

# Transcription of Episode 339: Michael Walsh (SHHS Athletics)

Tuesday, August 16, 2022

## SPEAKERS

Bob Firing, Michael Walsh

**Note:** This transcription was computer-generated and may contain typographical errors.

### **Bob Firing** 00:10

Good afternoon Shadow Hills. Well, it's been a while I know. But I'm sure every, almost every man and this development is getting excited because we are on the brink of football season. For the next eight months, there's gonna be a lot of football flying around the country. And most people now are watching on television, but that's a rather sterile experience. And part of the game is being in the crowd and cheering the home team on. And our professional teams are quite a long way away and very expensive to go and see. However, we've got a high school right down the street here that has a full program of fall sports. And my guest today is Michael Walsh, the Athletic Director, who's going to talk about them, Michael, welcome to Shadow Hills, and welcome to the podcast.

### **Michael Walsh** 01:12

Alright, thank you I appreciate you taking the time and having me.

### **Bob Firing** 01:16

Why don't you give us an overview of the program before we get into the specifics sports.

### **Michael Walsh** 01:22

Sure, definitely. Shadow Hills athletics, we have roughly 800 student athletes, 23 varsity sports, I've got 56 stipends for our coaches, a lot of those get broken up so we can have more coaches on hand, more of our coaches and our mentors working with our student athletes. So it's comprehensive. I love what we're doing at Shadow Hills. This is year five for me. And we have so many of our teams on the precipice of doing something great, not just success on their field in the realm of competition, but in the classroom and the community as well.

### **Bob Firing** 01:56

That's great. Well, I know you've got a full slate of fall sports, but football is definitely the one that is get attracts the most fans. So let's talk about that. Let's talk about the team. And I know you got a big game coming up. Let tell everybody about that.

**Michael Walsh** 02:15

Well, it's the season opener, you know crosstown rivals are the two high schools within Indio, it's the Mayor's Cup. This is our sixth year. We did have that one year pause with COVID. So it's at Indio high school this year. On Friday night, seven o'clock kickoff. We will host a lower level game at Shadow Thursday that'll be six in our dungeon. But we're looking forward to you know, getting back against that rivalry and playing that crosstown rival.

**Bob Firing** 02:40

So the Thursday game is what, the JV game?

**Michael Walsh** 02:44

JV game.

**Bob Firing** 02:45

Okay, and Shadow Hills. Talk about the success of the football program, you've had a lot of success over there.

**Michael Walsh** 02:53

Well Coach Esquibel's third official year, third year on the books. And last year really showed his leadership and the type of culture that he was building that Shadow Hills. One of the best defenses in the state for points allowed and brought us back to the playoffs. And I mean played a phenomenal team against Culver City and they were just the better team that night. But the change in our program top down from Coach Esquibel's influence is very dramatic and drastic. And he's just taking steps forward every year with the culture that he's developing for our football program.

**Bob Firing** 03:29

And he has some star players that we should be aware of.

**Michael Walsh** 03:32

We do. Desert Sun just recognized Jeremiah Peppers. He was all CIF last year as a sophomore, which is unprecedented. Team leader on defense, he's that ball hawk and kid that arrives and makes his presence known. He's not going to talk about it, he's gonna go out and do it.

**Bob Firing** 03:49

That's great. And so we know the first game is Friday night. But if people would like to find out about this full schedule, how would they do that?

**Michael Walsh** 03:59

Right, our website shadowhillsathletics.org is really one stop shopping for anything athletics. You can find all of our schedules up there from all of our different levels, as well as head coach contact information. We do live stream, any contest in our gym and in our stadium. Information for that is available as well. And all of our ticketing information we do completely online digital ticketing as well through GoFan.

**Bob Firing** 04:25

Okay, great. All right. So what are the other sports in the fall?

**Michael Walsh** 04:30

In the fall? We're looking at not only football, but boys and girls cross country, girls, volleyball, girls, tennis and golf. And then we have boys water polo going too.

**Bob Firing** 04:39

Okay, and is there anything in particular that you could talk about any of those sports that might interest our residents?

**Michael Walsh** 04:50

Well, a returning DVL champion with Marjorie Lopez on the girls cross country side and they have their returning a strong side a strong squad. We're also looking at a strong performance from our boys cross country team as well. Our aquatics program has come a long ways. We have some really great coaches that have tremendous interscholastic experience, you know, competing on their own, but they're building programs the right way. And for me, the biggest thing is not the win-loss record of a coach, it's developing character through that interscholastic experience through high school athletics. I want our students to be able to look back on their time as a student athlete and Shadow Hills in 10 or 20 years and have positive experiences and have learned life lessons from those role models and mentors that we put into their lives.

**Bob Firing** 05:34

Okay, great. And some of these kids who were at Shadow Hills 10 years ago have gone on to bigger things. Why don't you tell the audience about some of them?

**Michael Walsh** 05:45

Well, I think the one that always comes to mind for anybody is Taylor Ward. Just the other night had a home run for the Angels so...

**Bob Firing** 05:52

Tell them who Taylor Ward is...

**Michael Walsh** 05:54

Taylor Ward, baseball player for Anaheim Angels.

**Bob Firing** 05:58

So he's made it all the way to the major leagues, which is an amazing journey.

**Michael Walsh** 06:04

Happy to have a signed bat in my office from Taylor, because I had a family connection to him one of our other former student athlete baseball player.

**Bob Firing** 06:12

And that's another thing I've ever you know, you've got to a Ram game or even a USC game, the chances of you knowing someone actually on the team is pretty low. But here, you can meet the parents, you can meet the whole families, and really get invested in the success of the program.

**Michael Walsh** 06:30

A recent graduate Jake Shipley is up at Oregon, playing football for them defensive end, and I think he's one or two on their depth chart there.

**Bob Firing** 06:41

So there's good athletes coming out of out of the valley. And well, that's wonderful. By the way, on average, how much does it cost to go to a football game? And is there a charge for any of these other sports?

**Michael Walsh** 06:56

Football general admission, you're looking at \$10. And then for our volleyball and other one where we do charge a gate fee, that's going to be \$7.

**Bob Firing** 07:02

\$7, okay, Well that's very affordable for our people. It's nice and close. And you can get invested in the program, if you wish.

**Michael Walsh** 07:12

Right, it gets in the door, you're gonna see some great competition, you're gonna see kids that just love playing their sport, and you're gonna see some coaches that are true, you know, role models and mentors for our kids. Really, enforcing and modeling character based athletics.

**Bob Firing** 07:27

Okay, well, that's great. Well, so if in the audience out there, if you're interested and would like to go as a group, you can, you know, send me an email at [podcasts@scshca.com](mailto:podcasts@scshca.com), or talk to Michael directly. I mean, he's right down the street. He's got an email address on the website. And they are eager for your participation. And so finally, before I let you go, outside of sports, what's going on over there in the fall?

**Michael Walsh** 07:58

Well, in the fall, one of the things that I truly enjoy doing, it was part of my mission and visions for Shadow Hills athletics, as I run a Student Athlete Advisory Committee. Already have a commitment from Waymond Fermon, our mayor, to come in and talk to our kids. And that's about life skills. And that's about you know, offering his perspective to our student athletes so that they can, you know, better to find their path and you know, the doors that can be open to them from participation in athletics or anything else that they get involved in, in the community. So, I love to bring in guest speakers like that, just to offer a different perspective, because that's the thing you don't know, until you know. So just offering something to those kids that open their eyes or open their doors to new opportunities for them.

**Bob Firing** 08:40

Great. So okay, well, so the door is open. If anybody's interested. You talked to Michael about that, too. Well, thank you for your time. I hope you get interested in our local sports scene. And so until next time, bye bye.

**Michael Walsh** 08:55

It's great day to be a Knight!

**Bob Firing** 08:57

Great day to be a Knight . . . I like that.