



NA FALL BALL 2015 WEEK #5 RECAP

ACCORDING TO FENNIS DEMBO

Week # 5 was another good one! We had 6 games going on Columbus Day at the Barn & the McDome and four more going on Tuesday. The barn doors were wide open (NA resident and Boston weathermen Steve Cooper tells me this was probably the last week for end zone seating. Where will Johnny Bag o donuts McElroy now park his derriere?) Games were intense in the Barn and at the McDome and once again coaches' row was standing room only. Five weeks in the books and 3 more regular season games before we start the arduous process of finding out who is the King of Fall Ball.

PELHAM 77 CHELMSFORD 51. I expected this one to be closer but the Lions had no one that could even slow down Keith Brown. Keith with another impressive night with 33 points, 8 assists and 9 rebounds. The only ones able to contain Keith were the row of coaches that lined up to talk to him after the game. Cam Delaetto with 11 points and 12 rebounds was solid and Kyle Frank contributed 10 points and 3 assists. Austin Chadwick led the Lions with 18.

ST PETER MARIAN 58 METHUEN 51 This was a very good game between two teams with no superstars, no ego's and kids that just play and play hard. A see saw affair with the largest lead being the final score. TJ Darten was very good with 21 points followed by Juan Zorilla with 13 and James Amarillo with 12. Keegan Lannon with 14 points was big and Andrew Marcelino with 14 points, 9 rebounds and one of the best in traffic dunks of the year

CENTRAL CATHOLIC 65 TEWKBSURY 56 In the battle of two of the last unbeaten teams this was a game of two halves. In the first half the Redmen exerted their will and then in the second half the Raiders did. While CC was exerting their will in the second half it was clear that they were wearing down the Redmen. At this time the Redmen just don't have the depth to beat the very deep Raiders. Kevin Fernandez was tops with 14 but the best player for CC may have been Steven Hajjar. More on that later in the recap. Nate Tenaglia 21 points 8 assists and 6 rebounds led the Redmen

SALEM 65 LOWELL 64. Lowell was missing three pieces this week but the team truly laid an egg this week as they did not play team ball and the hungry blue devils did. Matt McLaughlin full

court drive and banked pull up as time expired gave Salem a much deserved win. Griffin Curtis of Salem was by far the best player on the floor tonight with 28 points and 7 rebounds. Tim Dodier also excelled for Salem in his debut. Alex Rivera led Lowell with 21 points and Tim Sousa with his best game to date with 18 points for the Red Raiders. Lowell is now on a three game slide.

NEW MISSION 68 LONDONDERRY 41. Safe to say the Titans are back! as this one here was over quickly. Londonderry at a distinct disadvantage talent level in this one. Titans missing 4 major players including Isaiah Laurent but that was no big deal as new guys dominated. Alonzo Cooper 16 and Kevin Nunez 15 were tops for New Mission and Jake Coleman once again led the Lancers with 14

LAWRENCE 46 PEABODY 38. I told you we would see a new Tanners team this week and we did. The Peabody zone slowed down the high flying Lancers but in the end Lawrence is just more talented. Kevin Vanderhorst 14 and Jaysen Desoto 11 led the Lancers. Junior Estrella 14 was top for Tanners

NORTH ANDOVER 57 WESTFORD 47. Told you it would be a process with the inexperienced Knights but tonight was an excellent win over a good Westford team. Both teams just play so it was a fun one to play in, coach and watch. Robbie Couymoudjian was terrific with 20 points 4 assists and 6 rebounds. Knights had 12 people score, limited their turnovers to 10 and forced 24 turnovers on WA. Pat Coffey with 18 was strong for WA and Bobby Hartmann with a typical line 10 points 10 rebounds.

BILLERICA 58 HAVERHILL 47. Both teams missing key components but one distinct difference, Josh Bradanese wears a Billerica uniform. Josh with 32 points 11 rebounds and Haverhill had no answer for the inside outside threat. Tyler Bradanese with 9 points and 6 boards was very good also. Mike Battaini with 11 and Josh Wojtas with 11 led the Hillies

WACHUSETT 60 TRITON 24. With Tyler Dion sidelined I expected this one to be fairly close but no so fast! The Mountaineers came out and just crushed the Vikings in every aspect of the game. Triton you are better than 24 points!!!! Matt Berman 16 and 5 boards led Wachusett and Adam Baletsa with 6 for Triton

ST JOHNS PREP 71 ANDOVER 47. In the first half Andover took it to the more talented eagles and even had a 5 point lead 3 minutes into second half but then SJP woke up and finished on a roll. SJP needs to play harder and smarter every possession. They are too talented to do any less than that. Spencer Danforth with 20 to lead the Eagles and Jonathan Rodrigues was tops with 18 for the Golden Warriors. Do not sleep on Andover. Missing so many key components every week which is not good for the standings but great for guys looking to show Faz they belong



WEEK 5 RESULTS:

ST JOHNS PREP 71 (SPENCER DANFORTH 20)	ANDOVER 47 (JON RODRIGUES 18)
WACHUSETT 60 (MATT BERMAN 16)	TRITON 24 (ADAM BALETSA 6)
BILLERICA 58 (JOSH BRADANESE 32)	HAVERHILL 47 (MIKE BATTAINI 11)
NORTH ANDOVER 57 (ROB COUYSMOUDJIAN 20)	WESTFORD 47 (PAT COFFEY 18)
PELHAM 77 (KEITH BROWN 33)	CHELMSFORD 51 (AUSTIN CHADWICK 18)
ST PETER MARIAN 58 (TJ DARTEN 21)	METHUEN 51 (LANNON & MARCELINO 14)
CENTRAL CATHOLIC 65 (KEVIN FERNANDEZ 14)	TEWKBSURY 56 (NATE TENAGLIA 21)
SALEM 65 (GRIFFIN CURTIS 28)	LOWELL 64 (ALEX RIVERA 21)
NEW MISSION 68 (ALONZO COOPER 16)	LONDONDERRY 41 (JAKE COLEMAN 14)
LAWRENCE 46 (KEVIN VANDERHORST 14)	PEABODY 38 (JUNIOR EATRELLA 14)



STANDINGS – HAVE BEEN UPDATED ON WEBSITE – PLEASE SEE

NEXT WEEKS GAMES: PLEASE REFER TO SCHEDULE ON WEBSITE WWW.NAFALLBALL.COM

NUTS AND BOLTS:

- Accounting office closes please square away any outstanding bills
- DO NOT PARK WHERE OUR MINI BUSES GO

- **NO SHIRT NO PLAY:** COACHES I AM DOWN TO MY FINAL EXTRAS MAKE SURE YOUR KIDS HAVE THEIR SHIRTS
- Details on the coaches buffet will be revealed during week # 6 – Chelmsford, Wachusett, Billerica, SPM, Haverhill you are in for a treat
- No Trespassers in Coaches Row and No Poachers by the exits, just the way we like it
- 3rd installment of leading scorers will be posted after week 6. Please don't have any daddy's calling the whiner line if we missed a hoop
- Standings and results always posted by **Wednesday nights, Recap by Thursday night**
- Coaches please have your players take their trash with them when they go

Zebras IN WEEK 5: NAPOLITANO, SLATTERY, SULLY, T SLATTERY, SALACH, BOUTILIER

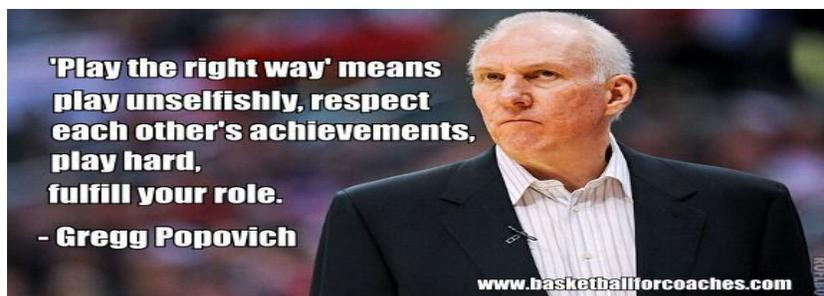
TEAM OF THE WEEK: **ST PETER MARIAN, CENTRAL CATHOLIC, NORTH ANDOVER, NEW MISSION, SALEM** are your nominees. This week we honor the hometown team, **NORTH ANDOVER**. A strong 10 point win over Westford, 12 players in the scoring column. Only 10 turnovers and forced 24. Played with pace, good shots to great shots and relentless on offense and defense. Congrats KNIGHTS

GAME OF THE WEEK: The nominees are **METHUEN V ST PETER MARIAN, CC V TEWKSBURY, NORTH ANDOVER V WESTFORD** but the winner is the two teams that battled to see who would remain undefeated **CENTRAL CATHOLIC V TEWKSBURY**. Great effort, atmosphere and intensity

DO YOUR JOB WINNER WEEK 5. NOMINEES are **STEVEN HAJJAR (CC) BOBBY LETOURNEAU (SPM), MATT MCLAUGHLIN (S) ANDREW MARCELINO (M) TIM SOUSA (LO) BRIAN FRANCOIS (SJP) ALEX ROMANO (NA)** and the winner is **STEVEN HAJJAR (Cc)** modest numbers 6 points, 6 rebounds, but the kid was all over the place keeping balls alive, boxing out, running the floor defending but biggest stat was CC + 8 when he was on the floor -5 when he wasn't. Congrats Steven

BABY FACES I DON'T THINK SO: Becoming a broken record here but Freshman **DARREN WATSON (NA) and BOBBY LETOURNEAU (SPM)** were very good again. Watson defense changed the game for NA and couple of people said to me what's up with Bobby Letourneau the last two weeks he hasn't really scored. Are you kidding me?, he might be the guardians most valuable player without scoring. Honorable Mention: **JOEY NUTHALL (WR) and DEMARR LANGFORD (SPM)**

PLAYER OF THE WEEK #5: Nominees: **JOSH BRADANESE (B), KEITH BROWN (P), GRIFFIN CURTIS (S), TJ DARTEN (SPM) ROBBIE COUYMOUDJIAN (NA) KEVIN FERNANDEZ (CC).** Josh and Keith dominated, TJ, Kev and Robbie were very good but this weeks' **PLAYER OF THE WEEK** is **GRIFFIN CURTIS (SALEM), 28 POINTS 7 REBOUNDS, 60% FROM 2 HIT THE ONLY 3 THREES HE TOOK, RAISED HIS GAME EFFORT WISE AND WAS VERY ACTIVE LEADING HIS TEAM TO UPSET WIN. CONGRATS GRIFFIN**



WEEKLY PET PEEVES FOR WEEK # 5

MONDAY	TUESDAY
PLAYERS THAT DON'T COME TO PLAY EVERY POSSESSION – NEVER TAKE A POSSESSION OFF	FACIAL EXPRESSIONS FROM KIDS TO COACHES TRYING TO EXPLAIN SOMETHING – GROW UP FAST
PLAYERS WHO WHINE ABOUT PLAYING TIME – YOUNG MAN YOU ARE PLAYING AS MUCH AS YOU SHOULD	DISINTEREST BY SOME PLAYERS – WHY COME THEN?
PLAYERS THAT ARE TURNOVER MACHINES – TAKE PRIDE IN TAKING CARE OF THE BALL	PLAYERS WHO DON'T VALUE POSSESSIONS – POSSESSIONS ARE GOLD
PLAYERS WHO PLAY HARD ON OFFENSIVE END AND NOT ON DEFENSIVE END – ARE YOU KIDDING ME?	KIDS WHO CANT HANDLE ADVERSITY ON COURT – MENTAL TOUGHNESS BOYS
DRIBBLE, DRIBBLE, DRIBBLE & CANT GO ANYWHERE – MOVE THE BALL OR DIE - POPOVICH	KIDS WHO CHOOSE NOT TO DEFEND BECAUSE IN THE OFF SEASON THEY ARE NOT HELD ACCOUNTABLE – DEFEND OR SIT



POWER RANKINGS AFTER WEEK 5 – EVERY WEEK, EVERY GAME, EVERY POSSESSION!

THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK
1. CENTRAL CATHOLIC 5-0 (BY .0978)	LAWRENCE
2. LAWRENCE 5-0	CENTRTAL CATHOLIC
3. TEWKSBURY 4-1	TEWKSBURY
4. NEW MISSION 3-2	LOWELL
5. ST JOHNS PREP 3-2	ST JOHNS PREP

Biggest Drop – Lowell from # 4 to #10

Biggest Riser - New Mission #7 to #4

Outside Looking in: BILLERICA 4-1, SPM 4-1,

BRING IT EVERY WEEK!

FACES IN THE CROWD IN WEEK 5: Billerica assistant Mark Mastrullo, Debbie Bradanese, Dean Colletti, Larry Gott, The Greenfields, The Curtis, Salem coaching staff, Alex Rivera’s mother, Mr. AP Wennah, Mike Grillakis, John Carmichael, wife and father in law, Lance Petka, The Quinns of Salem, Sean Derrah, wife and son, Mr. Connors, Phil Connors, Bill “The Therapist” Brinklow, Old friend Mr. Dirroco, Jersey Jim Connolly, Mrs. Dizazzo, Lisa Lannon, Matt Curran, The Rivera family, Roger Hardy, The entire TJ Scott family, officer Mejia, Meet the Browns from Pelham, Mr. Nystrom, The Chelmsford Boosters Club, Charlie Micol, Cory McCarthy and the NEW Mission transportation committee, The Brittings, The Bertrands, Johnny Bag of Donuts, Mr. Cronin with the cooler, long time lancer fan, Raymond Nunez, Justin Barrasso, Peabody Tanner cheerleader, Myles Couymoudjian, Don Romano, The Rosenthals, the lovely Mrs. Scarpa from the Mansion on the Hill overlooking YC, The Fowlers, the Rogers, Scott Hajjar, Jimmy Zenevitch, Mr. Cinserulli, Mr. Martin, The Lees of NA, John Warden, Chris Bramanti, The Hartmans, Mr. Whipple and daughter, Tom Coffey, Mike Trovato, Tom Gibbons and entourage, Chris Dion, Cmass womans club, Mrs. Henry, the Parsons, The Danforths, an angry Bill Burt, John Pags, The O’Neils of Lexington, George Yfantopoulos, Mr. Witten, Alan Hibino, Faz, Paul Tanglis, Kevin Tanglis Paul Tanglis Sr. and baby Tanglis. The Kalantzakos, the lovely Madeline and Alexa, Bark Mulch King Peter Breen, Nick Napps, Bert Hammel, Sean Kenneally, Mr. Hommonnay, Country singer Lorraine Mentos, Pepe Lepu, Young son of Ed Silva, former SJP player Max Butterbrodt. Former Pelham stars Ran Cloutier and David Rogers, Mr., Beattie of Chelmsford, Stacheys CEO Terry Holland, NABC head honcho Dan Fay, The Central Catholic Board of Trustees, TJ Darten father, Coach Bobby M, Nate Stanton, Mr. Coleman, Bill Boutilier



COLLEGES IN THE BARN AND AT THE MCDOME: ANNA MARIA, TRINITY, UNE, EMMANUEL, WPI, RWU, ENDICOTT, ST ANSELM, BRIDGEWATER, KEENE, WORCESTER STATE, GREEN MOUNTAIN, ST JOSEPHS, MERRIMACK, SUFFOLK. With the arrival of Trinity and Worcester State we have now seen **41 different D2 AND D3 COLLEGES**. Thank you for your continued support



ALWAYS SRO ONLY IN COACHES ROW!

FASHION OF THE WEEK # 5 it was a warm week so the styles ranged from late summer (a lot of shorts and sneakers) one guy defied the **sitting etiquette policy** by wearing the short shorts and sitting spread eagle. Notice has been sent to that high school. We saw some nice colors this week and not just with the sneakers but with dresses, shorts and shirts. Senior ref **Richie Napolitano** actually defied his own ref fashion rule by not wearing the black sneakers opting for a pair of grey sketchers he got on sale down at Payless. **Mrs. Fowler** had the outfit that could have been used if one of the refs went down. **Bag of Donuts** had the Raytheon required beige khakis, get rid of beige donuts. **Jersey Jim** always dapper in the grandfather outfit. Some of our coaches on coaches' row looked very professional with some new gear they got in the last week but this weeks' winner was Salem volunteer coach **JULIO "BENGIE" ROMERO**. Not even sure what to call this but he got style points for wearing everything grey. The tight fitting shirt showed off his new commitment to working out but the cut off RUSSEL ATHLETICS sweatpants at the calf was a credit to recycling. Grey crew socks and a pair of old school reebok grey sneakers with a touch of red. Congrats on winning the pie BENGIE



He said that? No he didn't say that; did he? After week 5 we introduce the sounds of Fall Ball

"What's the purpose of going in"- young player after being taken out after a few minutes. I am not sure you want to say that young grasshopper

"Looks like that guard is more interested in breaking ankles than going by his man" – a wise beyond his years 11 year old

"Faz does not look happy in the skybox" –everyone at scorers' table

"Coach, make the postgame fast I gotta get to the store before 10 to buy milk" – SJP asst.

"I guess their AAU coach doesn't require them to play defense" – said by a number of coaches

"These guys always play down to the competition and I am sick of it" – Lowell volunteer asst.

"I just want to go home" – said by little brothers of Keith Brown and Josh Bradanese as it takes them 30 minutes to talk to each coach recruiting them

"Hey Fennis when is the coaches buffet happening?" echoed by every high school coach who know what is coming soon! Hang in there fellas

Who Brought in Week #5 – [you want to be mentioned, bring it](#)

Robbie Couymoudjian with his best game of the fall with 20 points 4 assists and 6 rebounds. He let the game come to him and he trusted the plan. **Darren Watson** was a game changer defensively, ball hawking and making 6 steals. **Connor Rogers** was once again steady running the show. He needs to be a bit more selfish as he has a nice ability to get to the hoop. **Wade Whipple** with his second straight game of hitting a couple of big shots. **Alex Romano** does his job was battling the Westford bigs all night and was effective. **Jack Fowler** like Connor Rogers needs to be a bit more selfish but so improved over last year. **Nick Martin** with his best game of the fall as the lanky forward could help this winter, tonight he was active and scored 6 points. **Pat Coffey** was solid for Westford with 18 points 3 assists and 5 rebounds. Pat has got to take care of ball better as 6 turnovers is way too much. **Bobby Hartmann** with a double- double of 10/10. Big **Mike Baltayan** is getting better every day and is going to be good. Tonight he caused problems for NA.

Josh Bradanese as stated earlier was huge and the absolute difference in this game. He had 32 points and 11 rebounds. Brother **Tyler Bradanese** with his best game of the fall with 9 points and 6 rebounds. **Zach Foster** chipped in with 6 points. I thought **Joe Perrotta** played with more control and contributed 5 assists and 3 rebounds. **Mike Battaini** of Haverhill came a little late but was solid with 11 points 2 assists and 5 rebounds. **Josh Wojtas** was good with 11 points and 6 rebounds. **Avery Ceron** continues to do a lot of little things and Joey Fenderson added 7 points and 3 assists

Wachusett was impressive this week crushing Triton without **Tyler Dion**. The Mountaineers shot 77% from two and only had 7 turnovers while forcing 19 Viking turnovers. **Matt Berman** had 16 points and 5 rebounds. **Matt Doherty** had 13 points and **Mike Doherty** had 9. **Sam Dion** picked up the slack for his brother playing well and adding 3 assists. **Joey Nuttall** also impressed with 6 points 4 assists and 2 rebounds. Not a lot I can write about with the Vikings this week. Only 24 points and the effort and intensity was not there. Dan Letarte was coaching harder than the kids playing. Triton needs to move on to week 6 and need to play more together outside of the league. The Vikings shot 1-18 from three point land and leading scorer **Wil Parsons** was held to 6 points. **Adam Baletsa** was one guy who brought it with 6 points, 2 assists and 8 rebounds

SJP was very sloppy in the first half but the light switch turned on 3 minutes into the second half and the Eagles rolled over Andover the rest of the way. **Spencer Danforth** was impressive with 20 points and 5 rebounds. **Alec Buresh** was more than solid at the point with 7 points, 2 assists and 2 rebounds. **Brian Jean Francois** does his job! His game is not a thing of beauty but kid plays hard and is always active. Tonight he had 10 points and 3 rebounds. **Tommy O'Neil** is capable of doing a bit more but had some nice moments and contributed 8 points and 7 rebounds. **Matt Relihan** helped the cause with 6 points. **Jimmy Yfantopoulos** scored 8 second half points. The Eagles tried to X out **Jon Rodrigues** but the Andover senior wing scored an efficient 18 points (80% from 2, 50 % from 3). **Timmy Kalantzakos** had 9 points but tonight they needed more scoring from him, take a few more shots Tim. **Kevin Labrie** with his most minutes this fall was 3-3 from the floor for 6 points and 3 rebounds. **Ryan O'Connell** didn't shoot it well this week but he still did the other things.

Keith Brown continues to dominate the league with 33 points, 8 assists 9 rebounds. He shot 61.5% from 2 and 40% from 3. **Cam Delaetto** had a quiet double- double with 11 points and 12 rebounds. **Ryan Nystrom** quietly fills up the stat sheet with 8 points, 2 assists and 3 rebounds. **Kyle Frank** is continuing to do a nice job in the back court with Keith. Tonight he had 10 points, 3 assists and 3 rebounds. **Colby Wilson** also hit three 3 pointer for 9 points. **Austin Chadwick** was Chelmsford' best player with 18 points and 5 boards, shooting 66% from the field. **Andrew Linehan** with another solid week with 13 points and 5 rebounds. **Devon Firicano** with 7 points and **Jared Krueger** with 7 also contributed to the cause.

TJ Darten was up for player of the week with 21 points connecting on 5-7 from deep. **Juan Zorilla** continues to hit double figures with 13. **James Amarillo** had it going with 12 points tonight and **Demarr Langford** had 6 points and 6 rebounds. **Bobby Leterneau** did not score but he ran the show dished out 4 assists, numerous hockey assists and 4 rebounds. **Shamar Sims** did some work on the boards with 7 rebounds. Methuen was led by **Keegan Lannon** 14 points (4 three pointers). **David Dizazzo** had 11 points, 3 rebounds but needs to protect the ball as 8 turnovers is too much. **Andrew Marcellino** was good with 14 points 9 rebounds and one of the best in traffic dunks of the fall. **Dante Rivera** ran the show with 4 points, 4 assists and 7 rebounds and only 2 turnovers.

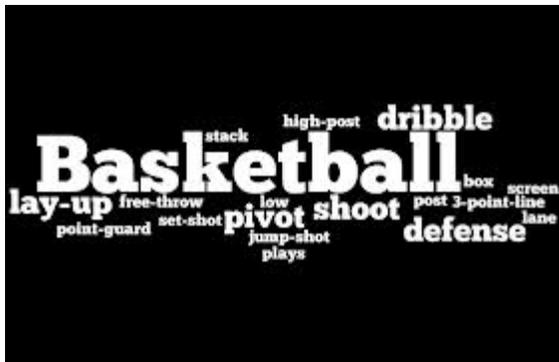
Salem pulled off a good upset by playing aggressive and efficiently. Salem shot 55% from 2 and 50 % from 3. They also out rebounded Lowell 28-22. **Griffin Curtis** as mentioned earlier was our Player of the Week. Big **Tim Dodier** debuted and his big body will help as he had 10 points 3 rebounds, ran the floor and boxed out. **Matt Mclaughlin** hit the game winner but also ran the show with 6 points and 4 assists. **Jared Gott** needs to move the ball more but he did add something tonight with 8 and 9 rebounds. **DJ Coletti** was big defending and shooting 50% from 2 and 50 % from 3. Lowell mailed in this one. Red Raiders resorted back to over dribbling and ball sticking which is never good. **AP Wennah** had 11 points, 2 assists and 7 rebounds. **Tim Sousa** with his best night ever at fall ball 18 points on 5-10 from deep. **Alex Rivera** was the one guy that came to play 21 points and 5 assists.

New Mission ran past Londonderry and shot the lights out, 60% from 2 and 60% from 3. The only black mark is they continue to struggle at the foul line. Titans were missing big pieces but next man up is the "mantra". **Kevin Nunez** in the house with an impressive 15 points. **Alonzo Cooper** has found his stroke with 16 points. **Charles Mitchell** with 12 and **Ty lee** with 10 and 6 rebounds just do work each week. . **Darren Tsadaroulin** with 9 points 2 assists and 4 boards. Londonderry once again led by **Jake Coleman** with 14 but a combination of being off balance and intense titan defense saw Jake have his toughest night shooting. Once again the Lancers are not helping their big gun out. **Matt Corey** did not shoot it well but did score 10 and had 7 rebounds to be the only other effective Lancer. Time for some Lancers to take a very long look in the mirror.

Lawrence was slowed down by the zone but not held in check as they did shoot 48% from 2 and 50% from 3. **Kevin Vanderhorst** had 14 points and 5 rebounds. **Jaysen Desoto** was effective with 11 and 3 boards. **Beniammi Rodrigues**, the work horse had 9 points and 5 rebounds. **Marcos Germosen** contributed 6 and 4 boards. Peabody played better and that is good to see. The ball moved more and 8 tanners hit the scoring column. **Junior Estrella** was tops with 14 points. **Ben Shmase** had 6 points and 2 rebounds and **Jake Gustin** also had 6 points.

Central Catholic is deep and we saw that big time this week as they played a lot of guys and threw a lot of different people at Tenaglia and Derrah. **Kevin Fernandez** was CC top gun with 14 points, 6 assists and 5 rebounds but needs to cut down on the turnovers. **Ian Carmichael** was very good with 8 points and 18 rebounds. I loved **Victor Mwaurah** as he hit for 11 points, corralled 9 rebounds and played good defense. **George Grillakis** does not get enough credit for the dirty work he does. Tonight George started slow but had 10 points 5 assists and 4 rebounds. **Steven Hajjar** as discussed earlier is our **Do Your Job Winner**. **Colin Bradanese** after a rough first half rallied and contributed 9 points. CC shot 62% from three and hit 15 out of 20 free throws. CC out rebounded Tewksbury 44-18. **Nate Tenaglia** was solid with 21 points 8 assists and 6 rebounds. **Justin Derrah** did not shoot the high % he has in previous 4 games but did contribute 15 points. **Devan Bere** had 6 points and 2 assists but thought he passed up a couple of nice looks. Ryan Briggs had 6 points but in this game they need double digits out of him.

BRING IT EVERY WEEK IF YOU WANT TO BE MENTIONED!!!!



THE WEEKLY RANT: FOOD FOR THOUGHT OR FOOD

FOR THE DUMPSTER....YOU DECIDE!

Before we get to the rant. Everyone who reads this has a homework assignment. PLEASE READ "THE REVOLUTION HAS ALREADY BEEN TELEVISED: HERO BALL IS DEAD, LONG LIVE BALL MOVEMENT" BY KIRK GOLDSBERRY as this is the rant I have been preaching for 5 years.

GOOD OFFENSE OR BAD DEFENSE:

A few weeks back former TCU Hooper and Fall Ball ref Tracey Mitchell and I were recapping the TCU v Texas Tech football game which was high scoring and pretty exciting to watch during the 4th quarter. I made the comment that it was a good game if you like high scoring offenses and then the distinct voice of Will "The Thrill" Hommonay aka the Stat Guy chimed in from the scorers' table "OR IF YOU LIKE BAD DEFENSE". Now when it comes to gridiron talk you listen to Will. Will is the fantasy football guru that writes for the Eagle Tribune and writes a weekly national article on the New Orleans Saints. So our conversation continued with the defensive blunders in the last few minutes along with many defensive brain cramps throughout the contest. Will's comment has resonated with me for the last three weeks as I have seen first- hand some atrocious defense this fall.

Now lets' be clear 90% of our High School Head Coaches in this league are defense first coaches. I know from thirty years of experience watching hoops in this area that the defenses will be vastly different and better one month into the season for almost all of the teams but why is the defense in fall ball not something to write home about. It's not like the teams in this league are offensively efficient like the Spurs or Warriors as a matter of fact the statistics we keep each week tells a vastly different story of offensive production. Before any one calls the whiner line defending their sons teams defense I am not saying every team is atrocious on the defensive end and I am not saying that at times every team plays some very good defense. What I am saying is the defense needs major improvement and there are reasons for the present state

1. Many new faces and not understanding the teams' defensive philosophy. Lets' face it there are many teams with some returning varsity players that know exactly what to do and the philosophy and then there are frosh, sophomores and juniors that have

not played varsity and don't. This will take practice and understanding and as anyone knows if three guys on the court know what to do and two don't you are in trouble. This is the obvious reason....new players, no practice, no head coach involvement and limited coach interaction at all

2. The Youth leagues have not prepared kids to be good high school defenders. This is every ones' problem. We need to get better qualified coaches at the youth level. We need defensive skill development to be on equal footing with other skill development. In the MVL when I was president we implemented no zone rules at the 4th, 5th and 6th grade. This did not go over well with the wannabe Coach K that wanted to sit in an orange cone 2-3 zone because 5th graders can't shoot very well. The rule was amended to only 4th/5th two years later so you get my point on how popular it was. We also have the coach that can't teach defense but because of fast and athletic kids can put a weak $\frac{3}{4}$ press that causes turnovers and gets a few more wins. I have watched these kids go to high school and the high school program has to start from scratch. I coached Methuen varsity kids and we had a group that actually took a full two years to teach them how to play defense because they never were taught. My favorite line is from the 6th grade coach who says well Syracuse runs a 2-3, hey Boeheim do you have 6'10" guys that can get to the sideline, a 7 ft rim protector and 6'5" Michael Carter Williams at the top, please! Youth Leagues need to teach man to man defense and they need to teach it hard. You can't teach a kid to play a zone till you teach him how to play man to man
3. The Grass root culture has not helped the situation. As everyone knows I coach a program that actually teaches and coaches defense but we still need to do a better job. Then there are the programs that don't value defense, don't teach it, sit in zones at the middle school level. When was the last time a video was posted of kids playing good defense to go along with the 1 million you tube videos on inefficient offense and stationary ball handling. I can hear the whiner line ringing now, yes there are some teams on the circuit that value defense and I applaud them but they are not the majority
4. How many workout and skill development programs teach defense! Some will say they do but most don't. The really good places do and you can see who is being taught. Trainers and Skill guys need to build it in, commit to it and hold kids accountable
5. Kids tend to also get the wrong message on highlight films. In talking with coaches row this fall they shake their heads with videos of kids over dribbling and going by an inferior player who can't cover and then when you expect help defense to be there you see guys standing up, letting the guy go by and my favorite is the kid is smiling at the camera as its happening. How about some high light films of kids playing shut down defense? What we have seen many times this fall is this type of defense
6. Fundamentals! We need to get back to basics on footwork, how to move your feet, how not to play with your hands, how to get in a stance and how to sustain a stance.

How to closeout, how to be in help, how to be in deny, how to defend ball screens, knowing the importance of the shell drill etc. etc. etc. I do believe the fundamentals to a degree are being taught but we are not sustaining the teaching and more so “are we holding kids accountable for it”

7. Bad habits are developed and laziness becomes the norm for some kids. 6 times this week I saw a player play bad defense then try to do a wrap around reach only to be called for a foul. 4 of the 6 had an attitude towards ref and coach. All 6 blatant fouls. The game has so changed the days of clutching and grabbing Heat vs Knicks is all over. Identify bad habits and change/adjust
8. Where is the accountability? This may be the biggest issue. We need to hold kids accountable when they don't play defense. The cold hard facts is if they don't defend they won't play in the winter and those that want to play at the next level won't play unless they defend. I know a lot of 1000 point scorers in high school who never got off the bench in college cause they can't or won't defend

Lets' also applaud the kids and teams that are playing hard defense. In the best three games of the week there was some strong defense from CC, T, NA, WA, M, SPM & when NM wants to defend they will. With 3 weeks left in the regular season lets try to improve on this and the playoffs will decide the best team, but those that defend will go the farthest