

School spirit has its ups and downs

By **PETER JEDICKE**
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Basketball, next to football, is probably the most "typical" high school sport. In a very real sense, the way the students of a high school back their basketball teams, like the football teams, shows just how much of that strange thing called "school spirit" there really is at that school.

But spirit, so intangible and unidentifiable, is very hard to measure, and to comment on. So, for now anyway, let's not discuss spirit directly, but just as it would apparently relate to the sport of basketball.

This past week or so we had the last home games of the season. Feb. 18 was the last tripleheader, against NFCVI. I was hoping we could yell the Red Raiders right out of the gym. We had what must be the biggest crowd, filling at least half of the seats in the bleachers.

The cheerleaders were there leading us, and we really screamed. In that final game, the senior, things were running at a fever pitch. The cheers back and forth between ourselves and the NF rooting section were almost hostile.

The game itself was an extremely exciting one with Westlane having a three or four

point lead almost all the way and then faltering in the final minutes of the fourth quarter, losing by one point, 47-46. Naturally, we were disappointed, but, at the time, everyone there thought school spirit had run to an all time high.

However, Tuesday afternoon the seniors played Thorold in their last home game. This game started at 2:30, so no one really had any excuse for not seeing at least an hour of the game. In fact, we had an even bigger crowd Tuesday than on Friday but,

strangely enough there was a definite drop in spirit.

I'm beginning to believe that an evening game is actually better, because then only the people who have spirit will come, but, at any afternoon game, every last apathetic bleacher-sitter can get in on it. It was really discouraging, seeing at least a hundred students sitting there quiet, without ever once participating in the "Give me a W" thing.

The important thing for us to learn from this, I think, is that no matter how much spirit a school has, specifically ours, this spirit will emanate from the ten or twelve dozen truly involved students, while the rest sit along because maybe they can pick up a chick, or something.

Moving onward to a less philosophical subject, I was told recently that Rosemarie Jakob, of our Westlane junior typing team, placed first in the contest at Confederation S.S. in Welland last Friday. Now, the typing

team is not the sort of thing you go to and yell "Give me a W" but this is still truly a great achievement, both individually and for the school. Congratulations to Rosemarie and the other members of the junior and senior typing teams, Janet Freeman, Cathy Harvey and Sue Mowat.

Lastly, a word about this column. A lot of groups have received mention because of me, but, naturally, I don't cover everyone well enough to satisfy all. In fact, I've had a few people tell me their group is neglected.

This disturbs me personally, so I've decided to try and do something about it. Therefore, if there is a teacher or a group president who is slightly peeved with me, this is what to do: write down all the pertinent information you want to see me print, and either hand to me personally, or drop it in the office. Now, nobody is going to tell me I've neglected them again.

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