

Pospisil is CVC principal, coach and bus driver

Written by Tom Fruehling

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Cedar Valley Christian Coach Jeff Pospisil has the optimism of the Little Engine that Could and the patience of Job.

More than that, says friend and longtime Cedar Rapids educator Mary Lehner: "Jeff? Why he's a saint."

Well, not quite.

There's no halo on his head, but he does wear quite a few hats.

He's the longtime volleyball coach at the 230-student K-12 private school in southeast Cedar Rapids. When the season ends, he'll pick up duties as the only boys basketball coach the school has ever had.

Since he goes to the games anyway, the 39-year-old Pospisil drives the team bus. He's also been the driver this fall for the school's first eight-man football squad.

Oh, and he's in his first year as the school's principal, too.

The married father of four, whose wife Jennifer helps him coach volleyball, he was the assistant principal for 14 years. His tenure at Cedar Valley Christian dates back to 1991, when he started physical education part-time in a building with no gymnasium while a student at Coe College.

"It seemed like a better job than flipping burgers," explains the former Kennedy High School

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athlete and senior class president.

He joined the CVC faculty full-time right out of Coe in 1994. In addition to basketball, Pospisil also started soccer at the school, even though he had played neither sport himself.

"Some of the kids had played," he says. "And I watched other coaches and did what they did."

After teaching math full-time throughout his career, administrative responsibilities have caused him to cut back now to only one class in advanced calculus. But then there's the school auto mechanics course, a one-of-a-kind program Pospisil started and has run for the past 10 years.

"In a small school," he says pretty matter-of-factly, "everyone does a lot of things."

At the moment, his immediate attention is on the volleyball team that began a shaky season by losing its first 21 matches, 16 of them in straight sets.

The spunky Huskies finally notched a win last Monday with a resounding 3-1 triumph over girls from the Meskwaki Settlement. That sweet thrill of victory was short-lived, though, as they in fell 3-0 to Morningstar Academy of Davenport three nights later.

With four regular-season matches left on the schedule, Pospisil remains forever upbeat, however. Looking ahead to next month's postseason tourney time, he says sunnily, "I think we can make a run at it."

After all, this is the first year the school has competed as a full-fledged member of the Iowa Girls High School Athletic Union (IGHSAU). He knew things wouldn't be rosy from the start.

His teams in the past have dominated similar-sized Christian schools (mostly from Illinois) but

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now are going against established small-school Iowa programs. And some of them are juggernauts.

Meanwhile, Cedar Valley Christian has but 63 students in grades nine through 12. Of these, 29 are girls and 20 of them are on the varsity and jayvee volleyball teams.

"We've been playing really good teams," the coach says. "And, in most cases, the games have been close."

The majority have been against others in Class 1A, but a number of tournaments have paired the Huskies with Class 3A competition. Besides, it's a rebuilding year for Cedar Valley Christian. One starter from last year graduated and three others transferred.

Pospisil says he has only a couple of players with background in club volleyball, the lifeblood these days for almost all high school varsity squads.

"We're young and inexperienced," he points out. "We don't have much height, so we don't have many blockers.

"We can play with anybody for a little while, but then our youth shows and we kind of fall apart. We haven't been able to win the close ones."

But they've never quit trying.

"I'm optimistic," says their enthusiastic coach. "We've played teams we could have beaten and should have beaten.

"The girls listen. They work hard in practice, and they play hard. They just need more

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confidence. But we're still going to win some more games. I know we will."