

## **DeWitt Perry: the Secret to Our Success**

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# **DeWitt Perry: the Secret to Our Success**

## **1 Introduction**

DeWitt Perry has been a very successful team over the last few years. We have been the highest ranked middle school in the world for three years in a row, the only middle school in the top 10 for the last three years, we have outright won two regionals, including placing 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> at this years region and dominated the Oklahoma region a few years ago. In addition we have placed in the top three in the R&D website challenge every year we have entered. Perry students have either won or placed in the Robotics Olympiad and Trivia contest every year it has been offered. We have won the NCER Leadership award twice and won numerous other awards. This paper is going to tell you the secret to our success.



## **2 The Reasons**

The reasons for our success can be classified into three categories: adult support, team support, and school support.

### **2.1 Adult Support**

The two main areas of adult support come from parents and our sponsor Mr. Culp. We have a lot of support from our parents that volunteer to help our Botball teams. A group of parents of Botball team members formed a booster club that plans fund raisers. Some fund raisers that they have planned include garage sales, rocket nights, and robotics camp. The garage sale is when we sell donated items for profit, and at rocket nights we teach kids how to build and launch model rockets. Finally at robotics camps we teach kids how to build and program robots that play a simple game. Also, our parents run a snack closet that allows us to buy food when we work late.

In addition, the parents, especially the club president, spend lots of time planning our trips to the regional and national competition, this helps take the pressure off of Mr. Culp so he can concentrate on teaching and guiding us.

Mr. Culp is one of the important reasons why we do so well. He comes to school when ever we need to come to school. He often times spends 7 days a week at school with us, late into the

evening, especially during Botball season. In fact, no one spends more time at Perry. None of us ever make every single meeting day, but Mr. Culp is there for every single team meeting of every single team. Many weeks he is there almost 80 hours in a week!

He teaches all of the new kids how to build and program the robots. The first semester of school is all about learning to program, build and solve robotic problems. He teaches us everything he knows which is a lot!

He helps us with things we do not know how to do and makes suggestions about how to do things better. He accepts only the best from us and tells us when we are not doing our best even though we might not want to hear it; he wants us to live up to our potential. We don't always listen to him but we have often learned the hard way that Mr. Culp's suggestions are often right. He has a lot of valuable experience that he passes on and can teach so that hard things seem easy.

Another of the main reasons that Perry is a success is because we have a Botball table that was built by a parent five years ago. The Botball table we have is as close to the real Botball table as possible. The table is EXTREMELY sturdy and heavy. Having a good, permanent table is important because we get to test our robots as accurately as possible.

## **2.2 Team support**

At Perry, we have the older kids to mentor the younger kids. This way we can pass on knowledge more efficiently. The older kids help the younger kids learn to build and program before Botball starts. This helps because we can get things done faster if the newer members don't have to learn as they go.

One of the most important aspects of DeWitt Perry Botball is that we are not focused on winning. Botball is a learning experience and winning is not important. Mr. Culp tells us all the time to not focus on winning and to focus on being the best we can be. Though we do win a lot, we don't believe that winning is the whole point of Botball. When we DO lose, we are good losers and know that it isn't really that important. We believe that Botball is a learning experience, not a competitive sport.

We also do well because we have a lot of people on each team. This is helpful because then we always have people that are good at something.

## **2.3 School support**

Our School provides a place to meet for our Botball teams during the school year and summer. Each of our Botball teams has dedicated meeting days that we meet on, but we come as much as we need to, to work on the robots. Some weeks we come seven days a week when we really need to get things done. This helps if we are running out of time and still need to build robots. We also

learn a lot more in a shorter period of time.

The principal of Perry also supports the Robotics teams a lot. He gives us school laptops to use at the competition and to program the robots with. He also comes to the regional events to support the team. In addition, he has allowed us the use of school facilities to do our fund raising and allowed us to do lots of fund raising because Botball is a very expensive.

### **3 Conclusion**

In conclusion there are many reasons Perry teams do very well at nationals and regionals. We have good parent support, school support, and team support. So, in other words, the reason we win is because we have support. So, we'd like to thank all our sources of support. Thank you to Mr. Culp our sponsor, Mr. La Puma our principal, our parents, and most of all, we'd like to thank our teams for working hard to be good at Botball.