

## **Bronze Medal Caps Great Season for Carpenter High**

**December 4, 2009**

There are very few grade twelve athletes who can hang three provincial medals around their necks at the end of their third season.

After winning a gold medal and bronze medals in provincial volleyball in 2007 and 2008 the early season expectation for the Carpenter High Senior Boys Volleyball Team was that they were probably in for a rebuilding year. The team had, after all, lost a number of very powerful players.

Over the season, however, the team became a team in a very real sense. A group of five grade twelve and a mix of grade ten and eleven students, the team was, in the opinion of coach Dustin Treptow, “a group of exceptionally fine athletes who worked together well: a great group of kids who received numerous compliments from hotel staff wherever they travelled.”

Under the direction of coaches Treptow and Gerry Varjassy they spent the first two months of their season moving across the province attending tournaments. Their results were very positive, with the team winning the two biggest tournaments in Saskatchewan: the Mount Royal and the University of Saskatchewan Invitational tournaments: “The highlight of my season,” said player Dean Villeneuve, “was winning Mustang Volley (the Mount Royal tournament) the biggest tournament in Western Canada – because everyone felt confident playing together, playing great positional defense – six guys working together as a team. When [that] happened we knew it and it was pretty special!”

Leighton Chiverton agreed that something very special had happened during that tournament: “It happened in the final versus Winnipeg, when we came back after a brutal 25-13 first game loss. Guys came together and played consistently. All of a sudden we turned around and worked together. It was a great feeling on the court.”

In their ninth week the team travelled to Warman to compete in the 5A Regionals against two teams from Prince Albert, two teams from North Battleford and teams from Warman and Tisdale. They won gold in this tournament and advanced to Provincials.

In Provincial round robin play the team beat Carlton (Prince Albert), Winston Knoll Collegiate from Regina and Estevan, but finished second in their pool after losing a close match to Saskatoon’s Marion Graham Collegiate. It was this loss that put them into the quarterfinals against Balgonie.

After two straight victories over Balgonie the team moved into the semi-finals to face St. Mary High School from Prince Albert. A loss in a hard-fought, very even, three game match against the eventual Provincial Gold Medalists then put the team into the bronze medal match against Carlton, whom they defeated in three games to take the bronze medal.

You don't measure the success of a season in medals. Medals are just the tangible results of a coaching practice that is intelligent and farsighted, and, all things in the arena being equal, a measure of luck. They are the result of a philosophy of athletics that sees past trophies, medals and clippings to the true measure of a successful season: an athlete who plays with selflessness. An athlete who plays with courage and discipline. An athlete who understands sportsmanship. And an athlete who has grown stronger in mind, in heart and in body.

The '09 volleyball season was a remarkable one with a significant and fine result. A result that went far beyond a medal or a trophy because the coaches and the boys not only exceeded the early season expectations, but together created something very special: they built a team that was, in the words of parent Kim Chiverton, "really supportive of one another. They stood together, and in every situation they encouraged one another. There was no concern for an individual's mistakes. It never became an issue. They supported the person and just got ready for the next ball coming at them and never worried about the ball that was on the floor. There were no superstars on the team, and because of that, they had to pull together and they did."

And in doing it they achieved something very, very special.