COACH FLANDERS THREATENS WALKOUT

By Randy Palmer

DARIAN - Drive into the Valentine district on a fall Sunday afternoon. You won’t have any problem with traffic, even as you near the Darian Destroyer’s stadium during a home game. Inside the stadium there are far more empty seats than full. And who can blame the fans for staying away, when the Destroyers have been destroyed by almost every team in the league?

Coach Jimmy Flanders doesn’t blame them. And he’s thinking of staying away from the stadium, too. Coach Flanders sat down and answered a few questions for the Darian Daily.

-How do you feel about the Destroyer’s performance this year?

Damned frustrated! That’s how I feel! We’ve barely won a game since 2002. We were winless before that season. The people of Darian want to see winners. They get a better show watching Mayor Wilson win the potato-sack race at your paper’s Fun Day than I can give them on a game day. Wait… I should say that I’m proud of how my boys have done, but I’m frustrated that I’m shackled by bean counters and can’t sign any top-dollar players. Nobody can win if you can’t sign the best players. Nobody at the top gives a hoot if we win or not.

-That’s a blunt statement about upper management, Coach. You make it sound personal.

Well it is to me. I came in to build a winning team. We had a rough start, but in 2002 Markheim was behind the team. He was committed to signing some top talent, and he put his money where it counted. He was the reason we were able to sign Lewis “Lightning” Unger. If Lightning hadn’t died we’d still be winning. And if the current owner doesn’t care as much as Markheim did, I don’t see why any of the rest of us should either.

-She has just taken over the reigns of a major corporation. And, on top of that she just announced that she is also a superhero and member of the Challengers. Why do you think she does not care rather than simply being busy?

At first I just thought she was busy and maybe an egghead that didn’t like football. So I tried calling her. A lot. If she cared she would at least return my calls. We’re talking a multi-million dollar operation here, which is a huge part of the public face of the company she runs. At the very least she could come out to the games! Having her and maybe a few other Challengers around could draw people in and show my boys that she cares about how they do. Hell, let Motormouth suit up. That would get us some yardage. I know the city needs superheroes, but she should know we need football heroes too.

-So what do you plan to do about this?

Well, I wouldn’t have called you guys in for this talk if I didn’t have something to say. Here it is: Kaliko/Dr. Summer Anne Mitchell show me that you’re going to give the team some support within the week, or I walk out before this Sunday’s game.

WATER TROUBLE

By Andrew Holden

DARIAN - Last week, local fishermen noticed an increase in the number of dead fish in the bay, as well as a decrease in the number of fish caught. Later that same week, officials at Darian Water Management reported abnormally high levels of algae and bacteria in the water system. Since then any water left standing for more than a day begins to grow a green-brown substance. The bay itself has become so thick with the sludge that boat Captains are reporting engine troubles have increased significantly. City Hall is expected to come out with an official warning soon. So far, any clean water that is drunk seems to be fine, but even bottled water turns cloudy within a day. The phenomenon is confounding local scientists, as the substance seems confined to water, other liquids are unaffected. The sludge itself has been identified as a mixture of simple bacteria and algae, neither of which is uncommon, but have never been seen in this amount, or been know to act in the way. The Darian Daily will continue to report as more develops.

CLOSE TO BREAKTHROUGH

DARIAN – Rumors in the scientific community recently suggest that Dr. Daedalus of Psion-Inc is close to a breakthrough. Saddled with the responsibility to design the next generation of U.S. military combat shielding, Dr. Daedalus has been struggling for months. Now he believes there may be a light at the end of the tunnel. SEE D-9
CRESCENT CITY ELEMENTARY GETS CHALLENGED

By James Dalemore

CRESCENT CITY - Today, Darian hero the Jester visited his hometown of Crescent City to speak at the local elementary school. After taking dozens of questions ranging from “What does it feel like to teleport?” to “Do you know Santa Claus?” Jester introduced more local Crescent City Heroes. Currently calling themselves the Crescent City Civic League, the group consisted of Xerox, Counter, Amoeba, and the recently discovered Crescent Sorceress, the latter of which claims to be related to the fabled Salem Witch from the turn of the century.

Jester allowed for precious few questions for the quartet, claiming they needed to keep their anonymity. After this, the Jester gave a rousing speech about what it takes to be a hero, and what is involved. The conclusion revolved around a question: “What heroes do YOU know”. The children in the audience named off Challengers, JSA members, JLA members and more. When the auditorium quieted, Jester signaled and two men came to the stage. Sheriff Detective Hunter Trask, and Fire Captain Dwayne Murphy. He used the two to illustrate that people need not fly or lift cars to be heroes.

He finished by asking the children to look down at themselves: “You are now looking at a hero in the making.” He said. “When you remember to dial 911, say no to drugs, or just give your parents a hug, you are making the world a better place. And that is all it takes to be a hero.”

While some may say such a speech is hokey, this reporter is sure that tonight, not a single parent in Crescent City will be without a great big hug from their child.

LOCAL HERO HONORED

By James Dalemore

DARIAN - Mayor Wilson presented Super Water Pick Man with an award for valor today, after saving countless animals from certain death at the Darian Humane Society. As was reported earlier, fire broke out at the Humane Society at approximately 3 am last Tuesday morning. If not for the quick actions of one of our cities lesser-known heroes, most of the animals awaiting adoption would have died from smoke inhalation before the Darian Fire Department could respond to the emergency. In his acceptance speech, Super Water Pick Man stated, “The big guys like the Challengers can’t be everywhere. We each have to do our part. Plus I decided to adopt one of the puppies!”

CRIME DOWN, ORGANIZATION UP

DARIAN – Local authorities are baffled by the wave of organized crimes recently. While traditional crime levels have dropped throughout the city, the crimes that still occur are very structured and organized.

Sergeant Emmett “Smitty” Barnes of the Darian Police told us of increased activity in drug trafficking, protection rackets, illegal gambling, and prostitution.

Some theorize that an organized crime family may have moved to Darian from Metropolis or Gotham City.
LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Letter #1 -
This is the last straw. That recent – unpredictable and completely random – electrical storm blew out all the electronics in my home including the surge protectors.
Sure, it was all insured but that’s not the point. I know that this is just another event in a long string of events that is directly related to those mutant freaks. First the new mall, which was to bring new jobs, fell into the ground, then a hurricane – also not predicted and came out of nowhere – damaged hundreds of buildings and homes. This city use to be a good place to live before these mutants showed up and ruined everything for good decent hard working people like myself. Why do we put up with them and their ilk? Oh sure they put on a good face and make big shows of helping people but only when it suits them, and usually after a disaster they caused. But we can’t trust their true intentions. Why are we so eager to give them sanctioned authority over our city?
Billy M., Proud Normal Human American

Letter #2 –
I wanted to publicly thank Motormouth and Raven Stick of the Challengers for their hard work and dedication to the new Youth Center. My son Marvin has made such incredible progress in his school studies and behavior. The last year has been very rough for us, with the death of Marvin’s father, I was at wits end, but now there is hope. Thank you Challengers for making such a powerful positive force for our community.
Debbie T.

Letter #3 –
Go Darian Lions! Boooyaaa! I have never been so proud to be associated with Darian’s Boggle champions. After three years of frustrating defeat at the tri-county finals, our team finally came out on top! Special thanks should go to Gertrude Epstein who really came through for the team during a stressful three-minute match. Until next year, shake ‘em and search!
Irvin F.

Letter #4 –
Where are the trash trucks? We have been without sanitation for three weeks. If the city council can’t get they’re acts together we should boot them out. The citizens of Darian pay taxes – too many taxes if you ask me – we should expect good services and trash is one of them. What’s going on? When I called the office place they said they would be out there today, well that was five days ago and still no one has come out and the trash is piling up. We should take the trash to city hall if this doesn’t clear up soon.
Guthrie W.

Letter #5 –
The recent letter by mayoral candidate Mary Gethron (“Darian’s shining beacon”) is completely out of context with reality. Where she got her numbers, and why she would use them to make the Mayor out to be a complete idiot is clearly driven by political gain. Her current talking points on security and public safety are a sham when compared against her well-documented record of selling out to whatever corporate entity is in power. And when I heard her most recent hate mongering against people “with abilities” - a stance that only serves to divide and confuse – I began to realize how much she shouldn’t be elected into office. I implore all citizens of Darian to think and see Mary Gethron for what she truly is: a manipulative divisive politician who seeks power through fear and distrust.
John W.

YOUTH CENTER A SUCCESS

By Jackie Century
DARIAN – The Challengers Youth Center in the Valentine district has been well received by local families. In just four weeks after the ribbon cutting, enrollments have tripled at the center.
Total enrollments are approximately 90 children, with a full-time staff of 10. In addition to the normal staff, members of the Challengers frequently make appearances and help out with the children. The armored Amp has been teaching computer skills to the youngest kids, and auto repair to the teenagers. Benjamin Maxwell, President and CEO of DariaNet, donated the computers for the children. The mysterious Raven Stick has been teaching the children self-defense, in hopes of developing their self-confidence. The speedster Motormouth has been coaching a physical education program, which includes jogging, sprinting, and cross-country. Danger-Man has started a class to educate the teenagers about the basics of business management. While team leader Jester has begun a gymnastics program for a small handful of children.
During an interview with technical genius Amp, he stated that spending time with the kids has really helped keep the Challengers spirits up. Two weeks ago, Challengers powerhouse Scion was lost in still-unrevealed circumstances. This is one of many losses the team has suffered in recent months. The enigmatic Dream Girl disappeared from the Challengers roster a couple months ago with no explanation. Soon after, the fire and ice powered Degree was lost battling the cross-dimensional villains the Murder Cartel. After that battle, the Challengers restructured their team and registered as an LLC, losing the Badger in the process. The roster then bolstered with the return of the Jester and addition of Shot in the Dark. However, Dark’s tenure with the team appears to have been cut short due to other obligations. Now with the return of Motormouth, Conduet, and Danger-Man, they are hoping to stabilize the team and focus on helping the community.
LOWER CRIME FOR VALENTINE
By James Dalemore

DARIAN - The month of October brought one of Darian’s largest crime rate drops ever. What’s more, while there was significant drop citywide, a large percentage of this was localized in the Valentine district. This area is traditionally one of the highest crime ridden areas. Now, it seems, this area has it’s own guardian. Having been dubbed “Foreman” by the areas inhabitants, because he wears a hard helmet and carries a wrench, this mysterious figure has sprung out of nowhere to fight crime.

Descriptions vary, and were they all to be believed, the Forman would be ten feet tall, have huge fangs, and drools acid. But most reports describe him as a construction worker. This isn’t that odd when you consider that the Valentine district contains a very large population of unemployed construction workers, carpenters, electricians and the like. Three years ago, Steelgrave industries was forced to lay off a great many workers, many of which lived in this area, or more specifically a smaller area of the Valentine district called “Builder’s Square”. This area was hit very hard during that time, but recent months have seen growth. Many of the workers have been re-hired, and various citizens have taken to using their skills for the neighborhood. After it’s completion last week, Builder’s Square now sports the city’s largest and possibly most architectural playground. Containing tire swings, net bridges and all manners of slides, this massive jungle gym is a whopping three stories tall! Some would say that it would be a parent’s safety worry nightmare, but safety inspectors have rated this the safest park in the county.

Massive clean-up crews are keeping up the area, working for free, or for simple thanks and a friendly meal with neighbors. It seems that the Foreman’s appearance several months ago has really changed things for the better. It has made this harder on investors who were eyeing the area as cheap property to buy up. The improvements have more than doubled the land value and it continues to rise. Not to mention that inhabitants are less and less desirous of leaving.

Cynthia Brown, owner of a free clinic in the area and organizer of much of the areas positive changes, “blames” all of the upswing on Foreman. “He has given hope back to the hopeless. And a poor man with hope is ten times as powerful as a rich man with none.”

So, take the kiddies out to the new park, try some of the home made food and the local eateries, and if you are lucky you might catch a glimpse of Darian’s blue collar hero, the Foreman.

LONE STAR CHALLENGERS TRIUMPH OVER THE INDOMITABLES
By Dash Mason

HOUSTON — Everyone was expecting an exciting World Series game four between the Houston Astros and the Darian Dynamite, but no one could have predicted this much excitement. Fifteen minutes into the first inning, an explosion rocked Minute Maid Park Stadium causing fans and players alike to be concerned. It was quickly discovered that the supervillain team known as the Indomitables caused the explosion. Lead by the weather-manipulating Warlock Storm, this group of villains was planning to rob the stadium of the game proceeds. The usual band of cronies accompanied Warlock Storm: Sir Shrapnel, Countess Anarchy, the Conqueror, Dr. Cleopatra Secret, Private Yellowjacket and his sidekick Kid Cobra.

Thankfully, the Lone Star Challengers happened to be on-hand to save the day. Lead by the flying and magic-using El Sombrero, the Lone Star Challengers were able to capture the villains and save any fans from harm. Baseball supporters were impressed with the team, consisting of the energy-projecting Reaction, the pint-sized Garden Gnome, the bird-controlling Grackle, the brilliant oil-like creature known as the Shadow, the ricocheting Rebound, the gun slinging Alamo, and the energy-bolo throwing Bolo Jack.

Bill “The Big Hurt” Johnson assisted the Lone Star Challengers in wrapping up the villains. Johnson was on hand at the game to cheer on the Darian Dynamite and leapt into action the minute trouble arose. Also assisting were Lone Star Challengers reservists: the super-strong tough-skinned Armadilettante and twister-like sword-wielding Whirling Dervish.

Lone Star Challengers sponsor and well-renown oil baron Buck Pitchgilding said, “Did you see them in action? That’s my team! They’re the biggest and best Texas has to offer, and that’s saying a lot!”