

EDUCATION; SPORTS

Sports and Desegregation

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- :20 Communities have long rallied around sports and some believe that sports helped move us toward better race relations in the late 1960s and 70s.
- :29 On December 20, 1966, Gibbs High School basketball coach, Freddie Dyles, responded to a question about what he wished for Christmas by saying, an even break from area basketball officials. This was due to the unfair calls made by predominated white officials against his team. Gibbs defeated Pensacola, Escambia, and Boca Ciega on the way to the finals. During the game against Boca Ciega, a thief sneaked into the Gibbs Gladiator's dressing room at half time stealing money, class rings, and other valuables. Even with unfair calls and the theft of personal belongings, Gibbs went on to defeat Clearwater 70 to 66 in front of 7500 fans in what was called the greatest show on earth. It was the largest crowd to ever witness a Florida high school basketball game and the fans were not disappointed. They saw basketball at its best. 1966 was a year of history in Pinellas County. Gibbs High won the Florida Interscholastic Athletic Association state championship and advanced to the national tournament in Montgomery, Alabama where they won two games and lost one.

School Re-Segregation

- 2:02 One of the consequences of racially discriminatory mortgage lending, a practice known as redlining, is that American neighborhoods are deeply segregated by race as are the schools that serve them. From the outset, school desegregation was widely and bitterly opposed. Court ordered busing brought turmoil in 1971, but it also created the opportunity for friendships and a deeper understanding between races among students and team mates of that first generation of integration. Pinellas County schools and sports teams have begun to re-segregate into neighborhood groups since a judge ordered the end of busing in 2000.



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