



Photos by STEPHANIE MELLON | For the Courant

ABOVE: Erik Feller and Daniel Thompson hug in front of the TV camera Friday night in Idaho Springs. Kendall B. of KS 107.5 interviewed the middle-schoolers for the "Keeping It Real" TV program on independent station 53.

TOP: Clown Rick Riley, an eighth-grader, cheers on the Goldiggers on Friday night just before kickoff.

'Keeping It Real' in Springs

By CASSI CLARK
For the Courant

The east end of Diggers Stadium bustled with kids Friday night, while Clear Creek High School football players fought off the team from Colorado Springs Christian. The crew from "Keeping It Real" was in town auditioning students to co-host the prime-time teen TV show on KWHD channel 53 (Denver) and KWHS channel 56 (Cable 6, Colorado Springs).

The teen-oriented show highlights local Colorado student accomplishments, events and teen issues such as suicide, the Internet and fund-raising for Sudan, all from a positive perspective, as well as featuring adventure activities like aviation school, sky-diving and snowboarding (at Echo Mountain).

"It's a really cool show, great show for the whole family to watch and be involved in," said Kendall B., KS107.5's morning DJ and host of "Keeping It Real."

And although the kids, mostly middle-schoolers and sophomores, swarmed the camera and Kendall B., few knew they were auditioning for a permanent host position; all were excited for their three minutes of fame.

What is it?

"Keeping It Real" is an uplifting TV show for teens. It can be seen on Tuesdays at 7:30 p.m. on KWHD channel 53 (Denver cable 53), and KWHS channel 51 (Colorado Springs cable 6).

"I just wanted to be interviewed," said senior Jeremiah Camp.

The "Keeping It Real" crew tailgated with piles of pizza from Beau Jo's and the Buffalo Restaurant, yards of sandwiches from Subway in Idaho Springs, and enough coffee from the east-end Starbucks to keep the crew awake and hype up the students. Echo Mountain banners wrapped two tables displaying raffle prizes: two cases of soda donated by Tommyknocker Brewery, as well as Tommyknocker T-shirts and gift certificates, Beau Jo's gift cards, Subway buy-one-get-one-free coupons, Starbucks gift certificates, Dewy's Adventure games for Nintendo's Wii, "Juiced 2" for Xbox 360, Quicksilver hats, Burton snow pants, Spy Goggles and Echo Mountain bandannas and a season pass.

The evening began with an

interview with Golddigger head coach Tony Villani. Then sophomore Peter Carr helped to open what would become the ninth episode while dancing students, keeping warm, waited to win their prizes and tried to snag whole pizzas.

"(The show's) already been an overwhelming success," said Blaine Howerton, production manager, who also filmed cheering students and Clear Creek's unflinching defense of their territory. Freshman Taylor Pitts, senior Jeremiah Camp and eighth-graders Eric Feller and Jake Cook aided Kendall in introducing different show segments.

"Kids today really are incredible," said the show's producer, Bonnie Bange.

Friday night's best host will be added to the pool of students from all over Colorado, from which the permanent student host will be chosen.

At halftime, production assistant Dustin Roberts announced the raffle winners; the TV crew packed up, and students devoured the remaining food. Clear Creek lost the game, but the students' pride and support will become a Front Range feature on Oct. 30 at 7:30 p.m.