

**HISTORY OF THE CALIFORNIA**  
**INTERSCHOLASTIC FEDERATION**  
**SOUTHERN SECTION**  
**(CIFSS)**

44<sup>th</sup> historical “tidbit.”  
Dr. John S. Dahlem

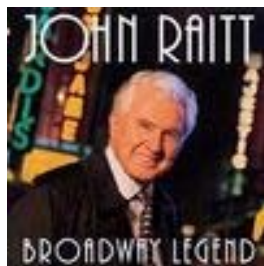
**WOW! I DID NOT KNOW THAT**  
**Interesting tidbits on the CIFSS**



- When the CIFSS was created in 1913, there were 5 leagues and 30 schools. There are currently 569 schools and 82 leagues.
- The first name of the CIFSS was the Southern California Interscholastic Athletic Council (SCIAC). The name was changed on September 26, 1914 to “The Southern Section of the C.I.F.”
- The CIFSS referred to illegal transfers as “tramps” in 1914.
- Some of the early coaches were referred to as the “town bums.”
- Boys who moved from school to school in the 1920’s to play athletics were referred to as “free agents.”
- Prior to the creation of the CIFSS, adult coaches used to play on the high school teams.
- During the early days of track and field, if you false started you were put back one yard behind the starting line.
- The “hand grenade throw” was substituted for the javelin throw during the 1919 CIFSS track meet...won by Tyson of Huntington Park with 11 “puts”...throwing for accuracy and it was an exhibit event with rules and grenades provided by the Spalding Company.
- The first maximum age limit to participate in CIFSS was 21 years old.
- The first four State CIF Sections were the same as the California Teachers Association Sections.
- The biggest controversy in 1913 was the definition of what is an “amateur.”
- Track and field was the sport that got CIFSS started.
- To run in the 1913 track meet the entry fee was 25 cents per athlete



- The CIFSS threw Long Beach Poly out of the CIFSS for a short time (1920) because Poly wanted to play for the Southwest Championship and the National Football Championship instead of the CIFSS Championship.
- Long Beach Poly defeated Phoenix High School by a score of 102 to 0 for the Southwest Championship in 1920...it became known as "*The Big 102.*"
- The official attendance for the 1956 CIF Football Championship in the Memorial Coliseum was 41,383 although many felt there were over 60,000 in attendance.
- Horse shoes had CIFSS rules in 1932.
- The football throw was substituted for the javelin throw in the CIF State meets from 1932 to 1936.
- John Raitt, father of the famous country singer Bonnie Riatt, held the state record in the football throw of 220 feet (almost 70 yards).



- The first Constitution of the CIFSS was two pages long.
- The CIFSS sanctioned an interscholastic ski meet for March, 1940 on the slopes of McGee Mountain, 35 miles north of Bishop. It was held during a storm that added, according to the local press, a little "*tang*" to the event.
- If you were in a high school fraternity in 1927 you could not participate in CIFSS sports.
- School CIFSS dues were \$2.50 for less than 100 ADA running up to \$20.00 for schools over 2,000 ADA in 1933.
- The first CIFSS office was in a Junior High School building.
- For a short period of time (1949), the CIFSS office was located in the Commissioner's home.
- From 1949 to 1959 the CIFSS office was located in the Helms Bakery.



- The first CIFSS Basketball Championship game in 1915 was played inside a gym the first half on an outdoor court the second half.
- One of the stars of the first CIF Basketball Championship in 1915 was referred to in the local papers as a “*fat boy*” named Dalin.
- It took wrestling a long ten years after their first unofficial CIFSS Championship to be sanctioned because they came under the control of the State Athletic Commission just like boxing.
- In 1935, schools were holding polo and fencing competition.
- Bowling attempted to become an official CIFSS sport in 1935.
- The CIFSS was urged to add handball to its sponsored activities in 1937.
- Six man football was popular in small schools during the late 1930’s.
- The first “Blue Book” was issued in 1945...it was 44 pages in length.
- The Los Angeles City CIF Section broke off from the CIFSS in 1935 as the 5<sup>th</sup> State CIF Section.
- The San Diego CIF Section broke off from the CIFSS in 1960 taking 32 schools as they created the 9<sup>th</sup> State CIF Section.
- The largest school in the CIFSS in 1937 was Phoenix High School of Arizona.
- The 1937 CIFSS budget was \$4,500 and the Commissioner was paid \$2,400.
- During World War II CIFSS meetings were often held by phone conference to save gasoline.
- Many games were cancelled during World War II due to the lack of rubber balls...rubber was needed for the war effort.
- In 1922, a Four Point Classification System (Exponents) was established based on semester in school, age, height and weight...there were four classes...A,B,C, and D the lowest.
- In 1935 they changed to a Three Point Classification by getting rid of the semester base.
- Japanese students interned in camps during World War II were initially ruled ineligible because of attendance rules.



- The “*Instituto Tecnio Industrial*” of Tijuana, Mexico was a member of the CIFSS in 1940.
- Trona High School is the only school in the United States that has a sand football field...they call it “*The Pit.*”
- The Sherman Indian Institute (Sherman High School) played USC in rugby during the 1890’s and won.
- In 1925, the famous “Flying Finn” and Olympic hero Paavo Nurmi, ran against Indians from the Sherman Indian Institute in the Memorial Coliseum.



- Speedball during the 1940’s was an unofficial CIFSS sport.
- Jackie Robinson, John Muir High School, was named the second greatest California athlete ever behind Joe DiMaggio.
- The greatest female athlete from California was Billie Jean King (Moffitt) who played tennis for Long Beach Poly.



- The CIFSS has a school with a “*Home School Sea Sick Advantage*” ...Avalon High School 26 miles off the coast of Southern California.

- Glenn Davis, Heisman Trophy winner from Bonita High School in 1946, once dated Elizabeth Taylor. His third wife Yvonne Ameche Davis was married to two Heisman Trophy winners.



- Clarence "Bud" Houser from Oxnard High School, a three time Olympic track and field champion in 1924 and 1928, had the athletic field named after him while he was still in high school.
- The heaviest football player ever in the CIFSS was Bob "***Big Man***" Pointer who played for Santa Barbara High School in 1967 alongside the great Sam Cunningham. Bob was 6' 1" and weighed 447 pounds.
- The tallest basketball player was Keith Goss from Sierra Vista High School who stood 7'2" in 1993.
- In the 1984 cross country season Sherman Indian High School had a runner by the name of Michael Fasthorse and Newport Harbor had a runner named Buffy Rabbitt.
- The largest stadium used by high school athletes in the United States is the Rose Bowl. Muir, Pasadena and Blair High Schools use the football field.
- The hammer throw was an event in the 1915 State CIF track meet.
- Prior to the creation of the CIFSS, the girls' basketball team from Long Beach Poly defeated the Poly boys' team in 1907 by a score of 20-14. Basketball in those days was referred to as a "***sissy sport.***"
- Some of the schools you might not recognize that were once members of the CIFSS:
  - Berkeley, Black Foxe, Brown Military, California Prep, Calipatria, Cambria, Citrus Union, Coast Union, Cutler, Jacob Riis, John Dewey, La Verne Academy, ***Las Vegas,*** Lankershim, Lomita, Midland, Mt. Empire, Newman, Mission St. Agnes, Oneonta, ***Owensmouth,*** Pacific Military, Randsburg, Shannon, ***Spanish American,*** St. Frances de Sales, Tucson, Urban Military, ***U.S.C. High School,*** Yuma.