

Friday Reflection

2/22/2019

I often reflect on a variety of activities which occur inside and outside the classroom. However, this was a unique week because one student, Jazmin Segura, deserved the Tiller spotlight.

Jazmin is a typical senior in many ways. She has attended Tustin High School for four years, growing from a less confident freshman to a mature senior. She has navigated the challenges of learning to choose friends wisely and taking her learning seriously. AVID has provided an important support for her to not only successfully complete high school, but to also prepare well for college.

One thing that sets Jazmin apart from her peers is the passion and drive she developed for wrestling during her time in high school. As the younger sister to four brothers, she learned quickly how to stand up to challenges. Jazmin was blessed with her share of athletic talent, but also a drive to work hard and learn. Over the course of high school, wrestling helped to focus her as an athlete and a student. Hours and hours of working out and countless matches resulted in quite a special week this week for Jazmin.

For both team and individual sport athletes, going to state is a dream. Out of thousands and thousands of high school athletes, only an extremely small percentage find themselves competing at the end among the very best. Jazmin successfully qualified for not just CIF, but also the Masters meet to determine the State qualifiers. Last weekend, she competed in multiple rounds which cut the field in half each time.

On Saturday morning, I made my way to Roosevelt High School in Corona to watch Jazmin wrestle. I made it in time for a quarter final match that would mean qualifying for state. Jazmin entered the match with obvious focus. She wrestled smart and with intention, winning 4-1. She was excited about her accomplishment, but there was also a sense about her that there was much more work to do. She prepared for her semi-final match knowing that she was going to wrestle the only girl to have beaten her so far. Jazmin lost in the league finals to a young lady from wrestling powerhouse, Kennedy High School. Even though going to state was a done deal, I could tell that Jazmin was determined to show she had grown from her earlier match that ended with her on the short end of a 5-6 score.

The match started out as a worst-case scenario when Jazmin found herself on her back early in the match. She trailed 4-0 about halfway through the first of three periods. As if she understood the urgency, she reversed her opponent and controlled her for the rest of the period to close the score to 2-4. Putting the pressure on, she ended the second period tied 4-4. Not long into the 3rd and final period, she moved ahead 6-4. Her opponent managed an escape to close the gap to 6-5, and then, with about 20 seconds left in the match, the ref called her for stalling to create a 6-6 tie. With just a few seconds left, she aggressively shot in for a takedown that resulted in her earning 2 points for control with just a second left.

Jazmin's reaction after the ref raised her hand in victory spoke volumes about what that match meant to her. She overcame and proved victorious. Some might have doubted her ability to beat an opponent who looked bigger and stronger, but Jazmin kept her focus and did what she needed to do to win. It was a special moment for those in attendance to watch this young lady, and it will be a memory I treasure for life. Watching one of our Tillers reach one of the highest levels of achievement possible for high school sports was impressive. However, understanding Jazmin's story and knowing how hard she worked and how much she overcame was priceless.

Jazmin is going to be successful in life because of the attributes she has developed as a Tiller. We have many coaches and teachers who work tirelessly to grow our Tillers into quality young people. It is a special gift when that results in such an outstanding accomplishment as qualifying for State. I am proud of our students and athletes, and I am grateful that Jazmin has the opportunity this weekend to compete against the very best. I don't know how her State experience will turn out in terms of results, but I know that she is going to approach the challenge with confidence and determination, knowing that she has worked so hard to prepare.

Go Tillers, and Good luck Jazmin!

Dr. Jon Tuin
Tustin High School Principal