

MARYLAND DISTRICT



BOYS BASKETBALL



JUMPSHOT Newsletter is produced by Maryland District AAU Boys Basketball • Editor: McCarroll Nole • Director: Benjamin DuBose

- *Notable Quote:*
"Remember, you will only be as good as you want to be. If you work to be the best, you WILL be the best!"
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Timothy Richo is a Hero in Pocomoke



TIM RICHO (photo by Ronnie Holcomb)

We identify heroes in our community as persons who are extraordinary or who have performed deeds far beyond those of ordinary people. Those we identify and heap praise on rarely see themselves as special. Yet, they have dedicated a significant portion of their lives to an endeavor, never seeking recognition, fanfare or remuneration.

Timothy Richo is a hero in Pocomoke. Pocomoke City, Maryland, dubbed the "friendliest town on the Eastern Shore", is located on the banks of the Pocomoke River.

Despite its scenic location in Worcester County, Pocomoke maintains a population of 4,184 with a per capita income of \$17, 301. It is home to the Pocomoke Knights, a team of 7th grade basketball players that entered the Maryland AAU Division III Championships for the first time in 2013 and against all odds won the coveted title of State Champions. The Knights were coached by Head Coach Timothy Richo and Assistant Coach James Gale.

In 2002, Timothy was hired as an Educational Assistant for third graders at Pocomoke Elementary School. As a way to track the academic progress and maintain contact with his kids, Timothy began engaging kids in basketball. He would review their grades every week and conduct pop-up visits to their classrooms. Timothy has kept this group of kids together since third grade and plans to enter them again in AAU in 2014.

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Notes from the Director...

by Benjamin DuBose

Wow! This is the first issue and the third year, of our JumpShot Newsletter! I couldn't be happier to present it to you!

April, 2013 turned out to be an exciting month for boys basketball. The Maryland District AAU hosted and co-sponsored the first "Diamond In The Rough" basketball tournament; with Baltimore City Council President, Bernard "Jack" Young. We also hosted my first, "Uncle Ben's "Unknown Athlete" Tournament." Both tournaments were NCAA-Certified and sanctioned by the MD AAU; the first time in Maryland history. High-school coaches (and scouts) had an opportunity to observe the finest basketball talent we have right here at home, and they weren't disappointed! These were truly action-packed events; with up-to-the-buzzer excitement, and we expect them to become annual traditions in our state for years to come!

We also began our annual Maryland AAU Tournaments in April, with the Championship series concluding in May. The winners of these tournaments will advance to represent our state at the AAU National Tournaments. Congratulations to all of our winning teams, players and their coaches! Also, my sincerest THANKS to the all of our participating athletes, coaches, family, friends and volunteers who continue to make Maryland District AAU Basketball the very best there is!

Benjamin F. DuBose Jr.



Five Maryland Players Participate in U.S. Elite-Select European Basketball Tour

Calvert Hall sophomore forward **Drew Edwards**, Mt. St. Joseph sophomore guard-forward **Bryce Thurston** and Gleneigh Country School junior forward **Chancellor Barnard**; all players for the Maryland 3D Basketball program, joined St. Francis senior forward **Tevon Saddler** and St. Vincent Pallotti junior center **Tariq Owens** on the 12 man team that represented the U.S. in the Junior Invitational Tournament, which was held in Milan, Italy. The 19U tournament, which has been held for 20 years, included teams from all over Europe and around the world. The tournament provided players the experience, skills and strength that college coaches seek.

U.S. Select is a sports mentoring program, which provides a platform for athletes to develop life skills and learn the importance of discipline, dedication, and determination through sports. Camps, workshops and tournaments for advanced athletes are provisions of the program. Players are chosen to the team by a Selection Committee that receives recommendations from a player's coach, and then evaluates the player's GPA and a written essay. Players must also have intentions of attending college. "We are pulling kids from all walks of life and coaches have very different philosophies", **Coach Eric Elston** explained. "Kids must, therefore, be coachable and able to adapt".

The team, including players from Indiana, Kentucky, DC and New York, took an early morning flight out of the U.S. on Thursday, March 28th, landing in Italy the following morning. There wasn't much time to unwind as the team had its first game at 8:00 p.m. The team went 3-2 with a fifth place finish.

"The guards were much quicker than I expected, the three point line was further out than in the U.S., and teams were fundamentally sound," recounted Bryce Thurston.

In describing the cuisine, Bryce lamented that there isn't the variety that's found in the U. S. "We ate a lot of bread and pasta."

Bryce would encourage young AAU players to work on fundamentals, particularly the pivot foot.

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Coaching is Never Just About Basketball: It is Also About Saving Children

Anger is a natural and healthy emotion and there's something wrong if a child does not get angry at some point. But when children suffer unmet emotional, physical and intellectual needs, they can become angry on a consistent basis, which can lead to an anger disorder.

According to [Anger Management Resource](#), every child needs to be held, nurtured, played with, coddled and rocked for the development of self-esteem, physical balance and emotional security. Eye contact provides a sense of "I belong", and "I am welcome. A smile tells a child that you love them and everything is OK. Children need to be acknowledged for who and how they are as unique individuals. And children need play for play is the language with which children communicate their feelings.

A child deprived of these emotional, physical and intellectual needs can display temper tantrums to get attention, a flight or fright reflex to angry looks or frowns and the development of too much anger. Managing this abundance of anger catches too many parents ill-equipped for anger management. They rely on counseling, school systems, extended family and often coaches for help.

Denzel Jones (not pictured), a 5'9" eighth grader recognizes that he has a problem with managing anger. "I don't listen to direction the first time given. I would Wild Out". Wilding Out, according to Denzel, means cursing and acting crazy.

For the last two years, Denzel has been participating in the Harford County Dream Team's Basketball Program where he feels he manages his anger better during the Basketball season. "My coaches won't let me play if I don't manage my anger. It keeps me motivated", he says.

Denzel admits to doing very well at the Alternative Education School that he attends, but admits early on "I felt hurt and lonely when my grandfather passed away and I didn't handle it well. He took care of me most of my life. He made me feel special, but I still have my grandmother," referring to **Mrs. Patricia Franklin**.



Denzel praises his involvement in basketball. "My teammates don't hate on me and coaches help me calm down. **Coach Tia** is the first person I call when I'm having difficulty". Coach Tia is **Tia Blue**, Assistant Coach for the Harford County Dream Team's eighth grade team.

"We value Denzel. We encourage him like he is one of our sons. We had the opportunity to meet Denzel's grandfather before he passed as well as his grandmother, who asked us to please help them take care of Denzel. Denzel gets caught up in the foolishness of living too fast and we have to real him in and slow him down", says Tia. Head Coach **Maurice Epps, Sr.** says he also assists Denzel in addressing his anger. He always makes himself available for any problems the players have.

Denzel helped his team to a second place finish in pool play before losing to their fellow Harford County Dream Team in the quarter finals.

Developing relationships with individuals and families beyond the confines of the gymnasium and program objectives by coaches and organization administrators make the difference between helping or rescuing a child or having him fall through the proverbial crack.



Pocomoke Hero...

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Keeping his team together has been a struggle. The city shut down the local Boys and Girls Club where the team practiced. The YMCA, where they now practice, charges them \$15.00 per hour for court time three times per week. The team pays the court fees, tournament fees and other expenses through fundraising and the generous donations of community members. They donate gas money, cost of a hotel room, etc. One of those supporters is Jonathan Johnson, a former Pocomoke resident, who now lives in Bowie. He travels the 135 miles to support the team and was in the stands at Milford Mill Academy rooting the team to the championship. "One of the reasons that I give my full support to Timothy is because he pours his heart out to the kids.

Additionally, community support for this team is because of Pocomoke pride". Timothy and his Assistant Coach James Gale are in agreement that their coaching philosophy is "we win together and lose together. We give 100% in everything we do. Kids who earn F or D grades cannot play. Kids who show disrespect cannot play". They went on to say, "Having respect for yourself will translate into respect for others. Respect comes back to you".

Timothy is committed to taking the Knights to the National Tournament in Hampton, Virginia. He plans to fund the trip with moneys raised from a car wash and a bowling night fundraiser. When I reminded Timothy that the trip to Hampton was an expensive undertaking and asked whether the two fundraisers could generate enough funds to get them to Hampton, he responded, "we depend on small donations from parents, grandparents and friends".

Timothy is clearly a young man who is committed to the success and well-being of his kids. He is a supporter of his community and gives unselfishly a significant segment of his life to Pocomoke basketball. He is, in my opinion, a Pocomoke hero. I will support the Knight's trip to the Nationals with a \$100 donation. Joyce Venable of 4Real Sports will donate \$50.00. Anyone wishing to help this team make the trip to the National Tournament can make a donation to the Pocomoke Knights C/O

Timothy Richo, 1014 Clark Avenue, Pocomoke City, Maryland 21251



Maryland Players Participate...

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The team was coached by former New Hope Prep Academy Coach Chis Chaney, Dale Chambers, Head Basketball Coach at Plant City High School in Tampa, Florida, Coach Eric Elston, a pure student of the game, and Assistant Coach David Thurston.

In a telephone interview with Coach Elston, he indicated that the toughest adjustments players had to make to playing by European rules are the game is much slower, players are more disciplined and there is a greater emphasis on executing plays. Eric also indicated that one of the biggest takeaways from the experience was that kids play in front of thousands of players each night. "They are treated like rock stars. But they must maintain their composure and focus on playing the game". Elston was asked what skills he would advise young players to work on to become the kind of advanced athlete that is selected to a program like Elite-Select. "They should think beyond their local environment and work harder than players that are good".

MARYLAND AAU Boys Basketball — Sports For All Forever!

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