hold of junky old bicycles and piled them into the back of
29 the farm truck with ourselves for the 40-minute drive to the
30 Woolman Hill Quaker Center. There, we hid the truck and rode
31 the bikes the remaining 2 miles to the school in our soccer
32 clothes — we had no uniforms back then.

33 We got the whole academy staring at us incredulously as
34 we showed up on our motley collection of bikes. Johnny
35 explained to them that this was how we got in shape for ski
36 season. We played their third and fifth teams and got skunked.

37 We got to feast on steaks and pie in our sweaty soccer
38 "uniforms," with the Deerfield boys in jackets and ties. After
39 dinner we climbed on our bikes and headed off in the dark for
40 "Putney." As soon as we were out of earshot, we laughed all the
41 way back to the truck, secure in the knowledge that we would
42 trounce them once we met them again during ski season.

43 Deerfield never figured out our ruse. Johnny told me a
44 few years ago on Putney Mountain that they were still talking
45 about when we rode down from Putney.

46 * * *

47 DURING MY LAST YEAR at Putney there was a 30-kilometer
48 race hosted by the school. It was for 18-and-older adults, so I
49 could not race at 17. Johnny had me be a forerunner to set track.
50 He advised me to just have fun and take my time.

51 The loop was repeated three times. As I came through
52 the second time, Johnny skied with me for a minute and
53 suggested I pick up the pace for the last circuit.

54 I did, and when I finished and the race was over he told
55 me with pride that I had beat the times of more than half the
56 other competitors.

57 In his subtle manner, he had taught me a lesson in
58 pacing myself, another lesson I have never forgotten.

59 He was also my math teacher. I stunk at math, but he
60 always passed ski team members.

####END TEXT####

BIO/COATTAIL:

####BEGIN BIO/COATTAIL####

61 **RICHARD FOYE** graduated from The Putney School in
62 1965 and has enjoyed a long career as a creator of Raku pottery.

####END BIO/COATTAIL####

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LINKS:

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VIDEO:

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###END VIDEO###

LOGLINE (SOCIAL MEDIA):

###BEGIN LOGLINE###

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###END LOGLINE###