

Bergenfield Recreation Wrestling By Chris Mascucci

Popular youth sports in the town of Bergenfield do not just cover common games such as baseball or football, but have a following in youth wrestling as well. The Bergenfield wrestling program, which is part of the Twin-County Junior Wrestling League, and involves about 50 to 60 towns in the State of NJ, has traditionally served as an outlet where kids have the opportunity to compete in various matches and events.

"I want to teach the kids teamwork and discipline," said Ed Volmer, the director and head coach of the wrestling program who has been involved with the sport for the last 30 years. "If kids are putting their effort towards sports, they are bettering themselves and staying out of trouble."

Volmer is an integral part of the program and oversees youth practices and handles the logistical requirements of running the league. Volmer also helps kids maintain their own physical fitness and teaches kids respect, discipline, and how to handle the competitive sport.

"I always teach the kids to have fun, win or lose they have to enjoy themselves," said Volmer. "We have always had a good team and I have high hopes for the kids this year."

The event Volmer and competitors are preparing for is known as the Sal Cascio Tournament, named after a local high school coach who has been inducted into the national wrestling hall of fame. The tournament is held in January and features the top three wrestling age groups. Kids compete in one-on-one matches and try to win gold, silver, and bronze medals. Volmer also has hopes to see his team reach the regional tournament held in Hackensack and possibly even the State circuit. At this writing, the team was preparing for the 2015 tournament on January 11th.

"Wrestling builds confidence, it is very hard work but also very rewarding," said Volmer. "The kids perform in front of a large audience, you learn to deal with loss, but it pushes them to work harder."