

## 2012 Alberta Volleyball Hall of Fame Award

### Category: Coach

### Inductee: David Johnson

Dave Johnson's love of volleyball was fostered at a young age when he watched the Sexsmith High School Boys Volleyball team compete in his grade 4 year. Since that time, his passion and commitment for volleyball has continued to grow, and the number of accomplishments he has achieved during his career reflects these characteristics as well as his vast knowledge of the game.

Dave started playing volleyball in Jr. High and continued on to play at Briercrest Bible College, Grande Prairie Regional College and Trinity Western University. While at Briercrest, he also managed to coach the Women's team. Following graduation, Dave coached at the Jr. High level for one year, before assistant coaching at Grande Prairie Regional College. Dave was also involved with the first ever Wolves Club team in 1984, and stayed with the program until 2000. However, Dave truly found his coaching home with the Grande Prairie Composite High School. For the past 29 consecutive years, Dave has coached the Grand Prairie Composite Tomahawks, including 3 of those years where he coached both the girls' and boys' teams in the same season. Dave's primary focus however, has been building the Comp Tomahawks program to be one of the most competitive and successful programs in North America.

In 1992, Sports Illustrated magazine named the Composite Tomahawks as the top High School program in North America, as a result of defeating a group of USA Jr. National players at the Sandcastle International Tournament two years in a row. No less impressive, was winning 13 consecutive tournaments over a 2 year period, capping each year off with a 4A Provincial Gold medal. In 2004, Dave's team had won the 4A Provincial Gold medal for the past three consecutive years. Overall, Dave has won eight 4A championships, four Provincial Club championships, one National Bronze medal and one National Silver medal.

The American Volleyball Coaches Association has also recognized Dave's accomplishments with a number of awards. Most recently, in San Antonio, Texas, Dave received an award for winning 1200 matches within a single program. This achievement places him as the number one High School men's program coach in North America.

Not surprisingly, Dave has never been one to back away from a challenge and has always looked to have his teams compete against the best competition in Canada. It has not been uncommon for him to travel thousands of miles in order to play teams that challenge his program to be the best.

Dave has also been active in officiating, receiving his National badge in 1987. He served as the Zone 8 Regional Officials Chairman from 1987 to 2005.

However, Dave graciously acknowledges that he did not accomplish all this by himself. He is always quick to point out that the Grande Prairie volleyball community has contributed to training the athletes that have participated in his program and, as a result, his program has benefited greatly. His assistant coaches deserve equal praise. He has coached with many talented individuals, including Andre Turgeon, Lee Carter, Jason Weaver, Mat Snider, Andy Beal, and Brooks Johnson, to name a few.



Dave had a way of getting the most out of the group of kids that he coached every single year. It's not

surprising that every year for the past few decades, the Tomahawks were a team that others feared to have in their pools or meet in playoffs. There have been some talented players in those years, but the Comp was always an amazing 'team'. This was directly due to Dave's leadership, the tone he set in practice and the culture he built.

It is rare to have a coach that you keep in touch with into your adult years, becoming a friend and mentor well past high school graduation. Dave is someone you have in your corner throughout your life.