

# Plenty of ‘Pep’

Teams and more teams. Baseball, cross country, soccer, softball, tennis, track and field, and volleyball teams. Did we mention the 14 different basketball teams?

Athletics at Saint George’s is about participation, and the man behind all of those teams — who wants to see every student’s name on a roster — is Athletic Director Ryan Peplinski.

“My goal is to get everybody I can involved in sports,” says the upbeat, bearded teacher with the build of a former college tight end. (He played a year at the University of Idaho.) “With our no-cut policy, we put anybody who wants to play on a team. I love to have several teams for each sport.”

One measure of his success is that 75 percent of Upper School students play on an athletic team; half of all students play on multiple teams. Ryan also measures success by how hard athletes work, “and how many come back to visit or keep in touch with emails — it’s quite a few.”

That graduates recognize the value of athletic involvement is no surprise to Ryan,

who sees it as an integral part of an independent school education. “Most kids’ grades go up when they are involved in sports teams,” he says. “Their work ethic carries over into the classroom, and they learn time management skills.”

Those skills come in handy for students balancing team practices and games with a full schedule of drama rehearsals, choir concerts, or debate tournaments. “At a bigger school you’d have to leave out the sports to do activities,” he says, “but we need the numbers, so coaches work around students’ schedules to make it possible.”

Ryan has seen how larger schools work, teaching and coaching football, baseball, and basketball at Mead and then Mt. Spokane High Schools before coming to Saint George’s in the fall of 2001. Now as Athletic Director his life is about schedules — schedules for hundreds of games, buses, officials — and looking after the school’s talented coaches, top-notch facilities, even the tasty concessions. He’s also secretary of the Panorama League, on the District 7 Executive Board, and a voting member of the statewide WIAA Representative Assembly.

As he represents the school in the larger coaching community, Ryan is clear about the reputation for which he wants his athletes to be recognized.

“Most of all, I want students at Saint George’s to be known for showing class — win or lose.”

But first, he has to get them on a team. “I’d love to see every ninth grader try something athletic. I hear seniors say, ‘I wish I had gone out for that team. I could have been good.’”

— John Carter

**Ryan watching his boys basketball team play at the 2007 State B Tournament**

**Athletic Director Ryan Peplinski has a team for everyone**



**Ryan by the trophy case in the Errol Schmidt Athletic Center**



## On the Web

See the latest schedule of games and results for all of Ryan’s teams at Athletics / Schedules & Results on [www.sgs.org](http://www.sgs.org)

