2013 May 13

On Saturday, May 11th I went to see a bocce practice at the upper field of Elphinstone Secondary. In attendance were athletes Amber Fenton, Amber Maher, Stephie Malcom, Ryan Van Louven, Bruce Stuart, John Mcara, Peter Twohig and Dustin Archer. Also there were coaches Jeannie Barwise, Bill Climie and Judy McDonald.

Everyone started off with stretches and then proceeded to line up hoops and practice throwing small balls from a distance to land them in the hoops. This is a way to find the right amount of speed and power.

Now, the game of bocce is quite simple. If there are single players, each player is given one bocce ball, colours of green, blue, yellow or red. The smaller white ball, named the palina must be thrown in the bocce court past the white flags with the player standing at one end by the red flags or on the other by the green flags. If there are teams of two, each player is given two balls each, each team with matching colours.

Once the palina is thrown, each player in turn throws his/her bocce ball to get it as close to the palina as possible. Whoever reaches that goal wins a point. I noticed that everyone had their own techniques in throwing the balls.

Ryan seemed to be a seasoned vet, along with John. Their throws gained them many points, just the right amount of oomph and rolling the ball off the hand.

The atmosphere was full of concentrated fun. People cheered a good shot and laughed off an out-of-bounder. The A Team - the alpha females, Amber F. and Amber M supported each other with praise and encouragement. The Green Guys, Dustin and Peter, were very focused on the task at hand. The Blue Boys, John and Bruce, brought a lot of finesse to the game. The Mellow Yellows, Stephie and Ryan, managed to score points in the game with bonus points for taking things in stride.

I must say, that I am glad the rain held off till just after the practice.

I had fun watching and feel confident I would have fun participating next year, although, I noticed there were no cappuccinos being served. Ha ha ha.