



NIK DRAGICEVIC MEMORIAL TOURNAMENT

WHITE EAGLES BASKETBALL

May 5. 2014

BAGELS AND BASKETBALL

The NDMT is just days away when I met up with the Chairperson of the tournament, Petar Chuk along his Co-Chairs, wife Natasa (the NDMT family representative) and Nada Tremblay representing the White Eagles. As they are ready to begin, the three named engage in last minute discussions and finalize decisions for the tournament. Petar laughs as he apologizes to me. He says, "Welcome to our lives. It's like this all the time. An email comes in and decisions need to be made quickly."

I, of course, have to ask Petar, "How did you get the position of chairperson?"

He points simultaneously to the ladies on each side of him. "How could I say no?" smiling. "Nada and I worked on SNF and Slivo Fest committees in the past and we worked well together". This is the first time working with my wife on a committee. So far so good, right?" Natasa replies, "No comment." (with a smile).

How many teams are registered for the NDMT?

"We have 44 teams entered. We have Serbian teams from Windsor, Detroit, Niagara Falls, Hamilton, Pittsburgh and Canton; Greek teams from Chicago and Detroit; Armenian teams from Detroit and a Filipino team from Windsor. Nik's friends from Windsor and Detroit also have teams. Our goal as a committee was 40 teams, so we are quite pleased."

Natasa, when were you approached about having a tournament to honour your brother?

"Nada approached me in late October about having a tournament in my brother's name."

Wow, that didn't leave you much time to organize. Were you surprised by the people that stepped up to join the committee?

"I was not surprised by the number of people that stepped up to join, but I was taken aback by all the heart and effort everyone put into it. It means so much to me and my family."

Having the tournament named after your brother must be pretty special. It's clear your brother had a passion for the game. Can you tell us what it was like in the household when he received his basketball scholarship.

"Everyone was very, very excited. We couldn't believe such a huge award was given to someone in our family. Nik was a superstar. And yes, it's very special to have his name on the tournament."

Nada, or should I call you Coachica?

"You can call me Coachica Nada. (laughing) Nada's fine."



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GEORGE DRAGICEVIC, REMAX REALTY
SERBIAN CENTRE
DIAG PARTNERS
WALKERVILLE BREWERY
DEAN PEROFF
NIKOLA & BOGDAN ADZIC
BE WELL
THE ORIGINAL WINDSOR SERBS
DR. GORAN JOVANOVIC & FAMILY
SARAPA, TREMBLAY & JELICH FAMILIES
CHUK FAMILY
BRKOVICH FAMILY
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How long have you been part of the White Eagles Organization?

"I've been with the White Eagles Organization since the first day they were formed, but I grew up playing sports for the Windsor Serbs Organization."

Can you tell me about the organization today and where it's headed?

"The organization is growing exponentially each year. It's headed in the direction where it should be self-sustaining. The players eventually come back to coach or join the organization board. Our board and coaches do a great job for the kids, but it's the kids that make all the long hours worth it in the end. The parents are great, always willing to help out and our sponsors are the best."

Looking at the information on the tournament, there are 11 members on your committee. How's the NDMT committee working out?

"The NDMT committee has done well with reaching our goal. The focus of the committee was to bring a great tournament to Windsor while providing an atmosphere where everyone feels inclusive while paying tribute to a former White Eagle and a great Windsor Serb."

Does the chairperson run a tight ship?

"Pete's good at letting the members have control of their responsibilities and encourages us to do things differently. He's not afraid to try new things. He delegates and stays in touch with each of us but he also comes up with some great ideas and makes them happen." Natasa adds, "Sometimes he lets us talk too much and then other times he doesn't let us get a word in. Luckily, we don't work for him, right Nads?" (as they high five)

Pete, are you always outnumbered and picked on like this?

"I'm used to it. Water off a duck's back."

Natasa, the facebook following is pretty amazing. How do you feel about the financial support that the committee has received.

"I am so overwhelmed with the financial support. Because of it, some great things are going to happen behind the Serbian Centre. I'm pleased that we can help the Serbian Centre board with a portion of the proceeds coming from the tournament. But the special messages about Nik that people post is unbelievably heartwarming."

Our interview takes an unexpected turn as we are greeted with a big smile and a "what's going on here?" Peter Dobrich (Gracanica Church President) has stopped in the cafe. We invited him to join us, but his time will be limited as he only has a few minutes before a client shows up to meet him. With no time to lose, I fire questions at him.

Peter with all of the hype and support the tournament is receiving, are you anticipating a good turnout for the NDMT coming up this weekend?

"I certainly believe that events like this should naturally bring out more people to celebrate what being Serbian and Orthodox is really about. It is about our future, the children, supporting one another when needed, camaraderie, and of course making great memories with family, Kumovi and meeting new people."

The Gracanica community has been through a lot over the last few years and seems to be moving in a positive direction. Do you feel that more events like the NDMT will help in the healing process and if so, are more planned?

"Any time we have events like this, the process should speed up, but more importantly what they do is show our real colours on what we were taught and what we experienced growing up in this great community."

NDMT COMMITTEE



BACK LR: Alex Stulic (gyms/schedule), Andy Adzic (volunteers), Petar Chuk (Chair) ,
Dayun Marjanovic (schedule/ referees), Milan Celic (White Eagles President), Daniel Dobrich (concessions)

FRONT LR: Mimi Dobrich (hotels/secretary), Tina Dukic (ad book/ sponsorship),
Natasa Chuk (Co-Chair, Family Rep), Nada Tremblay (Co-Chair), Mara Celic (finance/ secretary)

Other events planned?

Yes, we have put in a bid to host the SNF Golf tournament for the summer of 2015. I went to my first tournament when I was 16 years old, so this year is my 30th year anniversary and I have developed a second family with many people over that time. I have witnessed some great organizations, but what really hits home is when any group from our Gracanica family takes something on. We know only one way to do things, THE RIGHT WAY! That is what the SNF and tournaments like this are really about; developing lifelong relationships, Kumstvo, marriages etc. So I congratulate the committee for stepping up and planning such a great event. The fact that it is in memory of Nik Dragicevic is a testament to our strong beliefs of how we need to live our lives. I believe that we would be interested in hosting more events but we need our next generation to step up and take leadership roles within our community and push forward. Please!!!" (with his hands together in a praying motion and a smile)

Coachica Nada, are you expecting good results with your teams this weekend?

"The White Eagles always expect great results from their teams. The goal is not only to win but to improve and better themselves as a whole. Team play is so important and so is team spirit. Also, one of our big goals is to always meet new friends from these tournaments in cities we normally travel too. By hosting a tournament in Windsor, it also leads to making long-lasting friendships in the future with other basketball teams."

How would you think Nik feels, looking down on the tournament?

"I think Nik would feel a sense of pride that people from all over, both Canada and the US are coming together in friendship to engage in a sport that he loved so much. I hope that he would feel that the tournament will result in great friendships being created while raising money to make awareness to LDS as it has affected our community. Also, that the picnic area at the back of the hall will once again entice families and friends to enjoy the Serbian Centre."

Peter, being in your second year now as Gracanica Church President, your board has focused on continuing what our pioneers established in 1946. What is the focus of the board of directors going to be moving into the summer months?

"I think our biggest focus will be to continue to invest in our future. Our Children. This is the single most important investment we can make as a community. Our church school has been a great success and we will look to grow more areas around them. We are just finalizing our very important church accessibility/renovation plan which we will communicate very soon. It will give everyone an opportunity to donate small or large to help sustain our beautiful church Gracanica for future generations."

Peter's client shows up and he tries to excuse himself but not before I ask one more question. Can the members and parishioners of Gracanica Church expect to see their president make an appearance on the court this weekend?

"Of course you will (filling water bottles)." (Laughter breaks out) Some of us are wondering when we will have a Serbian Hockey Tournament ???"

Natasa, is there anything you would like to say to our readers?

"I would like to take the time to thank everyone that has helped make the tournament happen, to the sponsors for their extremely generous support and the volunteers that help run the tournament. I hope my brother's story of growing up in a small town in LaSalle and believing in his talent and dreams, will help a child believe in theirs and aim for that scholarship and the next level. Words cannot express how thankful the family is."

I think it's only befitting Petar that I let you get the last word in seeing what you have to put up with. (everyone laughing).

"Well, they have all said pretty much everything. All I can add is that the tournament is a few days away. Nik was special, there's no doubt about that. The people that knew and loved him will be there at the games and hall. I think it's going to be a great weekend and I hope that we do Nik, the White Eagles Organization and the Serbian community proud. Windsor has always been a great host and we, as a committee, have some big size 17s shoes to fill. It's been a lot of work for us, but as soon as that first tip off takes place, a sense of pride and relief will hit some of us. But the work is only really beginning, and ultimately the players and guests will decide the success of the NDMT."

Well, if this breakfast is any indication of what this weekend has in store for us, we will all be having a great time, many laughs with friends, a few surprises, shared memories of Nik Dragicevic, and tournament memories that will no doubt be talked about for a long time, but most importantly new friendships will be made. See you on the weekend!

-N.Novinarovic

GYM LOCATIONS

Dr. David Suzuki Public School
6320 Raymond Avenue, Windsor, Ontario, N8S 1Z9

F. J. Brennan Catholic High School
910 Raymo Rd, Windsor, Ontario, N8Y 4A6

John L Forster Secondary School
749 Felix Ave. Windsor, Ontario, N9C 3K9

Riverside Secondary School
8465 Jerome Street, Windsor, Ontario, N8S1W8

St. John Vianney Elementary School
8405 Cedarview St, Windsor, Ontario, N8S 1K9

St. Joseph Catholic High School
2425 Clover Ave, Windsor, Ontario, N8P 2A3

Sandwich Secondary School
7050 Malden Rd, LaSalle, Ontario, N9J 2T5

Nik Dragicevic Memorial Tournament

"After Party" at the Serbian Centre



Join us for great food and live music
Friday May 9th and Saturday May 10th

Doors open at 6pm

Friday Night

Menu

- Salad
- Pasta
- Cevaps on lepinja
- Kobasa on a bun
- Chicken fingers & fries

Saturday Night

Menu

- Salad
- Potato salad
- Coleslaw
- Pasta
- Cevaps
- Kobasa on a bun
- Kiseli kupus
- Roasted chicken
- BBQ Lamb

Friday Night
Bobo & Band

Saturday Night
Sneza, Bobo & Band

Friday Night - NO COVER

Saturday Night Admission
\$10.00 at the door

\$5.00 for children 12 and under

Serbian Community Centre

6770 Tecumseh Rd E

Windsor, ON N8T 1E6

(519) 944-4884

Schedule of Events

Friday May 9th

- Games start at 4pm
- Welcome Dance 6pm - 1am Serbian Centre (Kosovo Hall)
- Entertainment - Bobo and Band
- Food Buffet 6pm - 10pm

Saturday May 10th

- Games start at 9am
- Dance 6pm - 1am Serbian Centre (Main Hall)
- Food Buffet 6pm - 10 pm
- Entertainment - Sneza, Bobo and Band
- Kids Entertainment - 6pm-9.30pm
- Trophy Presentation - 8pm
- LDS Presentation - 8.30pm
- Nik Dragicevic Memorial Scholarship Presentation - 8.45pm
- Raffle Draw - 11pm

Sunday May 11th

- Divine Liturgy 10.30 am Gracanica and St Dimitrije Serbian Orthodox Churches
- Opening Ceremony - 12.30pm Sandwich Secondary High school
- Womens Final - 1pm
- Pee Wees A Final - 2pm
- Mens Final - 3pm

*** Trophy presentation following each game on Sunday ***