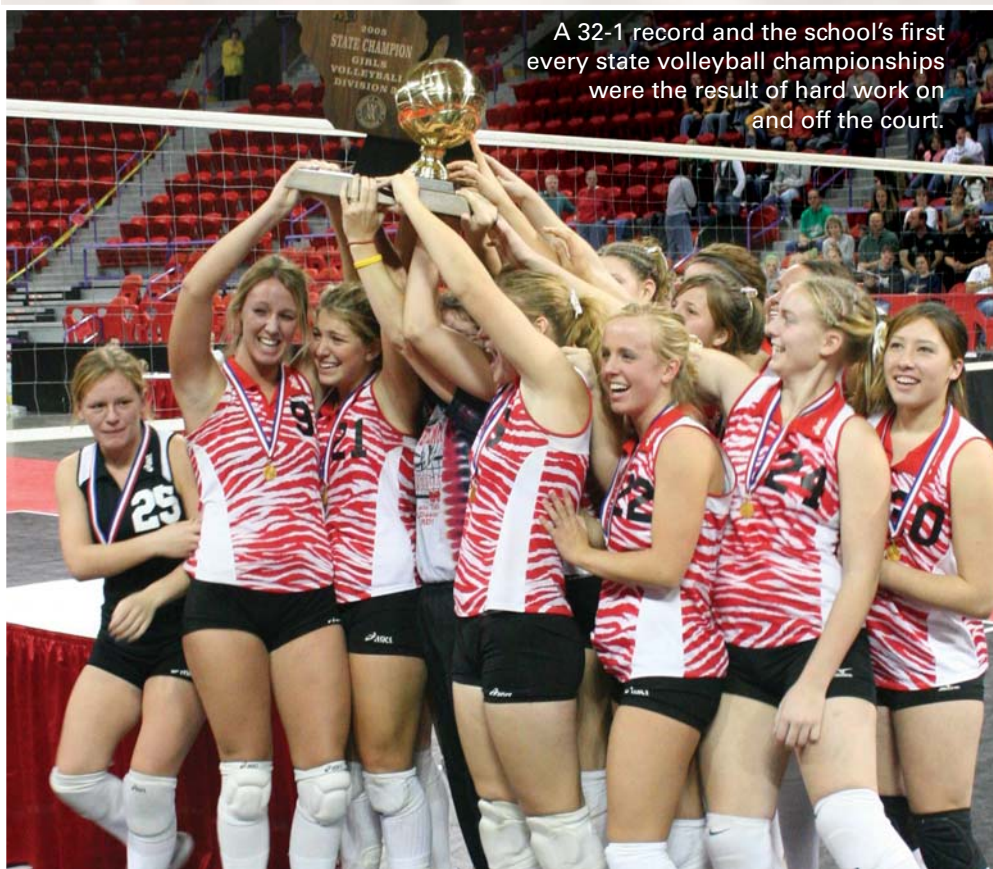


Two for the Price of One at Weyauwega-Fremont High

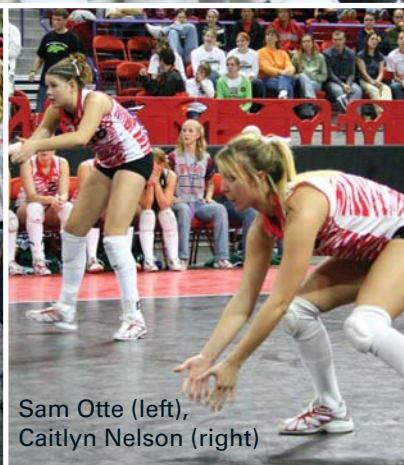
Unification takes on special significance when one high school athletic program serves two communities.

PHOTOS BY JIM LIMBACH



A 32-1 record and the school's first every state volleyball championships were the result of hard work on and off the court.

“Every day, in every way, I’m getting better,” is one of those affirmations that serve to inspire you to continually improve. Once you succeed with one thing, you look for other aspects of your life you can improve – kind of like making and achieving New Year’s resolutions all through the year. Such is the attitude at Weyauwega-Fremont, a high school that is continuing to take its athletic program to the next level with more championships and best-ever records.



Sam Otte (left), Caitlyn Nelson (right)

At this Division 3 school in Weyauwega, Wisconsin, strength coach Patrick Fee, who is also the defensive coordinator for the football team and a physical education teacher, is proud of how their positive approach to coaching has resulted in success throughout the entire athletic program. Let’s look at a few highlights.

The Indians’ volleyball team won its first-ever state championship, beating the five-time state champs, and finished with a 32-1 record. The Indians’ football team

won its first conference title since 1977, going undefeated and making it to the state semi-final game. Its 12-win season was the most ever in the history of the school. Other sports had similar success, with the girls' cross-country team winning the conference title, sending two runners to state, and the boys' team finishing third, sending one runner to state. The list goes on.



Dr. Greg Shepard's *Dream the Biggest Dream* played an important role in Coach Patrick Fee's leadership program.

Getting with the Program

Coach Fee joined the staff of Weyauwega-Fremont High School four years ago as a special education teacher. The school is unique in that it serves two rural communities: Weyauwega, with a population of approximately 1,800, and Fremont, which has 900 residents. The school is physically located in Weyauwega, which is in central Wisconsin about an hour from Green Bay.

After Coach Fee came to Weyauwega-Fremont, he decided to take his program to a higher level by attending the BFS certification course in Necedah High School in 2004. "I always did like parts of BFS, but when I became certified I learned much more about the



The Indians' boys cross country team finished third in their conference and sent one runner to state. Shown left to right are Mike Wenselow, Jack Blanchette, and Mark Limbach.

program and started to implement a lot more of it," says Fee. "I use the Total Program videos to show my kids proper form for the lifts in all my classes; then we go through a checklist and each student peer-teaches a lift. This not only covers us liability-wise but also makes sure all the students know how to lift

properly. We also use the BFS safety videos for each one of my classes." But Fee's program goes beyond just sets, reps and lifting techniques.

"We also use the Be an 11 motto, and we bought 10 copies of *Dream the Biggest Dream* last spring and distributed them to our football players as part of



The Indians' football team won their first conference title since 1977 and finished at 12-1, the best-ever record in the history of the school.

their leadership program. It's much more than a book about football. It's dealing with kids, it's dealing with life, it's dealing with hard decisions. The book went



The Indians' girls cross country team, led by outstanding athletes such as Josey Kristen who is pictured here followed by Kristin Van Lyssel, won their conference.

over so well that other students picked it up to read during silent reading time – an English teacher even asked for a copy to read because she saw a few students that hadn't been reading all year reading the book!"

Fee says that the school administration deserves particular recognition for their support. "Our administration has been very positive," says Fee. "They've kept an open mind about what we've been doing in our PE and athletic programs with the attitude of 'Let's take this a step at a time: Show us what you can do; and if it's successful, we're going to help keep it going.'"

Although Fee has been an assistant coach at the college level, he believes you have to be careful about trying to implement programs from that level into those at the high school level. "High school kids are different from college. High school kids have a lot of things to do – they're kids! – and it's not like we're paying them with scholarships. We have much greater time

limitations in that we need to get our kids in and out of the weightroom quickly while making it a positive experience."

Beyond the science of reps, sets and



The Indian's boys cross country team finished third in their conference and sent one runner to state. Ryan Hahn, shown here, went to state.

program design, Fee says that he and the other coaches set up a leadership development program for team captains and for other players they believe could fall into leadership roles. “We meet with these kids in the off-season and into the summer and put into their minds the idea that ‘Leaders are not just born; they can be made and they can be molded.’”

Nutrition is a major factor in athletic success, and as with his conditioning program, Coach Fee likes to keep things simple. “I get many kids who ask me about supplementation. First I tell them that as a high school coach I really can’t push any supplements, and that ‘Hey, you’re a kid!’ Rather than going to the GNCs and trying to mix and match these products, they need to eat some square meals with healthy foods that you buy at the grocery store.”

One of the keys to being able to work successfully in the high school environment, says Fee, is fast workouts, espe-



#22 Dion Vehm breaks away for big yards while #7 Reggie Spencer keeps his path clear.

cially with large groups, by providing a unified program and being consistent. “All our PE classes in the high school warm up with the Dot Drill; our lifting program for classes and athletics is the same for all and is largely based on the BFS program and principles.”

Fee and other members of the coaching staff attend several coaching clinics a year, but Fee is committed to his

current approach. “Yes, there’s a lot of stuff out there and there is the temptation to try new things to help put your program over the top, but the BFS program is tested and true. We can show in our weightroom numbers and our flurry of athletic success with championships how it’s been a positive influence on our athletic program. There’s no reason to change.” **BFS**



Great tackling was key to the Indians’ success. Shown are #9 Daren Wagner, #31 Chris Schmidt, and #72 Eric Koh.

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