Making History

Last night I had the honor of placing a Provincial GOLD MEDAL around the necks of Aron Masilingi, Cameron Buffitt, Desmond Duckworth, Devin Miron, Edmond Surur, Eva-Steve Abazumutima, Jonas Bihn-Shabani, Mekuria Geremew, Thomas Walter-Greenhorn as well as coaching staff Ryan Bradly, Justin Edwards and Head Coach Brandon Edwards.

This is the first time in Heritage’s history that one of our teams has won Provincial gold and how fitting it is that such a milestone would fall on a year we are celebrating our 30th anniversary. We are also making history with the RSEQ (Réseau du sport étudiant du Québec) as it is the first time ever a team from section B has gone on to win the provincial championship let alone do it with a perfect 23-0 record.

Before I get to the events of this weekend, I think it’s important to recognize, in sport, as it is in education, graduates and champions are not made in a single year or season; just as our students take years to train and develop their skills, so to do athletes and teams. The road to this Provincial championship has been in the making for many years with the principal architect being Head Coach Brandon Edwards. For those who do not know Brandon, on top of his full-time job teaching he has been instrumental to basketball in this region, particularly in terms of player development. I won’t go in to details as that would be way too long but he has coached local high school basketball, he is part of the Ottawa Elite basketball player development program and has proudly coached at Heritage since 2012. It is because of all this we have the team you see today. Almost all the players on our current team have been developed by or recruited through Brandon’s contacts in these various organizations. Not only does Brandon help develop players for our teams but spends countless hours working with university coaches and scouts to help our athletes move on to higher education and further their dreams of university Basketball.

Thank you Brandon. I’m sorry I can’t do your dedication justice.

The Weekend

The boys started their weekend on Friday afternoon up against Shawinigan. From the sideline Shawinigan was imposing! They were perhaps one of the biggest teams in terms of size, in the tournament and towered over Heritage. However, once the game got started the big men were made to look small as Heritage’s speed and skill brought them low, at half-time it was 39-26 for Heritage, and in the end 70–51 for Heritage led the man with the biggest heart Edmond Surur.

Up next was Sherbrooke. The game started off with Sherbooke getting off to a quick lead, scoring 2 baskets in a row, Heritage followed up with 2 quick 3’s from Mekuria and Devin. From here on in Heritage would dominate and their lead would continue to grow. By half-time it was 40-17 and it seemed Heritage could score at will. Even with a commanding lead the team continued to play as a team moving the ball, executing plays and putting the team ahead of the individual. They did this in a way that’s not always easy when facing a weaker opponent, with class and sportsmanship they proved they are true gentlemen and we can all be proud of their example.

The Gold medal game saw two undefeated teams, both 22-0 on the year face-off, Heritage College Vs. Champlain Lennoxville. Both teams were fast and the game was end-to-end sprints with high pressure all the way, Lennoxville managed to hit four 3’s in the first quarter proving they were dangerous anywhere on the court. Mekuria responded for Heritage by hitting two 3’s of his own. In the second quarter Devin continued to demonstrate his power and athleticism driving hard to the rim double teamed every time! He managed 11 points in the second quarter alone not to mention setting up countless others. At half-time the score was 49-30 for Heritage. I was unclear how Lennoxville would respond, they had never trailed all season and now they were facing a 19-point deficit. Well they came out hard, scoring 5 uncontested points! Our boys rallied and returned the pressure, the pace of the game never slowing.
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In the fourth quarter with Lennoxville continued to press, they had a bench of 15 players compared to our 9 and our legs were getting heavy, our lead continued to slide as they pressed the attack. With all energy seemingly spent the boys dug deep and through sheer will defended their lead and pushed back against the desperate last push from Lennoxville. With the sound of the buzzer came an absolute roar from the fans and team. Everyone rushed the floor to congratulate the team on an amazing accomplishment, one that any of the 48 cegeps would be proud to claim, but none have.

We were perfect, 23-0. We fought against the odds, seeded in section B to start. We did it with class, winning the sportsmanship Award.

WE ARE CHAMPIONS!!!

Jeremy Howard
Recreational Activities Technician