

Town's hoops program helps offers kids skills, fun

By Kristine Coulter
Staff Writer

FISHKILL— On a recent Saturday morning Maribel Humphries could be seen standing on the sidelines of the basketball court rooting on her 10-year-old son, Duprey.

"He's played a couple of years now," said Humphries. Her son plays in the Fishkill Winter Hoops program. The games are held on Saturdays in the gymnasium at Brinckerhoff Elementary School in Fishkill. Practices are scheduled on Tuesdays. Instead of a team name, the teams are known by team colors and numbers. Team one is the white team, team two is the black team, team three is the red team and team four is the blue team.

Humphries' husband, Jarvis, coaches the white team. The first game, which took place at 8:45 a.m., was the white team versus the black team. The 10 o'clock game was the red team against the blue team.

Humphries remarked that her son has gained "confidence" since playing basketball.

"Get it B," yelled Nell Durland to her 10-year-old daughter, Brianna. Brianna is number seven

on the black team.

"I love it (the program)," said Durland. "It's really good for them. They learn teamwork, good listening skills and they have fun."

Brianna, Durland commented, came into the program with very little knowledge of how to play basketball.

"She's starting to get the concept of the game. What it's all about," Durland said.

Brianna plays travel soccer and dabbles in field hockey for camp, her mother explained.

Brianna said she enjoys "being with my teammates and trying to get the shots."

Durland, who grew up in the area, stated it is nice to see how everything is evolving and that "it's nice to see the programs evolve."

"What we're really trying to do is instill general basketball skills and having a lot of fun doing it," said Rich Kolosky. Kolosky, along with Jay Maietta are the league's directors.

"The best is just seeing how far they come, from the very first day how they progress during the year," commented Maietta.

Each of the four teams that make up the league has approximately 12 players. The cost is \$85 per player, which the directors explained goes toward the use of the gymnasium and trophies that are handed out at the program's end. The league is for children in fourth through sixth grades.

The program is able to be in existence because of the volunteers that coach, referee and the scorekeepers, said Kolosky and Maietta.

One of the coaches of the black team is Tim McNamara. This is the second year McNamara is coaching.

"The kids are great. They're really enthusiastic," he said.

Allison, McNamara's nine-year-old daughter, is on his team.

"It doesn't matter if you win or lose," said Allison. "I like to pass the ball."

McNamara said the coaches try to teach the kids good sportsmanship.

"I think sitting in front of a TV playing video games isn't that great," McNamara stated. Bill Scesney coaches the black team as well.

"It's the age group for me. You can see them improve so obviously," said Scesney.

He said he hopes the kids "get an appreciation for team sports so they stay active and healthy."

"What I enjoyed most is when I made my first two foul shots," said Scesney's daughter Abigail.

Rich Weatherwax of Wappingers Falls was watching his nine-year-old son Ryan, who is on the white team.

"It's an excellent program for instruction and encouragement by these coaches," said Weatherwax.

He said the program keeps the children active and helps them understand "team concept."

"This is probably one of the better programs," he said.

The final score of the first game was the white team 41 and the black team 35.

An awards ceremony for all of the players is scheduled for the beginning of March.