

A new kind of practice

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So, why is it always soccer practice?

Yeah, it's true.

We're treading on dangerous ground here.

Soccer is sacrosanct. Almost as revered as global warming. The danger is that anytime, anyone, anywhere even mutters something that might be construed as less than worshipful about soccer a defender of the sport always seems to be nearby. And those folks are a rather loud bunch who are not the least bit bashful about castigating anyone who is less than an avid soccer supporter. It seems the world is filled with people who are on a mission to protect soccer's reputation.

(Nobody knows where it is all those people go on game day.)

But we digress. This is not about soccer. It's about those articles that appear with some frequency featuring career women. There was another last week in the New York Times about Liz Cheney .

For those who don't know, she is the daughter of the former vice-president. She is conservative. She is vocal. And whether you agree with her, she is quick witted and gives as good as any. Because of that she gets on TV with some frequency and has newspaper articles written about her. And it was in the recent article that I learned that in addition to her work, speaking engagement, marriage, family, career - she also hauls kids to soccer practice.

Not football.

Not basketball.

Not baseball.

Not even hockey.

Soccer.

And that is the way it is with all these successful career women we read about. Their lives are busy. They are great moms. They are smart. They are successful. They have fantastic careers. They have great families.

And they have kids they take to soccer practice.

Always soccer.

Frankly, at the risk of offending soccer supporters, I'm a bit weary of all this soccer stuff.

Not that I don't think it is a fine game. In fact, it is especially good for kids just starting out in sports. Far superior to, say, baseball yet with an equivalent excitement factor.

Every kid can run. Every kid can kick. And it's fun. There are never any embarrassing attempts to catch or hit a ball before the motor skills have developed. Just run. Then kick. Good stuff all around.

But geez, is there not one successful career mom-woman-wife who has a kid who plays football?

Just one?

But more puzzling is whether any of these soccer-playing kids have fathers.

Perhaps all this is rather petty, coming from the dad-man-husband perspective. But after seeing the umpteenth, gloriously upbeat essay about the busy, successful mom who balances career and family and still manages to safely deliver children to soccer practice my teeth begin to grind.

The gist of all this is just how darn busy this woman is. Marriage, family, career. For goodness sakes, how does one person do it all? Apparently their husbands sit home drinkin' beer, watchin' football, scratchin' themselves. Good duty, I suppose, if you can get it.

But a few of the husbands, one or two perhaps, also have jobs, care of the children and yes n busy lives. Lives that include hauling kids to various practices.

One of which, we can hope, would involve a football.

- DAN HAMMES is publisher of this newspaper.