



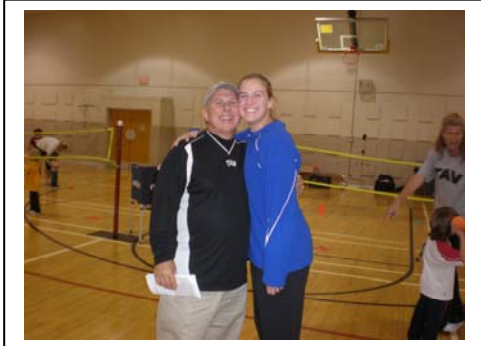
VolleyTot Blog:

October 24, 2008

We were sad to see Reggie and Denise head out super early this morning, but Steve Yates (TCA) was kind enough to make the 5:30 am trip to the airport to drop them off so the old guy (John), could sleep an extra couple of hours. Unfortunately, we still needed to get up early and make more copies of coaches material and lesson plans because of the large turnout in Milwaukee. Lucky for us the hotel had a business center and could make copies that we collated and got ready for the Morehead State clinic.

We picked up our next coaches, Laura Alford (TAV) and Amanda Martin (TAV) at the airport then took the back roads to Morehead State for our 5 pm clinic. Our ride was through some really scenic areas although we had rain the whole way there. We were about halfway there in the middle of farms, ranches, and horses when we spied an amazing site. Right in the middle of a field, far away from anything was a lone volleyball grass court and net. Just goes to show that volleyball is played a little bit of everywhere.

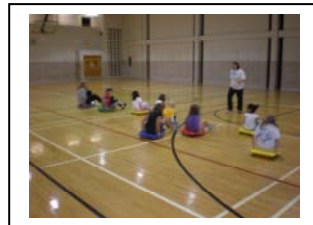
We arrived at Morehead and checked in with Jaime Gordon to see where we should set up. Much to our surprise as we were walking in to the gym Emily Maher and the Southeast Missouri State team was just leaving to get ready for the match. Emily played at TAV last year and is recovering from ACL surgery and it was great to see her in a college uniform! I guess it was TAV day as we got to spend time with Leah Duncan and Mel Humen (both former TAV players) who were with Morehead State. Leah and Mel along with several other Morehead players stayed to help with the clinic before the match and were great assistants. Morehead assistants Greg Goral and Kelsey Cronin also jumped in to help out before the match.



We set up in the rec center in about 15 minutes (we are getting really good at moving 700 pounds of equipment in and out now) and were ready to go at 5 pm. Coaches began arriving and we covered the information about VolleyTots and what drills we were going to be doing. While we were talking to the coaches the kids began arriving and immediately went to the obstacle course and started going through it.



An early arrival was Tiffany who not only hadn't played volleyball, but had not thrown a ball. Laura Alford (TAV) and Steve Yates (TCA) jumped in and got her going. By the end of the clinic Tiffany was passing, hitting and involved in every drill, especially the hockey and obstacle course. We had a couple of other kids that were shy about starting, so we changed to a buddy system using the college kids to help and soon had everyone participating in every activity. Amanda buddied up with a player named Morgan and by the end of the clinic she was one of our stars. We had our first two year old as Mark McCloskey brought his daughter to give VolleyTots a shot. Surprisingly, she was able to pass, swing at balls, toss bean bags and go through the obstacle course with a little help from Dad.



Jaime's two kids, Sidney and Jameson were ready to go and already proficient with some of the volleyball exercises. They led the way in many of the drills and competed with each other on who could be the best. We followed the normal format and by clinic's end, we were playing catch and toss four on four and having a great time. After a final obstacle course and cart race we ended the clinic, took only 11 minutes to load up and along with all the VolleyTots headed to the Morehead State vs. SEMO match. The match was exciting and fun to watch (after working with the 3 ½ - 8 year olds all week) and although the effort was valiant, SEMO stepped up and won the match in four. After the match we joined Jaime for dinner at a great Italian place (had the biggest Stromboli I've ever seen) and recapped the clinic and the match. We checked in the motel knowing we needed to leave early for our 1 pm clinic in Indianapolis on Saturday. Lots of miles so far and lots of new friends and a whole lot of new VolleyTots!

