

# Fun, dedication part of All Nations Team

By Leslie Mitts  
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Nine local girls can't seem to get enough basketball.

That's why they are playing for the local All Nations Team in addition to playing on the basketball team at Jefferson County Middle School.

The All Nations Team is one of many local teams traveling to nearby basketball tournaments.

This year the team has been participating in the SOAR weekend basketball tournament in Sisters that will go through February.

"We decided to do it this year because a lot of the girls didn't have the opportunity to play," Coach Eddison Yazzie said.

Plus, Yazzie said, the cost of traveling to the tournament isn't much.

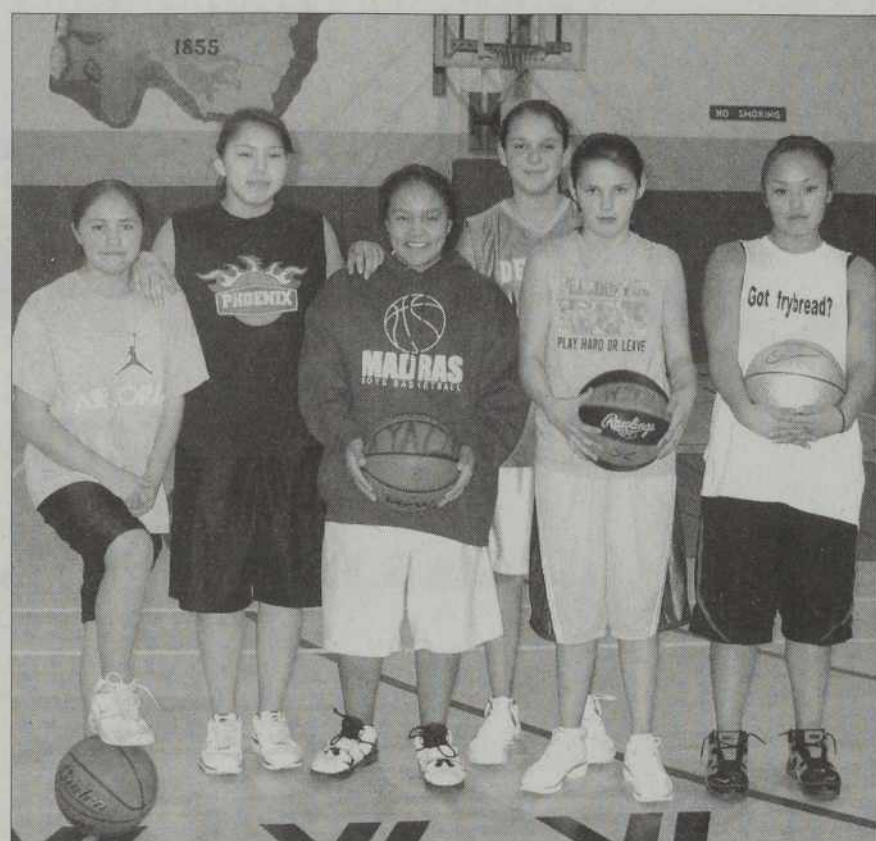
"It's just a day trip over there," he said, which makes it easier to take the team to the tournament.

So far they have placed second in one game, third in two games, and fourth in another.

But according to all the team members, they are proud of their progress and view their games as successes.

The team features 14-year-old eighth grader Norene Sampson, Lola Dick, Cheyenne Wahnetah, Rachel Simmons, Lauren Short and Misty Spino-McCormick.

Rounding out the team are 13-year-old eighth grader Amanda Squiempfen-Yazzie, 11-year-old sixth grader Inez



The members of the All Nations Team.

Jones and 12-year-old seventh grader Raylene Jones.

In addition to the All Nations Team, Sampson also plays for the Simnasho Vols.

Allen Jones co-coaches the team with Yazzie.

For Yazzie, the chance to coach also gives him the opportunity to spend more time with his daughter Amanda—a member of the team.

"I like to be with my kids," he said.

Parental involvement with the team is also key, Yazzie said. All of the parents of team members are invited to a post-game meeting to help the team discuss what they could have done better.

The girls are all in agreement that they enjoy basketball, but

the reasons all vary.

"We get to go places," Inez Jones said.

Raylene Jones added, "I get to learn a lot of different things."

She's learned a lot too, she added—recently Raylene made eight blocks in one game.

"That was the most I ever got," she said. "I was happy because I actually got some blocks."

For Dick, she's learned about a different aspect of the sport.

The most important thing she's learned, she said, is not to let herself down.

According to Sampson, the best part of basketball is just having fun and being able to socialize with other teams throughout Oregon.

"You're active and its just fun," Wahnetah said. "It's a fun sport."

In her opinion, she's learned the most about dribbling and posting.

"I still have to work on my rebounds though," she said.

Yazzie, she added, has helped the team a lot when it comes to basketball.

"He's taught us a lot of things," she said.

Squiempfen-Yazzie said part of the reason she enjoys the team so much is that she gets to spend extra time with her father.

Basketball is one of her favorite sports, she said, because "It keeps everyone happy."

Their best game so far was when they played against a team from Mt. View, Yazzie said.

He explained, "We scored 20 points before they even scored a point."

"What we try to emphasize here is our defense," he added.

It's something that can sometimes be misinterpreted. For instance, he said, in a game against Oregon City, "They called 18 fouls on us before halftime."

But Yazzie told the girls not to mind the referees.

"Don't give up till the whistle blows," he said.

Their worst game came during a match against Prineville, Yazzie said.

"We were still young; we were still learning," he said.

But the experience to play against more experienced teams is something important for the girls, he added.

"They are the teams that these girls will probably play in high school," Yazzie explained.

In addition, he said, they try to give everyone equal playing time—allowing the less-experienced players to get quality time on the basketball court.

Yazzie hasn't played much basketball himself. Instead he relies on what he can learn from books and from other community members to enhance his coaching ability.

His favorite part of coaching is seeing the players succeed individually, and watching them build confidence and self-esteem.

"They're figuring things out as they go along," he said.

The girls have also worked at fundraising with an Indian taco sale and a spaghetti feed and bake sale on Jan. 26.

Yazzie said that their time working together is about much more than just basketball—as evident by their fundraising.

"They need to learn their sales pitch," he said with a smile.

According to Yazzie, "It's all about building confidence and learning the game."

Yazzie said he hopes all the girls will continue to play basketball in the upcoming years. Right now, he said, they're developing skills that will be useful when they reach the high school level.

"Practice doesn't really make perfect," Yazzie said. "There are a lot of other variables."

In Yazzie's opinion, the most important part of what the girls are learning has to do with their confidence levels.

"They're becoming young ladies, becoming young adults, becoming people," Yazzie said.

Their involvement in sports like basketball will be influential in their futures, in Yazzie's opinion.

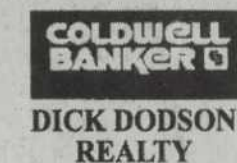
"It's preparing them for the greatest game on earth—the game of life," he said.

But it does come with one major difference, Yazzie added: "There are no substitutes in real life, there are no time outs."



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Warm Springs support groups/AA/NA meetings are at the following times on these days of the week:  
**Monday** from 5:30 to 7 p.m.:  
Aftercare support group meeting at the Community Counseling Center.  
**Wednesday** from noon to 1:30 p.m.: AA meeting at the Community Counseling Center.  
**Wednesday** from 5:30 to 7 p.m.: AA/NA meeting at the Community Counseling Center.  
**Thursday** from 6 to 7 p.m.: Talking Circle at the Community Counseling Center.  
**Saturday** from 5:30 to 7 p.m.: AA/NA meeting at the Community Counseling Center.

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