

# Everything comes together for Westlane to enter era

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Ladies and gentlemen, Westlane may have entered a new era. If we pursue the advantage we finally made for ourselves, we will have turned Westlane into a mature school.

Last year I wrote about two Westlane historical climaxes, and last Saturday I witnessed a third. The Midget Boys' Basketball Team defeated our arch-rivals, the Stamford Hornets, 80-69.

For the first time in our school's history, a basketball team is advancing to SOSSA finals. These finals were held today in far away Dunnville, Ont. I hate to say we have a good chance of winning, since that might jinx the whole thing; but we have beaten one of the other teams previously, and the others can't be much better than that.

The historical climax is more than just the chance to win a SOSSA basketball crown, however. It's something I've noticed since September, and which may not come fully into the open for another year or two.

Westlane is maturing.

How can a school be "mature", you say? A school is mature when it is entrenched in the community, well-known for certain achievements, looked forward to by the junior high school students. A school is mature when its students are silently proud to be members of its student body, when seniors are somewhat sorrowed by the idea of leaving, when old grads are proud to say they're grads, and when brothers and sisters can't wait to get to Grade 9. A school is mature when teams and individuals are not afraid to stand up and give 100 per cent effort in any cause, and when the teams and individuals have the confidence and desire to be at their very best.

Naturally, a school cannot become mature overnight. But there has to be a critical time somewhere. And if we at Westlane keep going in the direction we have been headed over the last while, we will become mature, for we have crossed the critical point: we can do it.

But what has the midgets win over Stamford to do with this? Now we come to the crux of the matter. Stam-

ford, however much we hate to admit it, always had a power over us. This is not to say we have never defeated them: but victory was more difficult to come by against the Hornets. Westlane teams as long as I can remember, and even farther, according to some older folk, have been totally psyched out by Stamford teams. I'll give just one example: in 1970, the junior football Spartans managed to defeat Stamford 13-5 at Westlane, thus forcing a playoff for the city championship. I remember how much I, as a player, wanted to win that game, and everybody on the team felt the

same way. We knew we were the better team: we just had to prove it. We lost 35-7.

Now the 1973 midget Spartans have broken this spell. With our junior and senior teams next year at their peaks, we ought to be able to keep the spell broken. It's surprising how important our rivalry with Stamford is to our development as a school. Tell a student of Westlane about some other school and he says, "sure, what about them?" Tell him about Stamford and he used to petrify with fear. No longer.

This is all fine and dandy, but now

## at right time of maturity

do I know maybe our midgets weren't just lucky? Remember back to Jan. 5 when Stamford visited us. Our midget team was undefeated: so was Stamford's. We lost 37-36. The much vaunted seniors lost what has to be the most heart-breaking overtime game I have ever seen. As late as Jan. 5, the old familiar "Stamford Stamina" beat the "Westlane Wilt".

But, aha, we returned to Stamford in the second match some weeks later. Both midgets and seniors came through with victories; I believe the first time we have ever won two in the same tripleheader from Stamford.

That alone I might have attributed to chance. But this 80-69 victory last weekend clinched it. Before, a Westlane team would have choked any championship game and lost somehow, even if Stamford's team didn't bother showing up. But last Saturday, the midgets made Hornets look sick. They beat the dribbles right out of Stamford's underwear. This was the New Westlane.

Next week: how the average student is making the school mature, and how the students are reacting to being in the winning column consistently.

MARCH 10, 1973