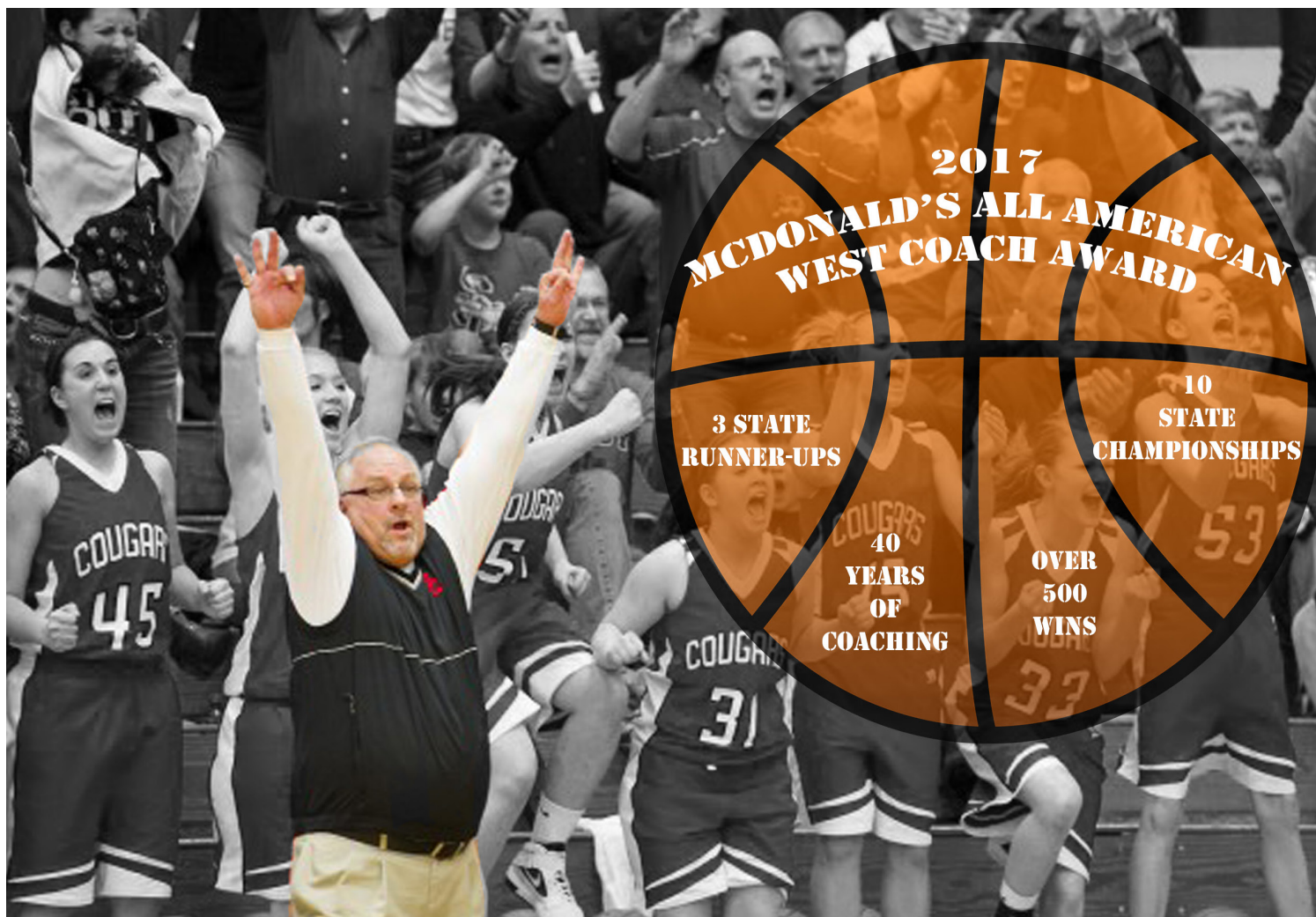


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KENZIE TURMAN | SANDY CREEK JUNIOR

Ninemire's win

Coach Ninemire scores McDonald's All American Award

BY: KYARA FIKE

Sandy Creek's head girl's basketball coach, Mr. Russel Ninemire is celebrating 40 years of coaching this season and looking back on a career that has been hugely successful. During the course of his career, he has earned many awards, including 10 state championships, 523 wins and was recently awarded one of the most prestigious awards a high school basketball coach can receive, the McDonald's All American Award. Coach Ninemire says, "I was incredibly surprised when I received the All American McDonald's award. It was a great honor to be considered #1 and a greater honor to receive the award. The awards are nice to have, but the most important thing is the relationship built with the kids. That means more to me than the wins and losses. I like to see my players succeed."

The McDonald's All American Award is given to a high school coach that is nominated to coach the "best of the best." This not only showcases the players, but also the coaches. Ninemire was chosen to coach a group of girls from all over the U.S. He will leave for Chicago in March, and the basketball game will be held on March 29th featuring the top 24 high school girls basketball players. Ninemire will not be traveling to Chicago alone, he will be accompanied, as always, by his wife of 35 years, Jodi Ninemire. Jodi has been a Sandy

Creek staple, cheering on her husband's team throughout his career, and is excited to cheer him on yet again on this national stage.

"I was so happy for him because he's worked so hard in his career, and he deserved this honor. I am very excited to be going with him, and I look forward to seeing some great basketball players in the time I'm there," said Jodi Ninemire.

Over the years, Ninemire has had the privilege to coach a lot of talented girls. Many of his players have carried on their careers to the college level. Keri Shaw, 2012 graduate, continued her career at Fort Hays University; Bailee Morris, 2011 graduate, continued her career at Concordia; Mikaela Shaw, 2013 graduate, continued her career at UNO, and Montana Hinrichs, 2012 graduate, continued her career at Midland University. Carrie Hofstetter 2000 graduate, Elizabeth Herbeck 1998 graduate, and Taryn Ninemire 2001 graduate, all continued their careers at Hastings College. Herbeck was named NAIA player of the year, and Hofstetter won a national championship while at Hastings College. Hofstetter is now the head girls basketball coach at UNK.

Former Cougar basketball player and member of the 2012 state championship team, Ashlee Harms said, "When I heard of the award that Nine received, I couldn't think of anyone more deserving. I texted him that next

day to congratulate him, and he responded with 'Thanks to kids like you, I have achieved an award like this. You believe in me and I in you. Thank you.' Nine truly cares about his players, which makes playing for him so special. He believes in his players when they don't believe in themselves. Even after you're long gone and graduated, he still asks how your job is going and takes an interest in where you're at in life now. I don't even think this award was on his radar. Which goes to show he doesn't do it for the glory or the fame, he does it because he simply loves the game and wants to share that with people around him."

In his 40 years of coaching, he has also been a teacher at Sandy Creek High School. Ninemire encourages his student athletes to succeed not only on the court, but in the classroom as well. He teaches his athletes to never give up and pushes them to the best of their abilities. Character is a huge part of basketball, and this is what makes his teams so well rounded.

Assistant coach Jeremy Borer said, "I've learned so much about how to handle different types of players having coached alongside of Nine for 14 years. Nine has coached so long, any type of offense or defense another team throws at us he knows how to beat it. Over the years he's taught me how to handle the refs and the other teams coaches. Most of all, he's shown me how much energy you have to bring. He's always 'Nine,' he never takes a day off."

Stress for less

How expectations for cutting down are going up

BY: MAKENZIE SVOBODA

With the cold temperatures and frequent snow storms of winter, comes the hysteria of the basketball and wrestling seasons. While the basketball players are lacing up their sneakers to take the court, the wrestlers are tightening their belts. For wrestlers, making weight while maintaining strength and agility is just part of the daily struggle. If they don't make weight, they don't wrestle, if they aren't strong, they won't win. While coaches and doctors advise student athletes to drop weight responsibly and safely, this isn't always the case. Concern over the health of wrestlers prompted the NSAA to require hydration tests in 1997. According to healthyliving.com, "Wrestlers are required to pass a hydration test to be assigned to their minimum weight class, one month prior to the competitive season. The hydration test measures the specific gravity of the athlete's urine to determine how hydrated the athlete is. Dehydration is a sign that may reveal excessive training and/or improper nutri-

tion." sound crazy, but that is one of the most difficult things that I enjoy about the sport," said junior Colt Rademacher, who wrestles in the 185 pound weight class.

Some wrestlers sink to drastic measures to drop large amounts of weight quickly. Some athletes will drastically cut their calorie intake while revving up their workouts. Others have admitted to sleeping with the window open in the dead of winter, hoping to shiver the extra pounds away. While it's not legal, desperate wrestlers have been known to don rubber suits while running to unsafely sweat out any water weight before stepping on the scale.

"I do agree with losing weight, that way I think you need to start a diet to boost your metabolism to cut the weight before you actually even have to weigh in. When it comes to making weight the day of a meet many people if they are over will put on sweatpants and a sweatshirt to lose the extra pound at most that is the only time I see it necessary to do so but otherwise I think a good diet and watching what you eat is all you need," said sophomore Jaekob Spitz. Wrestlers start dropping weight well before the season starts, it's not uncommon to catch a wrestler running extra miles each week to meet goal mere minutes prior to weighing in. However, studies show that dropping a pound or two right before a meet, might not be detrimental to wrestler's health.

According to the NCAA, "Unlike dieting for weight loss and unsafe rapid weight loss, small reductions in weight during the 48 hours pre-competition do not appear to negatively affect metabolic rate, lean muscle mass, or strength when the weight reduction is due to fluid losses limited to 5 percent of body weight."

Wrestling is a sport of conflict. Conflicts happen on the mat between rival wrestlers battling it out for a spot at state, in practices between wrestlers competing for a varsity spot in the same weight class and in the wrestler's own mind each time someone offers him a cookie. However, while wrestlers may hate some aspects of the sport, including cutting weight, every time they pull on their singlet and enter the ring, they know all the sacrifices have been worth it. "I absolutely dread dropping weight; it's the worst part about the season. I love the sport more than anything, but the worst part about it is dropping the weight safely in such a short amount of time," said junior Hunter Rempe.

Sandy Creek wrestlers, while occasionally tempted to drop a lot of weight quickly, are encouraged to maintain a healthy lifestyle year round. Coaches put a lot of effort into teaching students how to safely control their nutrition and weight.

"There are a lot of things that are important when it comes to the sport of wrestling, one of them is losing the correct amount of weight. To maintain the "healthy" body weight, I try and keep them hydrated and eating healthy," said head coach Mr. Ryan Bauer.

Unfortunately, some enterprising wrestlers have managed to trick the test, meaning they can drop more weight than is healthy. The development of a safe, standardized approach to determining an athlete's most appropriate weight class in high school is important.

"Out of all the things that coach worries about, losing weight is at the top of the list. He makes sure that we are staying on top of our healthy living. But on the other hand, he doesn't care if we aren't making weight because he believes if we or decision not," said

sophomore Luke Searle. People who are unfamiliar with the sport might not understand what it takes to drop weight, assuming that losing ten to twenty pounds would be unbearable. However, not all wrestlers, dread cutting weight.

"I like cutting weight; it might

"I absolutely dread dropping weight; it's the worst part about the season..."

Join the dub: Club volleyball major player in winter sports

BY: SAMANTHA JANDA

The winter sport that's getting all the buzz in Nebraska at the moment is club volleyball. This sport provides a competitive level of game that helps high school athletes improve their volleyball skills in the off season.

Club volleyball was established in the mid 1960's and has become more and more popular throughout the years. There were many talks to initiate a junior program in the United States Volleyball Association (USVA), but they were not productive. After a while, the USVA Executive Committee gave permission to the Amateur Athletic Union (AAU) to form a full-scale junior development program within the AAU structure.

"Club volleyball started in the area in 1992 with only elite clubs. As coaches became familiar with the process they began having teams of their own, especially in the younger age divisions as there were no restrictions on the number of girls that could play on the same team," said Cougar assistant volleyball coach Mrs. Julie Studnicka.

There are numerous club groups in Nebraska. The teams that are the most favored and popular

within the Sandy Creek volleyball players are: South Central which is in Aurora, Volleyball Club Nebraska (VCN) in Lincoln, and CC Aces in Clay County.

"Club Volleyball has two general goals. The local goal is to give athletes a chance to improve in an "off season" format where athletes learn without all the pressure of winning and losing. The more repetitions a player gets the more chance they will be successful," said Studnicka. "An elite goal is for a player to be selected on a traveling team that will train and gain exposure for those athletes that want to become elite players with the possibility of playing college volleyball."

This club season, the Cougars have three athletes competing in teams in the South Central volleyball club; sophomore middle blocker Grace Messenger, junior outside hitter Kambria Chohon and freshman libero Kyara Fike. South Central's club teams are instructed by coaches from surrounding schools. Sandy Creek's head coach, Mr. Levi Gorsuch, has coached a 13s team and a 17s team at South Central. In the VCN league, the Cougars have one athlete who competes on a team, junior middle blocker Coree Lipovsky. Last season, Lipovsky and her team took home the gold in the

AAU National Championship which was held in Orlando, Florida at Disney ESPN Wide World of Sports. The rest of the Cougars who play club, play for the CC Aces.

"I like playing for VCN because of the competitive level of play, the great relationships I have with my teammates, and the overall experience. Winning the championship was probably one of the most memorable moments of my life up to this point. We all worked really hard to get there, so knowing that all of our hard work paid off was an indescribable feeling," said Lipovsky.

Some people question what the point of club volleyball is. A lot of athletes say that they take part in club teams to better themselves for the upcoming season. There are many pros to participating in the winter sport. Athletes get to play with new teammates, get coached by different coaches, possibly play a different position and focus more on weaknesses for the fall season. Others do it to stay in shape and to keep busy. At the early age of eight, children can begin to participate on a club team. Normally, there are tryouts to make a team and the season can last from late November to July.

"I take part in club volleyball because I have a love for the game and it will help me improve for next season. I play on a team with people from surrounding towns. It really makes me expand my horizons. I'm very lucky to have the privilege of

getting to know the girls on my team and learning to play with different people," said Fike.

Although there are many pluses to this sport, there are some downsides. Because club volleyball takes place during the winter, basketball teams across the country are dropping in numbers quickly, and not just in smaller schools. In fact, a Class 4-A program at Bishop Heelan Catholic School in Sioux City, Iowa has made it to the state tournament in eight of the preceding 10 seasons. This team only had 21 girls out in grades nine through 12 this season. The Crusaders did not have a freshman team for the first time ever.

Gail Hartigan, a coach from Treynor, Iowa has been coaching for 42 years. In an article found from The Daily Nonpareil, she "finds nothing inherently wrong with trying to further one's skills in a club or AAU setting. But she believes when it comes at the expense of the high school programs, valuable educational experiences are being lost in the process."

For the Cougars, Lipovsky and Messenger have stopped playing basketball all together. After their freshman years they both decided to only tackle one winter sport. Besides these two athletes, a lot of the other club players participate in both basketball and club volleyball. "Although we've lost a few individuals because of club, I don't think that it's hurt our numbers too terribly. Most of the girls who play club volleyball also play basketball. It's up to the girls whether or not they should participate in both basketball and club volleyball. To me, if I were that kid, that'd be a lot between school, practices and games but the girls have proven they can handle it so it's up to them," said Sandy Creek's assistant girls basketball coach Mr. Jeremy Borer.

Club Volleyball Stats

- There are club volleyball teams at all levels and for all ages.
- It is called club volleyball because it is done after school hours.
- Playing gives a chance for athletes to work on their skills, improve their technique, and learn strategy.
- It is a great way to learn the sport and have fun.

Benefits and Drawbacks of Cutting Weight

Cons	Pros
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Change in eating habits - Can develop eating disorders - Starvation and purging can cause permanent damage to organs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increases confidence - Helps body function more efficiently - Boosts energy

Source - breakingmuscle.com

SAMANTHA STAPLEMAN | SANDY CREEK SOPHOMORE