

ADVENTISTREVIEW



HUGS AND TEARS: Players embracing after Victory Christian Academy presented Forest Lake Academy with its championship trophy in Dayton, Tennessee. Credit: Nestor Osorio / ANN

Volleyball Team Presented Trophy After Honoring Sabbath

Forest Lake Academy experiences a “selfless display of sportsmanship.”

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By **ANN staff**

Seventh-day Adventist teenage girls who forfeited a final match of a volleyball tournament because it fell on the Sabbath hours walked away with the trophy anyway when the winning team decided to recognize their faithfulness.

Forest Lake Academy, an Adventist school in Apopka, Florida, was presented with National Association of Christian Athletes trophy by Victory Christian Academy, a non-denominational school in Valparaiso, Indiana.

Forest Lake withdrew from the final match of the tournament in Dayton, Tennessee because it would have been held after sundown on Friday.

Both teams faced an elimination final match on Friday afternoon, but after receiving word of Forest Lake’s intent to forfeit, Victory Christian players and coaches noticed Forest Lake players looking down, and a few were wiping away tears.

Victory Christian was given the champion's trophy and banner at an awards ceremony. The team's 13 players then realized the reason for the forfeit, and they unanimously agreed to give Forest Lake the trophy.



WINNING TEAMS: Players posing for a team photo after Victory Christian gave its trophy to Forest Lake. Credit: Nestor Osorio / ANN

Forest Lake responded by giving Victory Christian the tournament's sportsmanship trophy. *The Times of Northwest Indiana* newspaper called Victory Christian's decision a "selfless display of sportsmanship."

"We didn't want to win that way," Victory Christian volleyball coach Megan Huber said. "We were just glad we had the opportunity to show God's love for them in that way."

Nestor Osorio, athletic director for Forest Lake, said the Oct. 31 exchange was the "biggest and greatest sports-related spiritual moment" of his life.

"I've seen God's blessings in many ways in the past for our young people through sports — that's why I'm a minister in this area — but this has been probably the biggest witnessing opportunity I've personally was a part of," Osorio said.

The National Association of Christian Athletes responded by declaring both schools co-champions, *The Times* reported.

"It was the best way to end our season, our last game," Victory Christian player Gabby Carlson told *The Times*. "It was even better than being able to win."

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