

Lisa Burdeyny

BC SCHOOL SPORTS COACH OF THE MONTH NOVEMBER 2008

School: Yale Secondary
Years coaching: 11 years.
Currently coaching: Senior boys' volleyball.
Subjects: AP psychology, student leadership, math.
Also coached: Junior boys' volleyball, Senior girls' volleyball and Senior boys' volleyball.



Why did you decide to coach?

I believe making a contribution outside of the classroom is an important part in enriching our students' lives. You get to know kids on a different level when you work with them outside the classroom as you are not constrained by the curriculum. This freedom allows for a richer personal experience.

What's the most rewarding thing about being a teacher coach?

Getting to know the kids and having a small part in creating life-long memories of their school experience and contributing to the development of their gifts and character.

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

I have been fortunate to work with a number of gifted colleagues and leaders. Each has given me unique insight into motivation, skill development, group dynamics and team building.

What do you do during your spare time?

I love snowboarding at Mount Baker; it's beautiful, laid back and close. Waterskiing in the Okanagan or Alouette Lake. I have a couple of dogs and spend a lot of time hiking in and around the lower mainland. I love to run and try to swim a couple of days a week.

Describe how you found sport in your life.

I've been involved in sports ever since I was a small child. There wasn't one defining moment as it's been an evolution over time from one sport to another as different passions have developed. Track was my first sport in elementary school and that evolved to include volleyball, basketball and softball. I went to university as a mature student so I wasn't involved in competitive sports at that level, but played rec court and beach volleyball for a number of years. I've also enjoyed competing in a couple triathlons.

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

Most coaches I know are doing it because they love the sport and love to work with kids. Personally it is the reward of seeing them grow and develop over the years. Also, it's rewarding when parents are appreciative of the contribution of care, time and energy into their child's life.

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

Time constraints. Trying to balance outside commitments to teams and the time and energy that takes without short changing your effectiveness in the classroom.

What has coaching taught you about life?

That it's a process and there aren't any shortcuts. Character, integrity and the experience rather than outcome are what's really important.

Describe your first coaching experience.

I had just moved here from Saskatchewan and my first job was at an inner city school and I couldn't pronounce half the team's names. They were in grade eight and they just wanted to play. It was a real learning curve about what was important; providing an opportunity to come together and play.

What was your proudest moment?

With the current team I'm coaching, two years ago at the Junior Provincials final match, going into the fifth and tie breaking game. We had just lost the previous two sets and I was about to step in to give what pearls of wisdom I could salvage from the bottom of the cup. The captain, to be joined by other players, began what I can only describe as the most inspirational/motivational talk I could imagine. In there were seeds of the previous year's 'between game' moments meant to inspire and motivate. They owned that moment and later the match. Their passion, conviction and commitment was so moving. Someone from the team said 'You leave everything on that floor...then it won't matter what the outcome is'. It was such a high pressure moment with so much at stake yet it wasn't about winning, it was doing their best and giving their all. I was so proud of them.

Other facts about Lisa.

Married with one son, teacher at Yale for 10 years, originates from the Prairies, loves to travel and is hoping to spend a year or two teaching abroad, loves to cook.