

Primary entry #43: Weston Public School



THE WESTON WARBLER



Weston Public School students enjoy the netball clinic.

Picture: Hayley Dann

Netball clinic visits Weston Public School

By 1/2C CLASS

RECENTLY a netball clinic was conducted at Weston Public School, proving very popular amongst many of the students. Maria Hoad, head coach from the Hunter Academy of Sport, visited the school and assisted children with developing skills and ideas to promote netball in the community. She has been coaching netball for 35 years across a variety of team and abilities.

"Netballers require good fitness, a nutritious diet and a great deal of effort and commitment to excel in the sport," Ms Hoad said.

Netball NSW aims to develop the growth of netball in schools and the wider school community, by providing opportunities that are both educational and fun through netball clinics like the one held at the school. These clinics have been held in Hunter schools for approximately 15 years, with Ms Hoad conducting an average of 10 netball clinics each year.

She shared the following strategies with students to encourage community involvement in the game: be welcoming and inclusive, make it enjoyable and promote a love for the sport. She said there are many benefits to playing netball, not only to increase and improve fitness levels but also a great way to make lifelong friends by being part of a team.

Skills learnt during the clinic will be put to good use later in the year when they participate in a gala netball day against other local schools.

By EBONY SHEEHAN AND 6F

YEAR 6 student and athlete, Tyson O'Neil, is well on his way to reaching his goal of participating in the 2024 Olympic Games for running. He recently took part in the Nationals games held in Tasmania, run by School Sport Australia where he ran and ranked fourth in boys 12 and under in the 100-metre event.

While this is an achievement in itself, it is made even more remarkable due to Tyson's vision impairment, ocular albinism, making him legally blind.

His vision is 6/60, which means he can see clearly to the tip of his nose but after that he just sees blurriness. Mrs Goodsir, his vision teacher said, "Because he is blind he doesn't see the ground like everyone else. Even though he is a really good sportsman he is disadvantaged because of his impairment."

Tyson started running last year in 2014 at the Weston Public School athletics carnival. Tyson's speed and time was absolutely phenomenal and he soon expanded on his success at zone level by representing his state at nationals.

Interestingly, when Tyson races, the winner is not necessarily the person who passes the finish line first. This is because "you are running against other students with



Runner Tyson O'Neil in action during a recent race.

disabilities some of whom are the same and some are different," Mrs Goodsir said. Tyson said "In my race I competed against students with dwarfism and cerebral palsy." Due to this, each athlete's time is calculated against specific formulas to allow the competition to be fair.

As if all Tyson's successes weren't enough he was also announced as the Sportsman of the

Year in 2014, which was awarded to him by the Primary School Sports Association. His mum Margret said "I felt very proud and excited about this honour given to Tyson."

While competing in the nationals is exciting it is also an expensive endeavour. So to help Tyson get to Tasmania, his family, with the support of Weston Public School, had to raise the money as his mum

Margret said: "I had to organise plane trips, hire a car, pay for accommodation and buy the uniform."

The money was raised through a variety of fundraising activities and the selling of raffle tickets. Recently, this fundraising has continued as Tyson was selected to represent his state in the national Goal Ball competition in Adelaide.



Students are involved with learning Aboriginal culture and beliefs.

Cultural knowledge is powerful

By CLASS 2D

WAKAGETTI Dance Company is made up of 10 Aboriginal men from various areas in the Hunter who have been dancing together as a group for three years. They have performed and taught Aboriginal culture to national and international audiences. The group believe that sharing Aboriginal knowledge helps to

bring communities together and educate audiences.

Wakagetti dance member Justin said "Aboriginal dance is a form of storytelling and a way to pay respect to elders past and present. It's also a way for younger generations to learn about traditional Aboriginal beliefs". The trio believe knowledge is power and it's only powerful if you share it. They seek to teach all chil-

dren about Aboriginal culture so they have a better understanding about Aboriginal beliefs and customs.

Lessons involve the sharing of Dreaming stories, painting, making paint out of ochre and dancing. Justin said "We aim to give students a sense of belonging, ownership and encourage them to have respect for themselves and respect for others".



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