

Big events mark Westlane scene for Steve, Joyce and lanky Tom

By PETER JEDICKE
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This past week held a couple of things of importance which cannot be overestimated for Westlane. I call them Westlane historical climaxes, because they are, and always will be, high points in the history of "Westlane for as long as our school stands. These are the sort of things you remember for decades, and can say, "I was there the night that —" at some Class of '72 reunion or 1992, or thereabouts.

Remember our Drama Night? Of course you do. And everyone saw the preview of "Sarah and the Sax". Steve Coopman and Joyce Allman were in it, and it was the play set to enter the Niagara District Drama Festival

Well, Steve and Joyce went on stage Tuesday, February 26 at Sir Winston Churchill in St. Catharines. Saturday night, one week ago, the adjudicator named Steve best actor, gave Joyce an award of merit, and also awarded Westlane the trophy for best production.

Never have we reached a pedestal like that. For seven years, Mr. Lannon and the various Drama Clubs worked hard for months — and, although we did have a few individual awards, never once won best play.

This year, we had a student — Steve — president of the Drama Club 1971-72, take over the Festival entry. Mr. Lannon stepped back and became merely an advisor. Steve chose the play, picked Joyce to be in it with him, and directed it — all by himself! And look what came of it. He won best play, and best actor, over more than a dozen schools, some of which have established Theatre Arts courses, which provide students with teaching and experience WITHIN the curriculum, a type of course which Westlane has always wanted.

It should be fairly obvious that we have plenty of interest among the students, and that a Theatre Arts course would be of benefit to many. We have long had the desire and the interest for such a course, but, somewhere in bureaucracy of the Board there is somebody who keeps vetoing the whole idea.

Next stop for "Sarah and the Sax" is the Regional finals at Brock University on April 21. You'll read more about that later. But for now, Steve deserves to be congratulated, and wished good luck.

The other historical climax happened within one day of the Awards Night. It is in the field of sports, and deals with a colossal individual effort at Ridgeway High School Friday night, February 25.

For the past five years, there has been a tall student playing basketball for the Westlane Spartans. Year after year, growing to 6'8", he has been the pivot man for first the midgets, then junior, and, this year, seniors. But never, in all the games he must have played, did Tom Francis put it all together the way he did against Ridgeway.

Tom virtually tore the Blue Devils apart singlehandedly. Hitting on rebound after rebound, Tom equalled his season high of 29 points in only two quarters. His total of 50 is by far a Westlane record (surpassing 38 Ron Hayward a few years back), and is believed to be a Zone 111 record as well.

The fact that Westlane won the game was well said in the Fort Erie page of the Review one week ago. But the intense feeling of elation the school felt in its support of Tom is my line. As he sank his four consecutive foul shots with less than a minute left in the game, the forty-odd Westlane fans and cheerleaders jumped to their feet with every swish. An unforgettable evening, for Tom, playing his last game ever as a Spartan and going out in style, and for the school in general.

So there's the two historical climaxes. Fantastic! If they don't thrill you the way they thrill Joe Sparty, and myself and most other people, go eat hay.