



Sports in the Fox Cities: So many reasons to be Thankful

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Sporting activities generate so many emotions within us. Whether as a player, coach, or fan, we have all felt the tidal wave of emotions that can come from tournaments, games, and even practices. But, during this month of November, I would like to take a step back from the highs and lows of sports and write about thankfulness. With the quantity and quality of venues, sports programs, and most importantly people, we have here in the Fox Cities, we have so much to be thankful for.

For the past 15 years, I have had the good fortune to travel around the nation multiple times per year to experience, learn about, discuss, and promote the business of sports. Nearly all of these trips lead me to reflect on how good we have it here in the Fox Cities and how we should be grateful for the sports scene we have. When I am on the road, I often experience and hear from individuals from other communities with a greater population, bigger budgets, or a more tropical destination, that wish they had what we have.

From small to large, the facilities and venues in the 19 communities that we classify as the Fox Cities are some of the best of the country in a community with a population of around 250,000. That isn't hyperbole. There is actually a national index that ranks sporting venues in communities and we are #3 in the country for comparable cities. Just trying to write about all the great facilities and parks we have is too long for this article. But, we should be thankful for not only the great venues we can utilize, but the people who pour their heart and souls into making sure that they are clean, modern, and operated at a high level.

Great venues are of little use without great programming. There are so many individuals, businesses, and non-profits that run great programs in the Fox Cities for athletes who are young and old, experienced and not, talented or just beginning. It starts with our extensive collection of park and recreation programs and the YMCA of the Fox Cities and then goes to school-associated programs, club travel teams and everything in between. The tradition of excellent program offerings has a long history here, but is carried on today by hundreds of dedicated individuals, many doing it as volunteers.

And finally, these venues and programs don't have any games to host if it weren't for hundreds of officials, coaches, trainers, and support staff. Even though we have many dedicated individuals in the Fox Cities that help make for great sporting events, there is always room for more! Remember to thank all the people who dedicate their time to making sports in the Fox Cities as great as it is, but please also consider how you can lend your time and talent to make it even better!