



AT THE DOOR Friday night, Gaylen Huntley (above), sold tickets for the Oberlin Invitational Basketball Tournament. Mr. Huntley was one of the Oberlin Lions Club members helping at the door. Principal Charles Haag (below) helped sell concessions with the junior class.

Fans, teams, workers busy for tournament

Fans stood in line, waiting to pay their money to enter the 37th annual Oberlin Invitational Basketball Tournament when it kicked off last Tuesday.

The three-day tournament brought in eight teams from Colorado, Kansas and Nebraska, and too many fans to count.

Each year, with the help of almost 125 volunteers, Decatur Community High School organizes the event.

With both the senior high and junior high gyms in use, members of the Oberlin Lions Club and school volunteers were stationed at the doors. In the hallway outside the cafeteria, two booths, manned by the Lions, sold tickets for the games.

Students from the junior class ran a concession stand in the cafeteria, selling candy, pop, nachos, water and pizza. Other students helped take care of balls and swept the floors between games. Each day, said Activities Director Randy Olson, 16 students were needed. That meant 48 student volunteers in all.

This three-day tournament came on the heels of the Oberlin Invitational Wrestling Tournament held last weekend at the high school. That event brought 14 teams and required 80 student and adult volunteers, Mr. Olson said. Still, he said, there was no problem for the school to find



IN THE HIGH SCHOOL GYM Friday, Tamara Ketterl cheered on the girls basketball team in their game against Hoxie.

help with the basketball tournament. "The tournament went well," he said. "The competition was outstanding. The final games were hotly contested, which is what we expect."

There were a lot of good games,

he added. Throughout the entire tournament, there was good fan support, with a nice crowd each day.

One of the schools, Resurrection Christian from Loveland, Colo., came out early and students attended classes here on Friday.

Mr. Olson said they paired up players from the Colorado school with Oberlin students. The Colorado students shadowed the Red Devil students until lunch time on Friday.

The Colorado kids traveled a long time, he said, so it was a nice exchange for them to attend some classes here.

"Our school is different than a school on the Colorado Front Range," he noted.

Mr. Olson said the next big tournament at the school will be the regional wrestling competition Friday and Saturday, Feb. 17 and 18. It is a huge tournament with 20 schools and about 220 wrestlers expected, he said, and he started preparing as soon as he had the basketball invitational organized.

The school hasn't had the regional wrestling tournament since 2002, Mr. Olson said, although he applies all the time. The tournament is moved around each year.

During the tournament, wrestlers who place in the top four in each weight class will qualify for state competition.

