

Northwest Student takes Badminton Provincial

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Competing in her fourth provincial finals badminton competition St. Walburg's Jasmine Knight won the gold medal in Girl's Singles competition in Melville earlier this month. After playing for 3 hours in a series of matches Jasmine handily defeated all comers to advance to the final against Danielle Chamakese of Pelican Lake.

The scores of the final two matches were 21-13 and 21-16.

The win completes a remarkable season in which Jasmine didn't lose a game all year. When asked about her strengths she commented "I really liked net shots, close in, because I worked at it more and was a little more skilled at it this year than last. I set up the net game when they send a drop from the back of the court, and then I usually just drop it back."

"All of my game is thinking. I'm constantly thinking of their positioning and their weaknesses, and also anticipating where they'll put the bird. I was trained like that by my mum (coach Brenda Knight) and by (former coach) Mr. Yasinski."

When asked what she thought made the difference, Brenda, her coach for the past 5 years, noted that "we had her play against a couple of our ex senior boys - graduates. They really helped her game because the boy's game is faster and harder. They really made her work and learn to have quick feet."

Outside of the badminton court Jasmine hit both the gym and the track, running for 30 minutes several times each week with progressive increases in speed in the last five minutes. "Watching her this year," said her coach, "I'd say that the biggest edge Jas had was her cardio. She just outlasted her opposition."

"My best moment of the tournament and the season was winning this year. I finished second in the provincials the two previous years and it was nice to win for once."

When asked for her perspective as both a coach and a parent Brenda remarked, "Well I'm very proud of her. She's worked hard. Always has. She's very easy to coach as she takes coaching very well. She tries to improve her game all the time. She puts in lots of extra hours outside of our practices working at things like the cardio. From a coach's point of view I couldn't work with a better athlete. From a parent's point of view it was an extremely proud moment for me. I've seen her play for many years... but this was the pinnacle of her career because it's the end. It was a special moment for her and for me as a coach and a parent."

St. Walburg has had an exceptionally fine record of provincial champions in the past with four students attaining gold medals, two under Brenda's tutelage and two under Dave Yasinski's excellent programme.

