

# Two schools are better than one at getting honor

By John Streit  
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Earning the High School Team Academic Award is a rare accomplishment for other Virginia schools. But the odds are better for this city when Ocean Lakes and Cox are involved.

The National Soccer Coaches Association of America selected the Beach schools as double honorees, meaning their boys' and girls' teams compiled 3.25 or better GPAs in the 2006-07 school year.

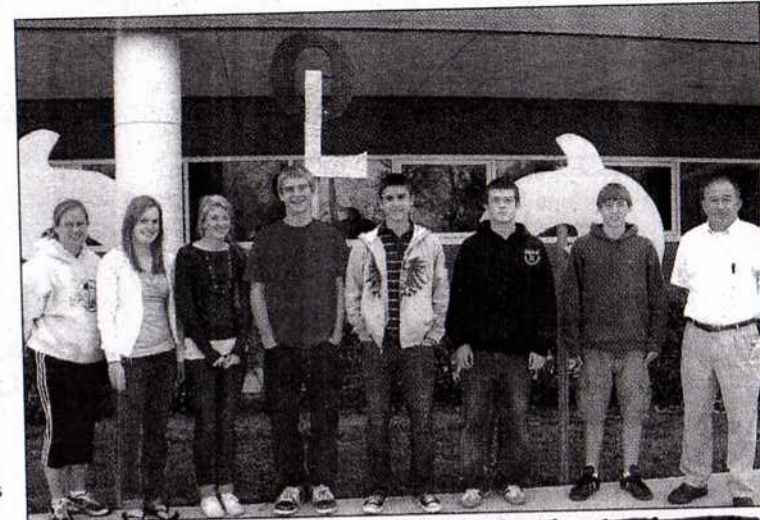
Cox and Ocean Lakes were the only two Virgin-

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JOHN STREIT PHOTOS

Cox's and Ocean Lakes' soccer programs were the state's only double honorees for the National Soccer Coaches Association of America's High School Team Academic Award.



Pictured are Ocean Lakes girls' coach Christine Thornton from left, players Elyse Surbaugh, Holly Tranchard, Dani Pierce, Taylor Scholz from left, Don Locantore and boys' coach Don Hart.

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ia public schools to receive double honoree recognition.

The Beach programs were also two of only 61 high schools in the country to make the cut.

Being included on this list is an Ocean Lakes tradition: 10 consecutive years for the boys and three for the girls.

Ocean Lakes girls' coach Christine Thornton said the correlation between success on the field and success in the classroom is natural.

"If you're involved in sports, then you're spending your time more wisely," she said.

Ocean Lakes boys' coach Don Hart said he and Thornton monitor the grades of players and potential players. He's instilled an unofficial minimum 3.0 GPA as

a requirement for a roster spot, even though Virginia High School League requires a 2.0.

"We were hired as teachers, not as coaches, so we're always looking at academics first," Hart said. "I'm not willing to give up this award. We've won it more than any school in Virginia, possibly in the nation."

Dolphins boys soccer senior Taylor Scholz said time management is key to performing well in academics and athletics.

"As soon as you get home, don't waste time watching TV or playing video games," Scholz said. "Just get right to your work, and it takes care of itself."

Cox girls' Michele Clark and boys' coach Jim Snodgrass said that their players' success often comes from strong academic foundations established at home.

"The majority of our play-

ers are good-quality kids," said Clark, whose team was the Group AAA state runners-up last season. "They're good citizens coming from families with high standards."

While Clark's team has nabbed the NSCAA Team Academic Award for three straight seasons, it took a little more work to get the boys involved in the process, which requires membership in the NSCAA and a thorough application process.

"I think winning this just speaks to our overall work ethic," said Cox player Brett Lascara. "It takes a lot to keep it up like that."

Falcons girls' player Kiley Allosso added, "It's always good to be recognized for things like this - to prove to everyone that we're not just some dumb jocks."

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