

Sports writing isn't this member's only game



Samuel Goldman, right, with his wife, Adele

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— SAMUEL GOLDMAN

BY ANDREW M. SCOTT

Stored in a San Francisco den are the 1941 newspapers by a young boy named Samuel Goldman from when he was editor of Marwedel Summer Camp's newspaper, Redwood Chips, in Mendocino County, Calif. Hanging on the nearby wall above his computer is a November 1933 newspaper photo of an even younger Goldman, at 6 years old, wearing a football helmet, holding the game ball and sitting on the lap of University of California football coach Bill Ingram. The two moments would forever intertwine and inspire Goldman through a long career in sports and journalism.

Today, Goldman is a Stanford University media relations volunteer assistant and works with the media relations department for the San Francisco Kraft Fight Hunger Bowl, formerly known as the Emerald Bowl. Over the years, the World War II veteran has held positions as the Shrine East-West Football Classic media relations director, Skyline College sports information director and San Francisco State University Sports information director, among other titles.

Last year you could find Goldman in the press box during the 2010 World Series championship when the San Francisco Giants won their first championship since moving from New York in 1958. Goldman has been involved with two NFL Super Bowls and numerous NCAA tournaments. But when Goldman goes to work at a major sports event, his concentration is always on the details: helping the sports writers with their coverage and making sure the event runs smoothly. And at almost every conference Goldman attends, colleagues are sure to see his wife, Adele, helping him.

"If it weren't for my wife, I wouldn't have been able to stay in this profession," Goldman said. Every time he found himself making tough decisions in his career, it was always Adele's supportive advice that gave him courage to make the right choices. The couple will celebrate their 60th wedding anniversary in April.

Goldman's career has led to many honors, including inductions into the halls of fame for College Sports Information Directors of America, San Francisco State University Athletics and Skyline College; the 78th annual East-West Shrine Game Volunteer of the Year Award; the American Press Institute Fellowship Award; and the Emerald Bowl Volunteer of the Year Award, which he shares with Adele.

In 2000, the West Coast Conference established the Sam Goldman Media Award, honoring sports journalists for their contributions to college athletics within the conference.

Although Goldman spent years as a sports correspondent for The Associated Press, United Press International, the San Francisco Chronicle and the San Francisco Examiner, he hardly sees himself as locked into the sports niche.

"I'm a writer. I just happen to use sports as a vehicle," Goldman said. "My whole life has been around the area of writing. I just love what I'm doing."

Since 1958, Goldman has been an educator for numerous high schools and colleges in northern California. For 16 years, he led the journalism program at Skyline College. A core principle in all of Goldman's curricula is the necessity of the press and free speech in the democratic process.

"The average person doesn't know what a precious gift freedom of speech and the press is, and that the rights and responsibilities of the citizens in democracy are understood by all," Goldman said.

The man who mentored those very principles to Goldman is retired San Jose State University journalism department founder Dwight Bentel, who recently turned 100. "He had those leadership qualities that assured us how important our role was in carrying on the responsibilities of a free press," Goldman said. Bentel continued to play a pivotal role in Goldman's career when he later asked Goldman to join the Northern California chapter of SPJ, then Sigma Delta Chi, in 1965.

"It had a lot of meaning for me and my family that I was joining the professional organization that was devoted to enhancing and protecting journalism," Goldman said.

Aside from SPJ, he is a member of 10 other organizations, including the College Sports Information Directors of America, the Basketball Writers Association of America and the Pacific Coast League Historical Society. ♦