

SPORTS

Basketball mania keeps parents glued to the bleachers

BY DON DECKER,
YAN News

Basketball fever in Camp Verde always takes top priority.

At least one night a week, YAN parents and grandparents and a slew of Camp Verde community members gather inside the school's gym to support their children. You can hear the buzzers going off and parents trying to remain calm if the refs don't call it the right way.

The Norman Smith family of Tunlii and the Hazelwoods of Middle Verde go there

to support kids like Julian Perez (grandson of Norman Smith), Devon James #24 who is the son of Saleana (Hazelwood) Garner of Middle Verde, Chris Ogle, 6th grader, the son of Stephanie Ogle and Jordan Williams #22 who is the son of Wendell Ogle.

Ten year old Julian Perez #20, the son of Joe and Corina (Smith) Perez of Camp Verde, is a fifth grader who plays with the Camp Verde Middle School Cowboy basketball players where he runs circles around visiting team players.

Mr. Perez is proud of his son, Julian and believes in his son's basketball abilities.

"He's only a fifth grader (Julian)," says Mr. Perez as he points out the fact that Julian plays with the big and tall 7th and 8th ball players from the middle school. The middle school basically enlisted Julian because he has exceptional ability in moving the ball around.

Julian is the shortest member of the team but this may work to his advantage as he weaves in and out and around the tall ball players at

lightning speed while dribbling the ball.

"The doctor says Julian will eventually grow up to 6 feet," adds Mr. Perez who has an off-season team called the "Y-A Warriorz". This team who are mostly Yavapai-Apache, has only been existence for a year and the bonus is that Julian gets the opportunity to be coached by his father- Mr. Perez.

Mr. Perez says the "z" on the end of the "Warrior" is specifically misspelled to honor Julian's proud Hispanic heritage as many Hispanic surnames end with the letter "z" such

as Gonzalez, Ramirez, Gomez and Antunez .

Julian's mom, Corina who is the daughter of Norman and Priscilla Smith of Tunlii is Apache. Her grandfather was the late Ernest Smith of Middle Verde, an Apache.

The mostly YAN tribal members "Warriorz" team play in local intramural Verde Valley sports including such places like Prescott and in the prestigious Lori Poyestewa Memorial Tournament held in Phoenix each year.

This coming April 2018 Julian will be traveling to the Phenom

National Basketball Camp in San Diego where he will undergo a grueling workout camp to hone his basketball playing skills.

When Julian isn't playing basketball, he attends the Camp Verde Elementary School and interestingly, because he has excellent academic skills, he tutors fellow students under the Johnson O'Malley Program, a program sponsored by the Nation to work in the schools to help students who experience academic problems.



The Hazelwood family of Middle Verde are avid supporters of the Camp Verde team.



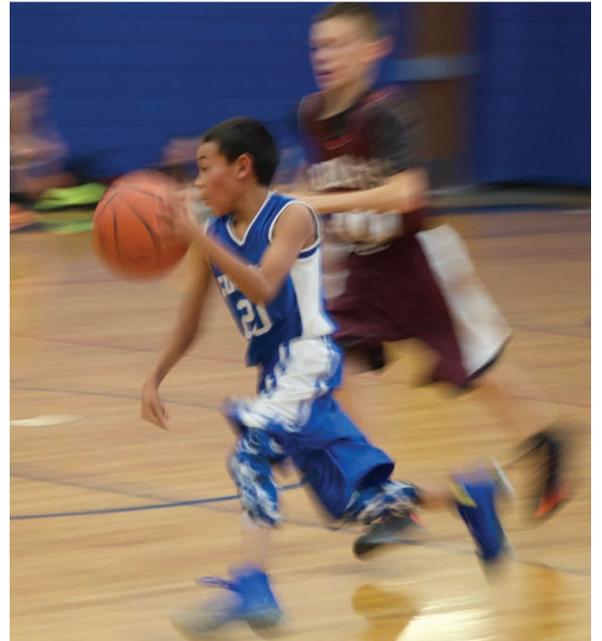
The Tewawina family watching a school basketball game in Camp Verde. The Tewawinas are employed by the Nation. YAN News Photos



Julian Perez, 5th grader plays with 7th and 8th grade basketball players.



Point guard Devon James is a key player.



Julian Perez makes a fast break for the goal.

Yavapai-Apache Nation is well represented in school basketball

BY DON DECKER,
YAN News

The Camp Verde Middle School girl's basketball team has 4 Yavapai-Apache Nation members on board for the basketball season.

They usually play before an empty gym with exception of some health ed students who have ended up on the bleachers because their coach is coaching.

Yavapai-Apache players rumble down the gymnasium floor playing full court press from the very onset when they go up to defend the full court immediately after it is brought onto the court.

This means every defensive player covering their own offensive team members.

One of players from the Yavapai-Apache Nation says that she could run every game shot down the court but due to team sports, she passes the ball often times—except when the scores are very close.

During one game, this player scored 22 points or 80% of the baskets.



Edith Honwytewa, daughter Rosalee Lewis(back) and grandchildren.

Nation's basketball players. 9th graders (L) Alana Lewis, Sicily Herrera, Mia Charley and Isabelle Robles.