

Respect All, Fear None



The girls basketball team is pushing for a better program this year.

"YOU MISS A HUNDRED PERCENT OF THE SHOTS YOU DON'T TAKE." NEGUSSIE SAID

Shelley Renes Photos

Basketball is a very technical sport that requires mass concentration and focus. With the number of girls participating each year depleting makes the game hard to play since girls are playing on two teams a night. But what the biggest challenge is this season is setting new goals for the team and pushing the program further than it's ever been before.

"We will have to adjust our offense and defense after losing three of our varsity players, but we can still make this season great," senior center Adrianna Jarrett said.

In order to do this and be able to push the team, the coaches have to make adjustments in order to build the team to their full potential.

"This year I want to be very clear with rules, expectations, demanding maximum effort from all girls, and making sure all the girls understand their role and what they're expected to do on the court," coach Frances Negussie said.

The hard work and pushing starts in practice, during preseason conditioning and open gyms.

"This year's group of girls are really special. They want to compete, and they are giving maximum effort thus far," Negussie said.

With the tempo of practices constantly increasing, the team is looking for girls to join for the next upcoming season.

"I'm looking for more girls to join so they too can experience a positive environment full of excitement and laughter. With girls all working hard to achieve a common goal which is to give maximum effort in all they do. So, come out and let's work," Negussie said.

The coaches invite girls that are interested in joining the team to come and watch practices and to come meet the coaches to begin building the relationship between coach and player.

"Just do it, it's a fun experience and we're like a little family," sophomore point and shooting guard Serenity Nelson said.



Fighting Till the End

The boys basketball team has had a reputation these past couple years as a tough team to go against. The only downside of that is that their team was mainly consisted of upperclassmen, specifically seniors. This year they have a low number of upperclassmen and lots of underclassmen.

The biggest challenge this season is seemingly the amount of freshmen and their inexperience in playing at such a high level. It's especially hard for those who haven't experienced high intensity play before this season since the gap between middle school and high school basketball is very big skill-wise.

"It's affecting us a great deal. We're starting two freshmen and a sophomore. The youth and overall lack of experience is definitely going to make this season challenging," coach Courtney Henderson said.

With the number of freshmen being so overbearing, one could only ask themselves what's going to change on the team to keep up the image of being a tough team to go against?

"There's not a whole lot that will be changing aside from the personnel. The guys still have to learn the system and learn how to play at this level. Essentially our system is the same. It's just who's in the system that is different," Henderson said.

Although coaching a team of "newbies" isn't easy, many have to realize that the game itself isn't as easy as it seems- especially on the varsity level.

"The biggest challenge as a coach this year is overcoming the youth and inexperience and teaching these guys how to work and how you have to play every possession at this level," Henderson said.

Even though the team is young, they're working towards pushing and playing the hardest they can. The boys' hard work is paying off as they continue to push and try to win more and more games.



The boys basketball team strives to stay at the top--without last year's seniors.

Mark Clark Photos