

Maidstone High School Hosts Provincial Volleyball Tournament

December 2, 2010

This past weekend Maidstone High School, along with satellite school Lashburn High, hosted the 3A Boys Volleyball Provincial Finals.

A provincial tournament is a very big deal. To successfully host one you need every staff member and a team of about 50 students from each school. All of these people will be fully busy long before the tournament begins and then for every minute it runs. They decorate, clean, keep score, officiate, move equipment, food, beverages and furniture, work concessions, act as hosts and ensure that all of the jobs get done on time or sooner. It demands a lot of work from a lot of people, all of whom who are of the opinion that there is no room, for 'good enough,' and no room for 'good' because only a great job will do.

And that was apparent everywhere you looked: in the perfect team signs placed beside each bench as the matches were on; in the small coloured line up pads provided for each coach; in the superb opening ceremonies, and in the carefully lettered, assembled and laminated decorations in the gym that celebrated each team; in the excellent officials, timekeepers and team hosts, and in the smooth way in which the event was run in both schools.

A smoothness that prompted the question: "Have you, uh, done this before?" And the answer, from tournament director David Speirs, was: "Yes, six times for us and five times for Lashburn." What he didn't mention was that the school had also hosted one of the largest volleyball tournaments in Western Canada, Megavolley, 58 times in the past 30 years.

Which in turn gave rise to "Why do you people do this?" and "What do you get out of it all?"

"Well," said Speirs, "people need to give back. You don't want a society of users. It's an important thing. I was an athlete and I went to the games and tournaments, and now if I, (and we), can give back by providing a venue for others, then we're happy just to be able to do that. If everyone were to think like this then kids would have opportunities to play like crazy. We're lucky because in the Northwest we have a lot of schools who host regularly and do a great job."

"It's also important for students to learn how to work a score sheet properly and how to officiate. You want the kids to understand that they're in a big thing. If they have to act as a linesman for 45 minutes, then they should understand that they have to be the best linesman in Canada for 45 minutes. If they're going to be in the room, then they've got to be IN the room. In the end, if they can't be playing on that court, then they can still be a part of that court. And the same goes for the school. It's a huge service, and a responsibility ultimately, to be able to teach kids about payback."

Speir's thoughts were echoed by the Maidstone principal Brennan Becotte. "We do it because we can. We have the right people here - the staff, all of them, make it happen. Dave and I can wish and hope all we want, but without the staff we have, we couldn't do it. We have the team, the

high school team, and we have the experience –there’s a continuity in what we do that goes way beyond one tournament.”

Finally I went to Jay Elder, the principal of Lashburn High, to ask these same questions. His response was slightly different. “Well,” he said, “it’s not quite as big an undertaking for the satellite school, but it still takes all of your staff and about 50 students. When we get the request we take it to our people and we ask if they want to help out. And they say yes! Yes, in a big way.”

“And why?”

““Why?” he asked in a surprised tone of voice. “Because that’s what you do. You help out your neighbour. You do it to help out. You do it because the lessons learned in sport and especially in volunteerism are good lessons. They’re the lessons of life. So we don’t hesitate when opportunities like this come about.”

So...

This past weekend Maidstone High School, along with satellite school Lashburn High, hosted the 3A Boys Volleyball Provincial Finals. Two teams from the Northwest School Division, Neilburg Composite and Maidstone, were among the twelve teams that qualified for the event. Play on both days of the tournament was at an extremely high level, with superb displays of athleticism the norm.

Advancing from round robin play Maidstone met and defeated Neilburg in two very close games and advanced to meet second seed Wakaw. Wakaw, the eventual tournament winner, defeated the hosts in the quarter finals, went on to defeat Langenburg in the semi-finals and then top seeded Waldheim in the finals to take the gold medal.

And then all the people who made it possible went home.



#5, Cole Sutherland; and # 7 Jay Boggust, blocking a hit from a student from Leader. The official is David Speirs.



Ryan Donovan (Maidstone) hitting.
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