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Things were a little different in 1951

Michael Hemesath

College of Saint Benedict/Saint John's University, mhemesath@csbsju.edu

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Quad 136



Things were a little different in 1951

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Things were a little different in 1951

A friend recently sent me an obituary from *The New York Times*, “Dick Kazmaier, a Heisman Winner Who Passed on the N.F.L., Dies at 82.”

Mr. Kazmaier, a Princeton halfback who won the Heisman Trophy in 1951, was drafted by the Chicago Bears but declined to join the team, or any other, saying he had achieved all he wanted in the sport (see full article [here](#)). The story of Mr. Kazmaier is a powerful reminder of how college (and professional) athletics have changed, literally within a lifetime.

As we welcome back our many student athletes to Saint John’s and Saint Ben’s, I appreciate the significant role of athletics at schools like ours. The DIII model allows young men and women to continue to engage in their athletic interests within the balanced context of a broader liberal arts education that prepares them for life.

Athletics can be pursued with commitment and passion, but our student-athletes, coaches and fans all understand that this commitment, just like all extra-curricular engagement, is only a part of the holistic education that small liberal arts schools provide.

If Mr. Kazmaier had not been a Tiger, he would have made a fine Johnnie.

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About the

Author:

Michael
Hemesath



Michael Hemesath is the 13th president of Saint John's University. A 1981 SJU graduate, Hemesath is the first layperson appointed to a full presidential term at SJU. You can find him on Twitter [at] [PrezHemesath](#).