Dean Bell

TELEVISION PRODUCER USES SPORTS TO TEACH MATH AND PHYSICS

Dean Bell is an award-winning filmmaker and television writer, director, and producer. His show *Sports Figures* is a highly acclaimed ESPN educational television series designed to teach the principles of physics and mathematics through sports. His approach has been to tell a story, pose a problem, and then follow through with its mathematical and scientific explanation. “But always,” he says, “you must make it fun. It has to be both educational and entertaining.”

Dean began his career as a filmmaker after college. He landed the apprentice film editor’s position on a Woody Allen film. From there, he worked his way up in the field, from assistant editor, to editor and finally writer, director, and producer.

“I’ve always been a fan of educational TV,” he states, “although I never thought that was where my career would take me. It’s one of life’s little ironies that I’ve ended up producing this type of show. You see, my father worked in scientific optics and was very science oriented. He was always delighted in finding out how things worked, and was even on the Mr. Wizard TV show a few times.”

Dean writes the script for each segment, working together with top educational science consultants. “We spend a day coming up with ideas and then researching each subject thoroughly. Our job is to illustrate the relationship between a sports situation and the related mathematical or physics principles.

“At the end of the day,” says Dean, “it really is nice to be working on a show that means something and that is so worthwhile. I’m still getting ahead in my career as a film and TV producer, but now I’m also an educator.”