



Grover Cleveland High School

April 2010

Dominick Scarola, Principal

Good News Boys Volleyball Team 2010

A letter to Mr. Scarola by Anna Dawidowska Boy's Volleyball Coach 2010

As the new coach of our Boys Volleyball Team, I believe we're off to a great start this year. Two weeks ago at Queens College, we participated in The First Annual Creole Volleyball Tournament, hosted by the coaches of Stellar, an extremely competitive boys club team in NYC. Four of our boys (Peter Borkowski, Przemek Walus, Czarek Wolczek and Richard Galej) are a part of that club, so it was extra special for them. Twelve of the most competitive teams were invited. Some of the teams that are always ranked high in NYC were Hunter College High School, coached by Justice Stack, a nationally known player, Newcomers, Seward Park, JFK, Walten, and Bronx Science. These teams are always in the playoffs. New teams such as Uniondale, and the very new St. Francis Prep boys team were also involved. I honestly did not know what to expect, and I was anxious to play against teams whose coaches were successful with teams that played against me in high school. Yes, we all go way back! It was intimidating, and nerve wracking, however, overall we played very well. We came in first place, in our pool play, and then played an amazing match vs. Hunter College High School. Peter Borkowski was chosen as an All Star Player of the tournament. We lost the final match against Walten H.S. from the Bronx, not because they were better than us, but because we made too many errors. We had 7 serving errors alone, not to mention unforced errors on serve receive and setting.

This past weekend we played in Aviation High School Volleyball Tournament. This is the most important tournament of the season because the top 10 teams of all 5 boroughs are always invited. In the last 7 years, the team who won this tourney, also won the PSAL Championships. Our pool consisted of Seward Park, JFK, Aviation, and Midwood. All these teams are extreme power houses in NYC. I feared Midwood and JFK the most in our pool. JFK took a game away from Walten at Queens College, and we lost to them. Midwood is a very tall team, with an amazing middle hitter that just kills the ball very hard; it's unbelievable. Despite my fears we came first in our pool yet again. The guys played their hearts out and we had a great day.



The other gym consisted of teams such as Cardozo, MSIT, Bryant, and New Utrecht. It was a tough pool. The boys from Bryant were the division champs for quite some time now, Cardozo were city champs for 2 years, and MSIT played Cardozo for the city championships last year. I did not know what to expect. Cardozo came in 2nd place in their pool, and MSIT in first. Yes, Walten did not get out of that pool. I guess my earlier predictions about them were true. They are not all that, we just made too many errors. We had to play Cardozo in the semi finals. I was very surprised that Bryant did not make it. We lost the first game to Cardozo and I began to worry. Then our guys just stepped up, gained their confidence, and started playing like the true champs that they are. Patryk Rozalski, our setter, served up a great game, Peter Borkowski, Przemek Walus and Czarek Wolczek, just had an error less, amazing game. A first year player Rezlind Bushati served and played defense very well. We had to play 3 games, but we won. We did it!

The championship game followed with MSIT. They are good, very good. The entire team plays club ball with Stellar. They are tall, athletic, and smart. In addition, the entire team played together last year, and made it all the way to the championship game. We had two new guys who never played volleyball before in the starting lineup. Unfortunately, we lost to MSIT. What hurt us the most once again just like in the first tournament, were mental errors. Once again we had 7 serving errors, and lost the championship match, but we only lost the game by 4 points.

We can't win with that many errors. The guys have to start learning faster, and realize that serving does not have much to do with skill, but the mental state of the athlete at the point of service. They have to be more confident and mentally strong to serve up a good game when the pressure is on. We gave MSIT a good fight, and we had a shot. We were also tired from playing 3, tough games right before vs. Cardozo. Well, we play, we learn. It's all good :)

I really appreciate your and the entire school's support this year. Everyone seems to be rooting for us in the school. The boys and I are very excited about our early success, and it's a great feeling to bring the trophies home and share the good news with all of the staff members, and fellow students. We have a busy, and competitive season ahead of us, and I just love it! We are also all set for our First Annual Grover Cleveland Volleyball Tournament on Saturday, April 17, 2010. I've invited 9 teams, I've ordered trophies and prizes, and we're going to have a great time.

While the Aviation tournament in a way foreshadowed us to come in 2nd place this year, I truly believe that we can bring the city championship trophy home in May. We can change the Aviation Tradition in 2010! We'll get stronger and smarter with time. I have faith in our guys! :)



From top left: Pawel Kasza (team manager) Adam Brzozowski, Peter Borkowski, Patryk Rozalski, Martin Galleguillos, Przemek Walus, Rezlind Bushati, Ms. Anna Dawidowska (coach) From bottom left: Suleima Guzman (team manager) Anxelo Mihail, Richard Galej, Czarek Wolczek, Ani Mihail.

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