



Woodlands International College

Junior College Newsletter

11 October 2019

Dear Woodlands Family,

Participation versus Victory

One of the “thornier” issues of society, and in schools, or our College in particular, is that of “How important is winning?” There are obviously two sides to the thinking, which may or may not be mutually exclusive. Firstly, to be involved, or just participate, is very important. One of the basic tenets of our College is exactly that: If you would like to participate, there will be a team or a place for you. We encourage everyone to be involved and participate. We don’t just do “A” teams in the “A” league in order to win. Our swimming team is a case in point: we now have two teams participating, with the second team comprising mostly beginners. Just to be there is important for them. On a larger scale if you think of the annual Comrades Marathon, out of the 20 000 people participating, probably only 10 or so have a realistic chance of winning, for the other 19 990, it’s just a matter of being there and participating.

However, when any team starts a competitive match against another, or one of our swimmers or runners starts a race, I want them to win. Nobody starts a competitive situation and thinks to themselves “I don’t care if I win”. They have to try their best, and if, at the end they lose, the effort would have been worth it. I want our soccer and netball teams to win. I want our swimmers and athletes to win their races, if they have the ability to do so.

Earlier this year I awarded a Tenacity Trophy to a young lady who never gave up and fought her way to sixth place in a race, instead of seventh or eighth or ninth. I gave equal praise to a young man who came first in his race – he also did his best.

So, for me, I guess it’s firstly about participating, then doing your absolute best, and then if you have the capability, coming first or winning.

I always say that the only we can be measured as human beings is: “Did you do the best you could, with what you were given?”

So remember, never, ever, give up.

Dr G Pienaar

