

Coventry track team takes the plunge





Members of the Coventry High School indoor track team participated in the polar bear plunge in Newport on Jan. 1 at Easton's Beach.



About 20 students turn out for A Wish Come True benefit

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COVENTRY—The new year has started and for one committed group of student athletes a new tradition has begun.

The Coventry High School indoor track team participated on Jan. 1 in the polar bear plunge that takes place locally and all across the country.

Their group specifically, took part in the Newport Polar Bear's Plunge raising money for A Wish Come True.

Erica Horlbogen, the head coach for the girls team, said that the event was team building and that they hope to make it an annual event.

Carlton Bradshaw, the head coach for the boys team, said,

"I think it's going to become a tradition."

This was the first time the indoor track team had done the plunge and the two coaches collaborated on the event, wanting to do something to embrace the weather, rather than work around it like they often do during practice.

"We are kind of held back by the winter," Bradshaw said.

They have to run around the snow or practice inside often-times.

This event, which was also for a good cause, would be geared instead toward the cold weather.

"The kids weren't really sure what to expect," Bradshaw said, but with the few thousand people at the event, he said they were one of the biggest groups there.

"They were really energetic," he said, "and really loud," and had everyone looking at them.

They had close to 20 students come out for the event, which was held at Easton's Beach in Newport at noon on Jan. 1.

That is about one-third of the team, Bradshaw said, and was more than they expected.

When I announced it at practice some cheered and others got a shocked look on their faces, Bradshaw said.

"We were expecting five kids," he said, "so it was a big turnout, especially for a holiday morning."

Even some parents took a dip into the water with the students.

"Overall it was a blast," Bradshaw said.

The coaches collected \$5 from each student and a check was written to A Wish Come True for \$150 on behalf of the team.

"The kids are already talking about next year," Bradshaw said, with ideas on costumes and how to catch the eye of the

local television news stations.

"Some people don't even know what indoor track is," Bradshaw said.

He explained that while it hasn't been around very long and some parts of the country don't even offer it, it is a really competitive sport in Rhode Island.

"You really have to commit to be good," he said, mentioning again the drudgery of practicing in the winter that some student athletes would just as soon avoid.

"We are really working hard in the winter," he said, "inside or in the slush."

There are around 30 students in the boys program and about 35 in the girls, he said. Running, jumping and throwing events include short sprints, high jump and shot put as well as numerous others.

"Anyone who lives in Wood Estates in Coventry has seen us out there," Bradshaw said.