

Shooting from the hip: Follow your own path, kids

by Scott Schulte

Jul 29, 2010

A few months ago I saw something that left me shaking my head.

It was at a sporting event in the area. A bright young man, who from what I have been told, is a gifted musician, had tried to play in this particular sporting event and it was obvious he was not interested about what was going on.

He was sluggish, bored, unhappy as his father, a man with large stature and full of intensity, kicked dirt around after his team lost.

Being annoyed after a loss is part of athletics. I am hyper-competitive and my own sons won't play air hockey with me to this day because I get too vicious. Talking trash over air hockey...weird.

As the people involved in this event mulled around, the young man I was watching suddenly rushed to get his things together and his entire demeanor changed.

"I have practice," he told his father. "I have to go."

His father then went on a tirade belittling his son over his love of music leaving the excited young man in a state of embarrassment and sadness.

My friend who was with me said, "Don't say anything."

And I didn't.

I am ashamed of myself for standing there as this so-called adult made fun of his own child for choosing a different path than he had in his life. This event has haunted me since it occurred in May. Now anyone who knows me knows I am the least perfect parent in the world.

But I will say this, even as it is difficult at times, I have allowed my two boys to choose their path.

With permission from my son, I will share with you this experience.

My son, Doug is entering his sophomore year at Viewmont, and I want him to run cross country. He can run and run and run. He enjoys runs uphill to the Bountiful Temple. As a former all-state runner and track and cross country coach I know a good runner when I see one, and with the guidance of Coach Lida Ripplinger I know Doug could be a top-notch runner. I have bemoaned my situation to Lida and Davis Coach Corbin Talley. Their advice: let him play football and support him.

Doug loves football. My 5 foot 6, 160 pound son is playing football and I believe he can be successful. But I also know he could be a great runner and frankly it used to kill me inside. I mean I really hated him wanting to continue his football career rather than running cross country, and we even discussed it a few times.

But it's his life, his path.

Not mine.

I hope as parents we can support our children in their dreams. Whether they choose athletics, music, drama, whatever, we owe it to our children to be in their corner cheering and loving them.

I'll be there at the football games for my boy...cheering and supporting him. And yes, I'll always wonder what kind of runner he could have become.

But I'll keep that to myself.

Read more: [Davis County Clipper - Shooting from the hip Follow your own path kids](#)