

GLOBE NORTH SPORTS NOTEBOOK

## A boost, and a warning, for Winthrop athletics

By Julian Benbow | July 31, 2008

**Al Petrilli** scribbled notes on two sheets of legal paper up to the very last second before he had to walk to the lectern and address the Winthrop School Committee last Thursday night.

He wanted to make sure each word was clear.

The money that his Viking Pride Foundation has raised to keep Winthrop athletics alive was, as School Committee chairwoman **Patricia Milano** put it before Petrilli spoke, becoming an "annual treat."

Petrilli doesn't want the funds to become a crutch. In a speech filled with mixed feelings, Petrilli announced that the Viking Pride Foundation will give the schools a \$50,000 gift.

The amount will set the high school's athletic user fees at \$350 per sport with a cap of \$1,575 for families with two children who play more than one sport.

The committee was looking at making the fee \$450 per sport, \$200 more than Winthrop's fee from the 2007-2008 school year. But the grant from the foundation will make it possible to lower the number.

It was the largest gift Viking Pride has raised for the School Committee, but Petrilli said it will make the smallest impact. His sentiment was that Viking Pride can't support Winthrop athletics all on its own.

"We cannot fix the problem," he told school board members. "We continue to be a very large Band-Aid on a wound that continues to bleed."

The School Committee accepted the gift and praised the foundation for its generosity since its creation in 2004 after a failed override snatched funding from the school's athletic department. The foundation raised nearly \$750,000 in its first three years.

Committee member John Macero said none of the school's state tournament teams would have been possible without Viking Pride. "We could not survive without you," said Macero, who was the only committee member who voted against the sports fee changes at the meeting.

### Swimming clinic

With the event on full display at this summer's Olympic games, the North Shore YMCA Selkies synchronized swimming team is hosting a clinic Aug. 18-22 at the Sterling Center YMCA in Beverly, teaching the sport that combines swimming, ballet, and gymnastics. Two Selkies, **Meghan Huston** and **Madeleine Hines**, have competed in the Esynchro Swimming Championships at Binghamton University the past two years, finishing 18th in the 11-12 age group. The clinic costs \$105 and swimmers should be at least 8 years old. For more information contact coach **Rebecca Bascom** at 508-212-8976 or by e-mail at [rbascom@verizon.net](mailto:rbascom@verizon.net). . . . Marblehead is looking to fill two coaching positions for girls' soccer. The junior varsity job is open, and the Magicians are looking for an assistant coach behind girls' varsity head coach **Sam Yawson**. Marblehead went 5-7-4 in the South Division of the Northeastern Conference last fall. For information, contact athletic director **Mike Planksy** at 781-639-3100, ext. 4131, or by e-mail at [plansky.michael@marbleheadschoools.org](mailto:plansky.michael@marbleheadschoools.org). . . . The University of Massachusetts at Lowell baseball program projects to have six area players on its roster next spring: **J.T. Leary** of Newburyport High, **Cam Kneeland** from Triton Regional, **Vincent DiCesare** and **Phil Perriello** from Lynnfield, **Jack Leathersich** from Beverly, and **Nicholas Conti** from St. Mary's.

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