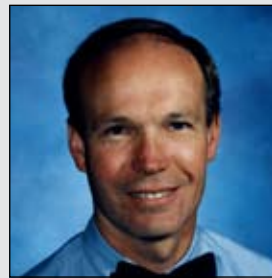


ROD CARMICHAEL

BC SCHOOL SPORTS COACH OF THE MONTH FEBRUARY 2009

School: Oak Bay Secondary.
Years Coaching: 20 years.
Currently Coaching: Swimming.
Also coached: Girls' basketball, girls' soccer, swimming and synchro.
Subjects: Sciences.



Why did you decide to coach?

I see value in athletic programs. I feel that athletics should be part of the school system and for that you have to have coaches.

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

Seeing kids get better. I coach a lot of novice swimmers so they come along way from kids who haven't participated in swimming before to taking part in Provincials on a relay.

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

My high school coach Lou Pocock. He always made it fun. He used to guide us with a sense of humour he did not have to yell at us. He created an atmosphere where you wanted to excel.

What do you do during your spare time?

I swim. I compete with the Masters Swimming in B.C. I'm occasionally successful in my age group. The advantage of being in Masters is you can go back to your age group so you don't have to swim with kids. I also ski and ride my bike.

Coaching credentials:

I have coaching Technical 2 (Swimming), Technical 19 (Wrestling) and coaching Theory 1.

How did you find sport in your life?

I chose Masters Swimming because I need exercise and it's a great way to get it.

It keeps me active and I have fun doing it.

I've always been someone who's done stuff whether I picked up sports when I was a kid or joined teams in high school. I think I had those opportunities in elementary school because the programs were there. I had an opportunity to play basketball and track because there were teachers there providing that opportunity.

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

I think the biggest part of recognition comes from how the team works and what the kids say to you. I like to hear that they had fun and are coming back. When four kids on a relay are successful they all work. The relay is a bit better than they all are individually because they're working for each other. That resonates with me.

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

One challenge is convincing kids they can do it. They just need to put in some work. Another big challenge for me is filling out the synchro teams. I pick from the kids that are there. It's one thing to convince them to swim but another to get them to do some synchro. Getting them to try new things and take chances is the biggest challenge. That and all of the paper work that seems to come with the job.

What has coaching taught you about life?

That anybody can be successful and success is measured in many ways.

Describe your first coaching experience.

It wasn't too bad. I started out coaching younger swimmers when I was quite young. If you're not much older than the people you are coaching it doesn't work quite as well as with a more experienced person. I made a lot of mistakes. It wasn't a bad experience, but I figured out afterwards what I shouldn't have done.

As an athlete what do you look for in a good coach?

I'm looking for someone who can help me be better. They have to have a technical knowledge but they also have to figure out what works for me and how to describe things to me and ask me to do things. That's what really works well in a coach.

Describe your proudest moment.

Probably the first time I had relays medal at Provincials. Kids come with time and history, and you can look at an individual event and tell who's going to win based on their previous history.

School coaches don't often get a relay team that's a lock, that they know who is going to win. You have to figure that part out. There are a lot of things that come together to make that work.

More about Rod.

I'm a teacher here known for wearing bad ties. I get them at the Sally Anne – I am too cheap to pay good money for a bad tie. Unique ties is probably a better description... Right now I'm wearing a wooden tie that looks like a saw that a student made for me.