

## Champions

### Tournament victory puts Boteler Basketball Team back at the top

In 1981 our school was recognised as the best in Warrington for basketball winning three trophies out of the four competitions we entered in Y10/11. Several years of near misses followed until competitions died out towards the end of that decade.

When the Ball Hall opened five years ago we re-entered local competitions and have always finished in the top half of the



league table without quite having the strength to go all the way. We came very close last year and achieved a third place in the league and a semi-final place in the tournament at the end of the season. Four of this year's players were in the team last year and with new talent developing on a weekly basis through involvement in the Ball Hall leagues we knew there was a chance of something special this season.

The 2010 tournament was held at Birchwood High School and seven teams entered. In the first game we were drawn against Bridgewater and had no problem beating them by a 9 point margin. There was no way past Ryan Armitage in defence and his speed on the break gave us a perfect outlet. The ease of this victory allowed the full use of our 8 man squad and in the second game a skilful but physically inferior Lymm team were no match for our man to man defence. Jake Tarburton and Josh Woodward stole the ball regularly, feeding our breaking players with accurate passes. Both demonstrated their skill with the ball and linked well with our taller players.

The only obstacle between ourselves and a place in the final was Great Sankey with whom we had managed only a draw in the league with a weakened team a couple of weeks earlier. During the eight minutes of that match a lesson in pressure defence and fast break basketball was handed out by our players. The final score was 22-2 in our favour.

Tom Bate and Declan Clarke ran in baskets for fun, missing very few chances. No team has been able to handle Tom's ability to drive to the basket under pressure this season. Declan's agility and finishing skill when off balance is without equal.

That just left the final to be played against Culcheth High School who had not lost a game all season. We felt the match was there for the taking and adopted a strategy of tough man to man defence with Culcheth's play maker under pressure from Declan Clarke and Josh Turner. We set off at a blistering pace. Mikey Lyon made several superb interceptions and harassed the Culcheth guards as only he can. Every loose ball was won by Boteler. At one point, Rocky dived on the floor and fed Declan with a rugby pass. Rocky himself ran in several points and controlled the tempo of the game when it mattered. Dec top scored for us and was a deserved MVP



for the tournament. Ashley Latham was the only player to stay on court for the full 8 minutes of every game and dominated under the basket all afternoon. He has given us great stability in that position all season.

This victory was based on the depth of quality and passion within this team. There are no weak links and a number of players who don't make the team would be playing regularly in other schools. In the early 80s the pale blue shirts of Boteler were feared by other schools as they came on court. Almost 30 years later these players have ensured that we are once again back at the top.

**Mr H Chambers, Basketball Coach**

## Year 8 and 9 Homework Prizes

Well done to all year 8 and 9 pupils for continuing to complete homework consistently or to an outstanding level. Prizes of £30 in gift vouchers for a well known sports store will be presented in assemblies next week.

## Canteen News

Bradley Skolozdra of Year 11 has now been appointed as the food critic for Sir Thomas Boteler. Have your say! Please tell Bradley the good and bad things about the canteen, and all your likes and dislikes.

Our next tasting day is on the 15th April. Come along and have your say. Everyone is welcome, pupils and staff. Come at lunchtime or after school at 3pm!