

Rob Solmes

~ Killarney Secondary ~



Teacher
Social Studies

- Cross Country
- Track & Field
- Previously coached Basketball (10 years)

A Message from the Nominee

Dedication—Don is out there 10 times a week with his team, they train on weekends, just amazing.

Dave Derpak—Principal

What “Others Say” ...

Others can believe just how dedicated they are. They have the biggest cross country program in school district 39.

When did you start coaching?

I started coaching in 1999 at David Thompson Secondary School (Vancouver).

What sport did you start coaching?

My first BC School sport was cross country and then later that year I coached sr. boys basketball and that spring I started a track and field team. I had no idea what I was getting into.

Describe your first coaching experience.

My first season coaching cross country was exciting and overwhelming in spite of having just three athletes on the team. One of the two male athletes on the team often showed up to practice in jeans and boots with nothing but the desire to run and I felt pretty much the same as I had no prior coaching experience, no knowledge of resources or available assistance, I just had the desire to coach. And together we ran and laughed.

Why did you decide to coach?

My high school athletics coach was an enormous influence on me as a youth (really a surrogate parent) and I felt obligat-



Killarney Secondary—Cross Country Team



Vancouver kids that was graciously provided to me when I was in high school. I hope his compassion and generosity inform my own coaching practice. .

Did you participate in any sports at the high school level?

In high school I ran track, cross country and I played basketball.

How did you find sport in your life?

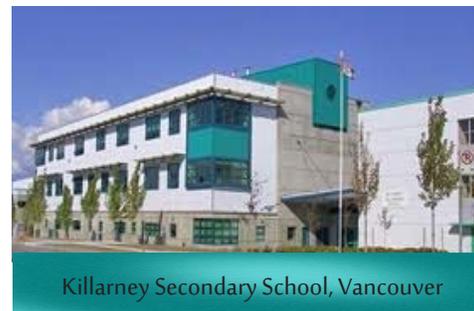
I had an older brother that ran high school track and he would bring me to practices while I was still in middle school. I cried the first practice and failed to complete the workout, but I showed up the following day to try again.

What sport(s) do you currently coach?

I currently coach cross-country and track and field, but I also coached basketball for ten years.

What is the biggest challenge you face as a teacher-coach?

Coaching is incredibly challenging on a variety of fronts. Every practice there's something else that needs to be done. But I'm fortunate enough to have a supportive administration and athletic department, a patient and understanding family, and I have had the opportunity to coach along side some remarkable people who have held my hand through some trying times.



Killarney Secondary School, Vancouver

What's the most rewarding thing about being a teacher-coach?

The relationships with students and colleagues that derive from shared struggles and successes are pure gold. . Every time a student I had previously coached begins their own coaching adventure I feel proud and inspired.

Who would you identify as a role model specific to coaching?

My high school track coach (Tom Hocking) and people that I have had the opportunity to coach with like Donald Chang, Balraj Dhillon, and Andrew Lai have all been enormous influences.

What was one of your proudest moments as a teacher-coach?

Every time a student I had previously coached begins their own coaching adventure I feel proud and inspired.

Any recognition/achievements for your current team(s)?

Our cross-country team this year had a great season filled with lots of mileage and a lot of laughing.

What has coaching taught you about life?

I know how this sounds, but there is no end to the benefits you get from investing in relationships with others.

What do you do in your spare time?

I find time to run, read, play with my son, but like all coaches a great deal of our spare time is spent coaching.

How do you balance your coaching with your personal life?

I have given up trying achieve the illusive "balance" and have adopted a policy of integration. So team training camps and trips double as family vacations and practices double as playtime. I am so very fortunate to have a family that is understanding and patient.



BCSS *Thanks You...*

BC SCHOOL SPORTS along with all it's member schools, teachers-coaches, student-athletes, parents and volunteers would like to thank Rob for his commitment and passion towards coaching in his school. We recognise that without the dedication of our teacher-coaches, numerous student would not get the opportunity and experience to play sport.

