

Coronavirus throws unhittable curveball at DNHS coach

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The cancellation of public events during the COVID-19 pandemic has hit Roger Schultz doubly hard, as a coach and a businessman.

As the new head coach for the Del Norte High School baseball team, Schultz was looking forward to a rebuilding year, getting his athletes back to the basics. Now, in the wake of the state canceling all athletics, only Schultz visits the field daily, keeping it in shape during the time off, in case it ever returns to game on.

“But the guys, I’ve got them doing what’s appropriate from home, hitting off tees, watching video advice. A couple have batting cages. No one’s pitching off mounds. There’s nothing else we can do with the season,” Schultz said.

Schultz said it’s particularly hard for the seniors on the team with the season canceled, especially those looking to play at the next level. He said if there is no baseball this year, college recruiters are forced to look at statistics from athletes’ junior season. And that’s where the problem compounds for DNHS players.

“Their junior year was horrible. The former coaching staff didn’t keep track of statistics, didn’t give anything to Max Preps. So, there’s no info for college guys to look at,” Schultz said.

He added their best hope may be if colleges host open tryouts at the start of next season.

His athletes aren’t the only ones missing out on the sports season. Schultz also owns Hot Shots Sports Photography. His cameras are shuttered during the cancellations.

“My business is dead in the water. I wasn’t planning on doing a whole lot anyway,” Schultz said, adding he planned to coach more than take photos this season. “But with a whole lot of venues with nothing to shoot, my business takes hit. Plus, no sports teams are taking team photos.

"But my situation is small compared to the rest of the world," he added. "Other people are worried about losing their jobs because the business can’t stay open. While some are hiring left and right, others don’t want to get exposed to the virus. It’s a tough situation.”