

## The Bar Is Raised Again...Thank You Dave Ellringer

Posted by eric anderson on Wednesday, October 7, 2015

Last week something really special happened at the Eau Claire Kubb League.

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David Ellringer, learned kubbing shortly after we moved to Eau Claire in 2007. He is 70 years old, lives in Eau Claire, WI, and plays under the Berserker Kubbing flag. He plays with his son Aaron and grandson Sy, on what many would consider the most famous team in the U.S. ... Ringers. 2010 U.S. Gold, 2015 U.S. Silver, teamed up with four others for a 2014 World Silver, countless other wins and podium finishes. No American has played in more kubbing tournaments than Dave, not even close. He invites anyone to play in a tournament, and many a times his teams do very well, and every time his teams have a great time. You can see it and feel it. If you play with him, you play under the Ringers team name, even though Aaron and/or Sy may not be on the team. I'm not sure if he has ever turned down an opportunity to introduce kubbing to anyone or group in the City.

The story:



Dave is teaming up with his grandson Sy (6th grade) and Jim Erdman (lives in Eau Claire and plays under the Chaska Kubbing flag) in the Fall Eau Claire Kubbing League. Teams take this league seriously and this past week was a BIG week. The 8th and final week of the fall season before this week's playoffs. They were to meet 2/3 of one of the top three EC teams, and one of the top handful teams in the nation...Kubbitz. Although Sy and Jim did not play with

Dave in the U.S. Championship, it was a rematch of one of the 2015 U.S. semifinal matches. In Eau Claire, the team names Ringers and Kubbitz mean a lot. Yes, kubb is an important part of our lives here, and that is just fine with us.

Dave needed a sub, so he asked Sam Klages, 7th grade and two-time U.S. Junior champion. Could they beat Kubbitz? Maybe, maybe not. Perhaps more "maybe not", but there was a decent enough "maybe". Nobody there would have been surprised. Tough task, but not out of the question. Soon after the match started, Sam's brother Max, 4th grade and also two-time U.S. Junior Champion, walked down to the pitch and he joined the team. Then their sister Josie, 5th grade, wanted to play, and she joined Ringers. Then the Klages' neighbor Jack Long who is in 2nd grade made his way down to the Ringers vs. Kubbitz pitch, and next thing you know, Dave and the four kids all have batons in their hands...playing as Ringers against Kubbitz, in the 8<sup>th</sup> and final week of the fall season that would either move Ringers up the standings or drop them far in the standings.

With each addition, that "maybe not" got bigger, and eventually the outcome was certain. I needed to take a picture during the match, so I walked down the two pitches and took a photo. When I asked Dave about playing with all four kids in such a big match, he said, "Hey, they kept on coming." For those that know Dave, we know there is no way he would have said "no" to any of those kids. With the loss, his team dropped to 12<sup>th</sup> out of the 16 teams in the competitive division.

When kubb is played as a sport, just like any other sport, you play to win, and Dave plays as hard and with as much grit and passion as anyone I have ever played with or against. He is an absolute perfect teammate...before a tournament, during a tournament, and after a tournament. He both wins and loses with class, and myself, that says a lot about a player. Kubb is a sport which should be played with high integrity where fairness and sportsmanship are vital to the game/sport. Dave is all of that. He is simply what kubb is all about. He has done so much for the game, it is not measurable.

And last Sunday, at the Eau Claire Kubb League with 23 other teams (16 are in the competitive and 8 in the recreational) focusing on winning and losing and what that would do to their playoff position, he again set the bar even higher for all of us to follow. Dave's trophy area is literally overflowing, and I am sure he would like to have something from the Eau Claire Kubb League in it as well. However, at that moment, he showed what a true champion would do. He invested in those four kids and let them play against Kubbitz. But more importantly, he gave them the chance to play with Dave Ellringer and be a Ringer for a match.

That may not mean a whole lot to those kids right now (but looking at Josie's face in the photo, I think it did), but I hope they remember it.

I know it meant a lot to me watching it, and I will remember it forever.

In my opinion, Dave Ellringer is how all champions should be measured.