

MICHAEL ADAMS

BC SCHOOL SPORTS COACH OF THE MONTH APRIL 2009

School: Quesnel.

Years Coaching: 26.

Currently Coaching: Jr. girls' basketball.

Also coached: Boys' basketball, senior girls' basketball and grade eight volleyball.

Subjects: Principal.



What has been the most rewarding thing about being a teacher-coach?

I guess I really like it when a group of kids come together as a team and they begin to teach each other as a team and play on the court as a team. I love that team bonding.

One of the things I kind of pride in myself in - it's been good and bad - any kids on the bench get equal playing time. Everyone on the team gets equal playing time. Even time at $\frac{3}{4}$ for every kid on the bench and in the fourth quarter if I choose I can short the bench. But I very rarely do that. We were down at the Provincials and I played every kid even time.

Describe how you found sport in your life.

When I was young I played a lot of baseball and rugby. I think I made the basketball team in grade 11 but was told I had to quit rugby but decided not to. Because of that I developed a love of basketball and not cutting kids. This year we had 24 kids showing up to play girls' basketball, grade nine and 10 team. We had them all practice, I was able to get a couple of older students and a parent to help me out and I was running two teams. I have a real commitment to making it accessible for all kids.

What do you believe would resonate with the teacher-coach of today in terms of recognition?

Just a thank you at the end of the year is all I ever want. It's been kind of a cool year, we've got a local wall of fame in our rec. centre and I just got selected to that on lifetime contributions, and that was a total shock. Just a thanks at the end of the year and that's it.

Who would you identify as a role model or mentor in your life specific to coaching?

I had a baseball coach when I was 12 years of age who really inspired me because I was not very athletic at that time. His name was Dave Cathcart. He encouraged me to play and turned me around.

What has been your proudest moment as a teacher-coach in recent years?

I was very proud of my current team because we went to the Provincials. It was the first time we went to Provincials. I have had so many proud moments. When you see kids going out there giving everything they have for a team. When I play kids evenly I always say we win as a team and we lose as a team and that always brings kids together and that really makes me proud.

Describe your first coaching experience.

I went back and coached little league baseball in the same baseball field I played in Victoria as a child. I was really comfortable coaching baseball because I played it until I was 18. I was 18 when I coached it. From there I continued to do stuff like that and I realized I wanted to be an educator as a result of that experience.

I got into education because I liked working with youngsters and coaching. I just love working with young players around sports and athletics.

What is the biggest challenge you face as a teacher-coach?

For me it's time constraints. Especially in my role as principal of the school.

There's another big one, probably bigger. Coaching in the North in a small town is a cost consideration. It's huge for kids, that's the biggest challenge. I get really concerned when I got kids who should and deserve to be playing but can't afford it. Our school district has not had the funds, schools can't support it, so it comes off as fundraising or something that parents pay for.

What has coaching taught you about life?

Coaching has taught me the importance of having kids feel positively connected to something.