



Star/Journal photo: June Webb

Buccaneer, Dustin Anderson, the Purple Pirate, challenges Barriere elementary student, Jake Young, to a test of basketball skills during a performance Tuesday, May 24, at the school.

Purple Pirate promotes pedal power and play

By June Webb
North Thompson Star/Journal

"Have a great day, and don't forget to play!" The Purple Pirate, aka Dustin Anderson passed on this message Tuesday to students of Barriere Elementary and Wednesday at the Annex (Primary School).

Co-sponsored by the Elementary PAC committee and the Healthy Beginnings program in Barriere, the pirate employed comedy, dance, rap and magic to pass on his message.

During the act, the high-energy performer constantly emptied his water bottle and re-fueled with a magic decanter that never ran out of water. Anderson displayed skills at Canada's favorite sport, hockey as well as cycling and basketball.

Making use of everything from roller blades to hula-hoops he inspired chil-

dren to be active while staying safe and having fun.

"There are all kinds of sport to enjoy," Anderson took pride in highlighting successful BC Athletes, Steve Nash (currently awarded Most Valuable Player in the NBA) and Sam Whittingham (fastest cyclist in the world and unbeaten in sprint competition for 10 straight years).

The Pirate promoted fun with fitness, "If you're not competitive, that's okay."

Interacting with the audience, he emphasized the importance of another great B.C. athlete, Terry Fox and his Marathon of Hope. "Don't let anyone tell you it can't be done."

Anderson runs up against similar attitudes when promoting his act. Those who are skeptical this performer truly practices what he preaches are surprised to discover he has sold his car and travels exclusively by bicycle. A true role

model, he believes, "... adults, especially parents, have the responsibility to set a good example for children by being active themselves."

His act showcases his bike which he rode to Barriere from 108 Mile House via the Fraser Canyon from Vancouver. On average, Anderson burns 35,000 calories per day. At 34 years old, he pedaled 13,000 kilometers last year traveling to various events, including festivals in Banff, Whistler and Prince George.

With the performance behind him, The Purple Pirate challenged the senior students at the elementary school to a fun game of basketball during the lunch hour.

The bicycling buccaneer plans to navigate the "asphalt ocean" all the way across Canada next year as he promotes his message, "Play, with friends. Play outside. Play often."