

# Coaches and athletes mourn death of San Mateo's Dooley

devotion are what touched people from Aragon athletic director Bill Daskarolis to St. Francis' Steve Filios to Gunn's Hal Daner — similar breeds in a sport that some consider to be fading on the high school level.

"It's way too soon for what he gave to kids," Filios said. "You always looked forward to seeing him during the year."

Oddly enough, Filios — who turns 40 this year — will coach high school track and field for the last time this weekend when he takes a handful of St. Francis standouts to the state track and field championships at Cerritos College in Norwalk. Filios was named St. Francis' head basketball coach last month and will

leave his role as track coach.

Filios, like Daner, saw Dooley and joked around with him last Thursday at the Central Coast Section championships. Fittingly, Dooley was named this season's CCS honor coach — the person recognized in a particular sport for "dedication and tireless efforts." As is the honor coach's role, Dooley helped hand out trophies and medals at the awards ceremonies last week.

Daner, his voice cracking with emotion, spoke of Dooley as "a bastion."

Dooley, who saw eight principals change at San Mateo, was part of the pioneers who included the likes of Menlo-Atherton's Plato Yanicks, Carlmont's Loren

Landsberry, Mills' Ed Parker and Los Altos' Leo Long — coaches who strived to build the reputation of track and field on the Peninsula.

"Don was very instrumental in maintaining and providing a proper environment for our sons and daughters," Daskarolis said. "He could've gone to any other school and coached at any level, but he stayed here with the kids.

"He had a very keen sense of feeling."

So, with the thought of having a proper cross-country course for high school runners, Crystal Springs was the brainchild of Dooley and Rush.

"A lot of guys helped," Daskarolis said, "but, Don designed it

and Bob kept it groomed. It's not perfect, but it's the best when you look at other places. Woodward Park in Fresno (site of the state meet and Kinney Western Regional), that's not a cross country course, really. It's a public park."

Daskarolis said he hopes that younger coaches come along and can maintain the enthusiasm and dedication that Dooley did for 30 years. Daskarolis singled out Steve Nelson at Mount Pleasant, who has built a program that won both the boys and girls CCS team titles last week.

And, with track and field being phased out at colleges looking to cut costs, San Mateo County residents who drove to San Jose Municipal Stadium to watch Serra's

baseball team last week might have noticed the barren track at San Jose State.

SJS dumped the widely respected program five years ago. Only two years earlier, the coach that the track is named after — legendary Bud Winter — died two days before he was to be inducted into the NCAA Hall of Fame.

A memorial is scheduled for Dooley on Thursday on the track at the San Mateo campus at 4 p.m. One coach suggested that some sort of a memorial be placed somewhere along the course at Crystal Springs.

It might serve as a reminder for the teenagers — present and future — to the symbol of someone who gave them a place to run.