

(Story written by www.iwasatthegame.com)

One of the Dover Boys basketball players collapsed during a game in the first round of a tournament at Mulhall-Orlando High School early in January, and suddenly everything changed.

This young man who was a starter all season, had just scored for Dover before running back on defense when he collapsed. A Dover girls basketball coach, a Dover softball coach, and all three Dover boys basketball coaches stepped up to play a role to save his life. They assessed the situation, checking his pulse and for breathing, one called 911, others worked together to start CPR- counting, giving breaths, doing chest compressions, and communicating.

Magnus Miller, a player from Life Christian, who had just been competing against Dover, was even part of the lifesaving team. Having been a trained lifeguard, this young man had undergone extensive first aid training so he was prepared and used his training to encourage the coaches in what to do.

The most important thing the Life Christian Academy player did was probably reassuring the coaches that they were doing things right, according to Dover Head Basketball Coach. Because Randy, the Dover player who had suffered cardiac arrest, didn't seem to be responding to CPR, the confident reassurance really helped.

After performing CPR for a while, someone got the school's defibrillator to restore the unconscious player's heartbeat.

According to Head Coach Jared Reese, it was about 30 minutes before the ambulance arrived, so doing CPR was crucial, but his heartbeat wasn't restored until the defibrillator was used.

Paramedics transported the player to Oklahoma City and doctors told family members that the use of the defibrillator likely saved his life.

Randy doesn't want more attention, and the coaches don't want any credit. This experience has put things into perspective, according to Reese. It has made our team even closer. What Coach Reese said he really wants, is for people to know that the cardiac training that the OSSAA has required coaches to go through for years is important.

David Jackson, OSSAA Executive Director explained that although we have required it for years, the state actually put it into law a few years ago through legislation. The Chase Morris Sudden Cardiac Arrest Prevention Act is guidance on required training, necessary emergency plans, and drills for schools to be prepared in the event of a sudden cardiac arrest. The OSSAA incorporated those guidelines into their required training. Every school is also required to have a defibrillator on site.

Mr. Jackson shared that the OSSAA, in conjunction with the National Federation Foundation, provided 420 free defibrillators to any school that needed one a couple of years ago. The defibrillator used on Randy was one of those provided through that coordinated effort.

Recently, the OSSAA ordered 24 more defibrillators and will be sending out a letter to all membership schools making these defibrillators available at no cost to any school that needs them, until they are gone.

Coach Reese stressed that we are all often critical of the things the Oklahoma Secondary School Activities Association (OSSAA) does or doesn't do the way we may think they should. "But the truth is, without the training they require and access to the defibrillator the OSSAA provided, this young man would not be alive today." Because of what the OSSAA did, he was sitting on the bench in the state tournament as an important part of Dover's team.

Dover Boys made it to state this year for the first time since 1993 and are the only Dover's Boys team to win a game at the state tournament, except for the 1962 team that also made it to the semifinals.