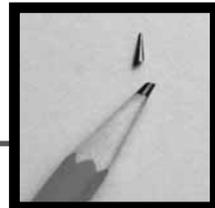


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Good to Be King

No Girls Allowed

By King Harris

Every once in a while in your lifetime, if you're fortunate, you might cross paths with someone who enters your existence as would a tornado or a hurricane, but one who leaves behind in the wake nary a path of destruction so much as a whirlwind tour of the universe, not unlike the once fabled e-ticket rides at Disneyland. If you've ever met C.J. Silas, I have little doubt you would agree. C.J., a Central Coast resident for the past ten years now, is perhaps best known for her work behind the microphone in the world of radio sports broadcasting, most recently sharing the airwaves with Mike Wozniak on "The Sports Bite" on ESPN 1280, and providing fall football coverage for KVEC Morning News. And I am pleased to announce that she has returned to radio full time as of last week, with her own

radio hour-long sports talk show on EXPN 1280 at 7 a.m. every Saturday. "Today I'm in the grassroots stages of having my own radio show for the first time in over 20 years," she told me recently, and not without a great deal of pride. "I own it, I produce it, I book it, I research it; it's all me." C.J. might have landed such a program several years ago if it weren't for the fact that in 2008 she took time off to write her very first book, titled, "No Girls Allowed: The Jock and Jill Mentality of Sports Broadcasting," a chronicle of her zany and frenetic experiences in the world of sports broadcasting dominated almost entirely by men.



they struggle like I do and I did. My book is a collection of stories about my journey that got me where I am today."

Where that has turned out to be, is her very own radio sports show. "I'm selling it and marketing my own show; I've never done anything like that. I've always worked for a general manager or a program director. This is my gig and I pay ESPN for my time. My show is also podcast, which is cool. You can go to my website (thecjsilasshow.com) any time of day or night and tune into my show."

C.J.'s broadcast will focus on Central Coast sports. "Local sports at the collegiate level, not high school so much. High school parents are nuts when it comes to sports, and I don't want to deal with that. They're passionate and their kids are all Olympians, and that's not a ground I wanna walk, but I'm going to cover Cuesta, Hancock and Cal Poly, including athletes of the week at all schools every week."

Any advice to young women who want to enter sports broadcasting? "Know more than everybody else and never, ever give up in what you believe, no matter how many people tell you that you can't do it."

That philosophy can be found sprinkled throughout C.J.'s book, along with challenges that include, among others, a tenacious battle with students and instructors during her daunting days at Syracuse University. But you'll have to read that for yourself to believe it.

"This book is about a woman who has a dream, and 20 plus years later, she still is doing it. It's about wanting something, and never giving up, no matter how hard it is, no matter how many walls you have to break through. So here I am in my forties, and I'm still doing it." ❀

"I always played sports and I like to talk, so I thought I'd find a way to put 'em together. It's true! I have a lot of energy and I had a lot of passion." That no one can deny. C.J., who grew up in Los Angeles, gives a lot of credit to her mom. "My mom was a story teller, she still is; she was a screenwriter for many years in Hollywood. I learned storytelling from her, so I knew I wanted to talk and had always played sports. I emulated top sports announcers like Chick Hearn and Vin Scully. Even though they were men, I didn't think about that as a kid, and later as you fast forward, I knew there would be some struggles in my career because of my gender."

C.J. contends there is a particular challenge in being on radio as opposed to being on television.

"Look at sports radio today; there's not much. You see more women in TV on the sidelines, in studios, at the anchor desk, but not in radio. There are so few women who talk on the radio because a lot of men aren't interest in hearing a woman's perspective on sports; they'd much rather see her, and check her out. I'm not trying to downplay women in TV sports, they work hard,



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Focal Point

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