

# Nadakkavu VHSS students bowled over by Brett Lee's charm

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
@Kozhikode

HIS blistering pace has terrorised the world's best batsman and sent famed sides packing. But the students of Government Vocational Higher Secondary School (VHSS) in Nadakkavu on Thursday got to see the gentler side of former Aussie speedster Brett Lee, who came across as a warm and caring being.

The kids were literally over the moon when Lee played football with them. He also joined them for a live interaction held before a full house. "If you want to achieve something in life you must persevere and should never give up," he said.

Lee said after suffering an injury at the age of 16, he had been advised to give up sport and concentrate on studies instead. "The doctor (whom I consulted) asked me to give up sport and focus on studies. But I never gave up. Later, I send the doctor a ticket for the first match I played for Australia in 1999," he said.



Former Australian bowler Brett Lee in action during a football game at the Nadakkavu Govt VHSS on Thursday | MANU R MAVELL

He asked the students to work on a single goal every day. "Doing things will let you increment. I have followed this principle every time in life. I used to

work on a single goal every day. And it has indeed helped me a lot," he said.

Lee said a leader must possess certain qualities. Mainly, he/she

should be trustworthy. He must have belief in himself and should know what he wants to achieve and must be aware of his strength and weaknesses.

He said former Team Australia skipper Steve Waugh was the best captain he had played under. "He was really an inspiring captain who helped bring out the best in me as a player. These qualities should be cultivated in the younger generation when one is a position to lead," he said.

According to Lee, it was the wholehearted backing from his family which helped shape his career as a champion fast bowler. "They were very watchful. They had given it their 100 per cent," he said.

Lee said his son is an aspiring cricketer who dreams of donning the baggy green cap one day. "Whether he does indeed play for Australia or not, I too will support him as my parents did in my case," he said.

Recovering from injuries is very important for a sportsman, Lee said. "We tend to plunge into low spirits especially when something happens to you for the first time and you don't know what to do. It is during

these times leadership qualities help you a lot. In my case, I used to work hard to come up with great strength and always reminded myself not to become nervous. I prepared my mind and tried to stay strong all the time," he said.

On whether cricket has ceased to be the 'gentleman's game' it once was, in the wake of the ball-tampering controversy associated with the Australian team, Lee said sports and games are played and enjoyed by millions world over.

"There will be issues everywhere and sports and business are no exception to the rule. But one person committing an error will not affect the entire lot," he said.

Lee was brought here by the Faizal & Shabana Foundation which has played a key role in transforming the Nadakkavu Government VHSS under the PRISM (Promoting Regional Schools to International Standards through Multiple Interventions) programme.