

## A look back at the 2010 high school football season

Written by George Browning

Thursday, 11 November 2010 00:00 - Last Updated Thursday, 11 November 2010 14:18

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### By George

After a long hiatus from writing sports columns, I think I may throw my hat back in the ring. Now, before you criticize or disagree with me give me a few weeks to get used to opining about local sports with my fingers again.

I thought in this, the first "By George" in more than a year, it should be a pot-luck column of happenings over the past few months since school started.

The first topic I will discuss is the West Washington football season.

What a year Head Coach Phillip Bowsman and the Senators had. I really thought they would have a winning record, but 9-3 more than exceeded my expectations.

If there was a Coach of the Year award to be given out state-wide, I would have to say Bowsman deserves to be in that conversation.

One would think he might have a little bit of interest in the coaching vacancy at his Alma mater, Salem High School, but Bowsman has told me time and time again that he is happy where he is.

In our last conversation about the subject he said his ultimate goal is to win a state championship and he thinks the Senators have a good shot at getting that goal accomplished.

This year's team had that kind of potential and had they gotten past Milan, who knows what would have happened.

That's one thing I love about sports, the "What ifs!" There are very few certainties in life, and

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there are even fewer is sports.

There is one certainty when talking about Bowsman, however, and that's the fact that he knows how to coach football.

Bowsman was 3-7 in his first year and guided the Senators to 5-5 and 6-5 seasons before this year's 9-3 campaign.

He had a vision when he took over the program, and Bowsman has made the moves necessary to see that vision become reality on the field.

The Senators are winning, the kids are having fun in the spread offense, and the football facilities at the school are among the best for Class A schools in the state.

While I am happy for Bowsman, I am sad for the departure of a friend on mine. I figured Brian Motsinger would step down after this year, but I hated to see him go out with a win-less season.

Over the decade or so that I've covered sports in Washington County, Coach Mots, or "Red" has always made himself available to me.

I've called him at his home, on his cell phone even when he was out on a date. He always had time to talk to me. It wasn't because he enjoyed my conversation as much as it was to get his kids the recognition they deserved in the local paper.

He was all about the student-athlete and helping them not only reach their potential, but take it to new heights.

In some ways I felt like an extension of the coaching staff when I would keep stats on the

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side-line.

I remember getting ran over by a Clarksville player at one game and when I looked up Coach was there making sure I was alright. We later laughed about it and he admitted to watching it a few times on the video, but he put aside the importance of the game for a moment to check on me.

Mots won a lot of games as coach of the Lions and coached a lot of great players. A lot of us in the community appreciated the work he did and it will be strange not seeing him on the sidelines next season.

The Salem School Board has a tough job. They not only have to find a quality coach, they have to find a better person to pick up Motsinger's whistle.

Then there is John Dablow at Eastern. What a two-year run this guy has had. He took over a team that won just one time in it's first 19 games and in less than a year had them playing .500 football.

Dablow will be able to write a book on how to turn a program around.

Some credit has to go to talent. Ryan Tandy, Keenan Shanks and the Eastern seniors put in the work, but talent needs to be guided and Dablow and his staff have done that.

They started with the basics and really shouldn't look back now. I am not saying they will win every game, but I think the days of EHS being blown out are behind them.

Now, the foundation has been laid, it's up to the returning players to keep working to make sure the program keeps improving.

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Well, that was my first effort. I hope the rust is knocked off. Give me a column or two to get back in the swing of things.

Let me know what you think via e-mail, [gbrowning@gbpnews.com](mailto:gbrowning@gbpnews.com).