



## **Don't Let Fear Get the Best of You**

By Bill Gosse

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With the leaves changing colors and crispness in the air, fall is an awesome time of year.

Playoffs abound for high school sports, and for a kid, it's an exciting time.

Regionals, sectionals and state finals all dot the calendar with incredible opportunities.

These can be challenging times for our kids, sometimes facing competition unlike they have seen all season. It is a time when fear can creep up and cause them to freeze in their tracks.

Chances for special performances and great accomplishments exist, but if fear prevails, their calling will go unfulfilled.

F.E.A.R. is something many of us have heard spelled out as False Evidence Appearing Real. How true this can be.

Loads of people fail in their mission, because every time they try to go forward, they allow fear to stop themselves. Fear brings mental torture, and we can't enjoy life and be tormented at the same time.

These post-season contests are so great for teaching life-lessons, it's important for our student-athletes to live in an environment of proper perspective and sound expectations. Parents and coaches have an incredible say in determining the mental make-up of our kids as they approach these situations.

Have they been allowed to make mistakes without retribution? Is sarcasm used to negatively motivate? Have kids been nurtured through past tough times so they can recognize opportunities as they surface?

These are games, and one loss can end a season, as well as a high school career. We want these experiences to encourage our future leaders to embrace challenges instead of cower away from them.

Fear will exist from time to time, but will those feelings stifle action? Life will continually bring us new, and bigger challenges. Trust in our heart, our experience, or trustworthy people will help us take a step and go forward.

Fear is present to all of us.

I had some fears when approaching the proper individuals to begin this column way back when. I had not been trained as a writer. Who was I to think I could eventually become a weekly columnist?

As I've mentioned before, my late brother was a football all-American at Lakeland College. As a result of his efforts, he was invited to complete an application to try out for the Green Bay Packers. Because he feared he wasn't good enough, he never processed the paperwork.

In sports, the predominant fear is of failure or injury. Other fears may pop up in our lives in the form of death, loneliness, people, heights, commitment, authority etc. The phobia list seems endless.

I believe our fears will follow us until we face them. We have the choice to go forward or run away. What will you choose?

Fear not, great moments await!