

If I were a head coach that was looking to retire at the end of next year's season, I would want to be remembered as the coach that took the team to the state finals. To accomplish this, I would take this year's team and promote the juniors and underclassmen to first string as soon as possible. I would basically bench as much of the senior class as possible because the experience that the underclassmen will receive during the games will pay big dividends next year. Letting the seniors play this year will not enhance next year's team and thus should be discouraged. I would start this promotion process even before boot camp.

I may have to play some seniors, but for the most part, I would constantly be looking for junior replacements. The least I let the seniors play, the easier it will be to replace them. No one will really know how good they are, if I do not let them play. Even the parents that would complain, would not have much evidence that they were ever any good because they did not get much if any game time. I could (because I have coached here for several years) simply state that the senior players were not as good as the underclassmen and also point out that the parents always think that their kid is better than the others.

If push came to shove and I had to replace someone, I would rather bring in a sophomore, than to activate a senior halfway through the season. Think of the embarrassment of having a benched senior start playing better than the underclassman I put in front of them. This might make the fans think that there might be other seniors on the bench that need to be put into the games. This could jeopardize the team building process, so it is very important to stay on track and keep the seniors off the field.

I realize that we will not do as well as we should this year, but because of a recent change in the classifications, I find that we will have a really easy season and stand a good chance of making it into the playoffs without using the seniors. If the season turns out poorly, I think that I will be forgiven because next year I will have an impressive number of returning starters and I will take them farther than the school as ever gone.

When I retire, it will be on a winning note and I truly expect that I will take these young men to the state finals and be remembered as the coach that made it possible.

Does any of this ring a bell? Could it be that our coaches at GP did not put their best effort into winning games this year? If a player does not give 100 percent during a game, he should be taken out of the game. If a coach and/or coaching staff do not give 100 percent into winning each and every game, what should happen to him/them?

ZERO starting senior offensive linemen! A sophomore starting as an offensive lineman! Senior starters getting moved to special teams only! Second string senior demoted to fifth string during a game when the first string junior becomes ill! Most seniors play less and less as the season progresses! How can this be explained? Ask the players and see what they have to say. You will find that most of the seniors have little respect for the coaches because they knew the coaching staff was over promoting the junior players and cutting down their game time. Our team's season was doomed by the coaching staff's "long term plan". No team can achieve greatness without senior pride and senior leadership, not even GP.

I sure hope that next year is really a great one for GP. It has been dearly paid for by this year's seniors. Unfortunately for my son, he was one of the seniors and he will not have the same warm feelings for his senior football year that I have for mine. I think that keeping Coach Harris from leading our upcoming "super team" to the playoffs is something to consider. After all, he sacrificed our senior's senior football season for his dream retirement scenario.