

The quote that was attributed to me in the Friday edition of the Commercial Dispatch article about the soccer tournament has taken on a life of its own- no- let me rephrase that- the statement that was misquoted by Isabelle, which I do think was an honest mistake on her part. When I read the article, I immediately called her and made her aware that I had not said, "Hell, they'll play in anything". Rather I said, "Hey! They'll play in anything." But that is really a minute point now. I did take some comfort when soccer coaches reached out to me to say they liked the statement because it shows how adaptive, resilient and tough soccer players are.

In yesterday's newspaper, the two individuals or whoever wrote the letter to the editor for them; what they did fail to point out was the preceding paragraph of Thursday's article which read, "Both Short and Lewis said mud and rain wouldn't stop soccer players anyway." Is that not the context of what I said? I did not say they will play on anything.

For those two individuals to try to shed light on what little concern I or the County have for the children of this community is a farce! Through God's grace, He has allowed me the opportunity to dedicate my entire career in recreation to making things better for our kids- I've made every effort to make facilities safe and enjoyable. Prior to my retirement, I did what I could for the past, present and the future children of our county by overseeing the construction of playgrounds, the Lowndes Soccer Complex, numerous baseball and softball fields, water spray parks and yes- the Cook Soccer Complex. Why would I now seek to oversee the destruction or lack of attention for the facilities that I was instrumental in building? To try to paint a picture of a soccer complex in disrepair and my lack of concern is a joke.

During this past week-ends soccer tournament, there were 128 soccer games played. It's ironic that at the County's unsafe and neglected soccer complex 68 games and 6 championship games were played. At the Cook Complex, 46 games and 2 championship games were played. And 14 games and 1 championship game were played at the Columbus High School. As well, the Mississippi Soccer Association staff administered the soccer tournament from the Lowndes Soccer Complex. If my math is right, a little more than half the soccer games were still played at our complex.

1<sup>st</sup> Peter 2:15 says, "For it is God's will that by doing good you should silence the ignorant talk of foolish men." So, I will continue to follow God's will, I choose to take the high road- I will not roll in the mud (no pun intended). I will concentrate on the future of the Lowndes Recreation Department and what recreation opportunities we can provide our citizens. And I would think they would concentrate on the future of the City Recreation Department rather than being so concerned with our department.



Roger Short  
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