

Local boys & girls move on to free throw district finals

Written By ROBERT BELARDI

The Knights of Columbus hosted their annual free throw event last Saturday as boys and girls from various schools in the Caledon area competed.

Since the inaugural year in 1996, schools are instructed to host a free throw tournament if they wish, to choose a representative from the age of nine all the way to 14 to compete.

All the children that attended came from seven local schools in the area, including St. John The Baptist and Macville Public School.

This tournament was the local competition. In two weeks, the district competition begins, including the winner from five councils, Orangeville, Tottenham, Alliston, Caledon East and Bolton. The provincial finals will occur at the end of the month.

The local event was held at St. Michael's Catholic Secondary School on Columbia Way.

In the gym, boys and girls participated on separate ends of the gym, by age group. Children nine to 11, will use a women's size regulation ball, shooting from 12 feet out. Girls 12 to 17, use the same size ball, but taking shots from 15 feet out. The boys however, use a men's size regulation ball; one size larger than the women's basketball, also from 15 feet out.

Players can take three practice shots, before they begin 15 consecutive free throws.

Director of the tournament Ron Frank insists; this competition between these children, is the most exciting aspect of this day.

“Watching the competition in the youth,” said Frank. “They come in here and they are shooters. They shoot 15 consecutive free throw shots and some of these boys and girls, are shooting 10, or 11 or 12, out of 15. They take it seriously.”

There is credence behind this statement as the shooters that came out on Saturday, in some cases, barely missed.

The first shooters were the nine-year-olds.

Jake Rampino and Vanessa Rupa won their competition and move on to the next level.

The 10-year-old winners were Emily Amodeo and Darren Chandarpaul. Chandarpaul and another boy Anton, went through three overtimes to finally decide a winner.

In overtime, both players step up again in the same order, shooting five baskets to settle the tie.

Chandarpaul and Anton initially made 11 baskets. Both boys went through another three rounds, before Chandarpaul sunk in four out of five in the round to seal his win.

In the 11-year-old group, Tyra Reginald won for the girls and Adrian Edeleriji won for the boys. Edeleriji shot 11 baskets as well.

The 12-year-olds, were welcomed by another shooter making 11 out of 15 baskets, tied for most on the day from four players. Daniel Napoleoni got things started and sunk 11 baskets, sending nervous jitters throughout the group.

For the girls, Sofia Genovese sealed her win quite comfortably.

No 13-year-old girls or 14-year-old children attended for this local competition. There were two, 13-year old boys that competed with Domenic Martino walking away with the victory.

Frank shared his thoughts on today's matchups and how well the parents supported the children with adulation and every made free throw for all ages.

?This is an opportunity for children to learn their skills at free throw basketball shooting,? said Frank.

?They love it. They come ready to compete and they have parents here to support them. It's all about the children.?

14 Knights showed up to support the community, in which they feel, is the most gratifying thing to do for the community.