

# Brown named Sumner Coach of the Year

By **DANNIE OLIVEAUX**  
*The Courier-Herald*

Curt Brown was named 2008-09 Coach of the Year for the Sumner School District during an Aug. 12 luncheon at Bonney Lake High School.

Brown, who coaches football at Sumner Middle School and Bonney Lake High School, was presented the award by Athletic Director Tim Thomsen.

The award is given annually to a coach who, in an extracurricular capacity, contributes the most for the positive development of students.

"Curt Brown is well known for his gentle demeanor, integrity and ability to build rapport with his athletes," Thomsen said.

In addition to his current positions, Brown also coached middle school baseball and several community sports teams during his tenure in the Sumner School District.

A 1977 graduate of Sumner High, Brown has spent his entire 26-year teaching career in the Sumner School District, including his current position as a social studies and language arts instructor at Sumner Middle School.

"There are two things I strive for — that's to be honest and always do what's best," Brown said.

In his nomination letter, Bonney Lake High assistant principal and former football coach Jeff Gardner wrote, "Curt consistently models humility, courage, selflessness and effective leadership.

His coaching style embodies the character traits that are the cornerstones of our district's athletic department's philosophy."

In addition to being a longtime teacher and coach in his hometown, Brown is also serving in his second term on the Sumner City Council.

According to district Communications Director Ann Cook, the criteria for nomination and selection for the award are based on relationships with athletes and colleagues, rapport, motivation/inspiration, discipline, sportsmanship, developing positive character traits, coaching expertise, public relations, program management, professional growth and service, and honors and awards.

Other nominees were: Lila Hansen, Lakeridge Middle School tennis and fastpitch coach; J.D. Rushton, Mountain View Middle School basketball and Bonney Lake High golf coach; Shirley Baker, Bonney Lake High volleyball and track coach; and Mike Fitzpatrick, Sumner High volleyball and track coach.

"There are 115 years of coaching experience nominated for this honor," Thomsen said, noting Fitzpatrick has coached 33 years, Hansen 28, Baker 20 and Rushton for nine.

Superintendent Gil Mendoza told the coaches the influence they have as a coach is much more powerful than what they have as a teacher.

"Kids are there with you because they want to be with you," Mendoza said. "When they want to be with you, they want to be nurtured by you and



Photo by Dannie Oliveaux

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**J.D. Rushton congratulates Curt Brown** on his Coach of the Year honor.

they are looking to use you as a role model. That's where they first learn to pick mentors."

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