

Mike Toakley, Belmont Secondary Coach

About Mike Toakley:

Mike Toakley teaches PE and Social Studies at Belmont Secondary in Victoria. He's been teaching at Belmont since 1997. As a coach for 28 years, Mike led Belmont to their first ever provincial title in 1997 and then again four years later. Mike coaches senior girls volleyball.



Why He Became a Coach:

“Coaching is a real special way to get to know the students at your school. The kind of relationship you develop with players you coach is different than students you teach. They voluntarily want to be there. They want something from you, and you can contribute to their growth as players, and quality of character.”

Most Rewarding Experience as a Coach:

“Some of the teams I've coached have won Provincials. But in the end, it's really about getting to know young people. You're working together for something you're both passionate about. Some of my closest relationships are with my former players.”

In His Spare Time:

“Family. I'm from a small, but close family. When I have time away from teaching and coaching, I like to spend it with them.”

Biggest Challenges as a Coach

“Time and energy. With experience you learn shortcuts. You learn how to get other people involved with you. One of the great things is that players have come back and helped me work with teams after they've graduated. They can help provide some of the energy that's harder to produce as you get older.”



What Athletes Look for in a Good Coach:

“That's a good question. I'm not sure they come looking for anything. What makes a good coach is an understanding that student athletes have a lot on their plate. I think as a coach in a school setting, if you can make it clear you're supportive of them outside the sport, you can help accommodate their other goals.”