



The Messenger

www.mnchristianschools.org

Volume XXII, Issue 3

April 2015

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The MACS Tournament Difference



Over our Spring Break, we were looking for some inexpensive and fun things to do, so we went to the Minnesota State High School League Girls' State Basketball Tournament held at Williams Arena at the University of Minnesota. Our admission ticket allowed us to watch a full slate of games. We were particularly interested in the semi-final games of the Class 4A Division. Hopkins and Eastview won their semi-final games and would face off for the championship game where Hopkins ended up winning the 4A Minnesota State High School Basketball Championship.

Why would I go and watch the girls' state games? Well ... I do have five daughters

and I coach the varsity girls' basketball team here at Fourth. And, I love basketball, so I wanted to see how our program compared with "the big schools."

There was no question about the talent level. While we have a lot of talent for a school our size, the talent pool of a Hopkins High School (1,891 students) was slightly different from Fourth Baptist Christian School (with a high school of just 45 students). If the two played in a game, it would simply be a "David and Goliath" type of contest.

I was pleased, however, that many of the things we were attempting to teach our girls were things that the state champs did as well. They ran some zone defenses, taught strong man to man defense, ran similar plays, and pushed the ball down the floor. Made me feel kinda' good, you know? But the huge difference between the two was the level of play. The girls were huge (no offense, girls), athletic, and extremely talented. The competitiveness of the

program and numbers of girls sitting on the bench was a reflection of how many girls try out with only the most athletic making the team. I was impressed with the way they played, what their coach taught them, and their focus and concentration throughout the games. And while I am speaking of the Hopkins team specifically, equally as impressive were some of the other girls' teams.

But... As I watched, something struck me.

We sat on one end zone and Channel 45 was there televising the games, interviewing coaches and players, and I just might have



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gotten a little air time (did you see me?) I was struck with how isolated all the schools were. Their kids came in together and left the arena together. There was little interaction with anyone else and the focus was only on their team. They shook hands in the line at the end of the game and went directly to their locker room. The tournament was impressively run and many fans came out to cheer for their school.

What is the difference between our Christian school tournament and others?

The big difference is that there is a fellowship of the schools, the players, the coaches, and the fans that is vastly different from what I saw at the state tournament. I realize that size is a huge determination, but the truth is that we may pack our gym with hundreds of fans for the final games of our tournament, but the spirit of our teams should be that we are *not* adversaries. We pray together before the games. We root for each other's kids because we have known each other for years. Our coaches sit together and commiserate or celebrate depending on how their team performed. There are relationships and lasting friendships, a common bond because of the Lord whom we serve, and a similar philosophy of education that permeates with all the folks attending. Christ is central and teaching our kids to be followers of Him in their actions and their thinking is a big part of why we are doing what we are doing. It was this difference in spirit observed between the tournaments that caused me to appreciate what we have and what we are collectively trying to accomplish.

I don't know about you, but I really enjoy getting all of our MACS schools together and seeing everyone at the tournament. Yes, there are some great competitive battles, but I don't think I have walked away angry at anyone

because they beat our team. When we have lost, we generally have not done what was necessary to be successful. We were disappointed when we lost, and there may have been some tears, but we weren't mad at anyone. And we were all able to go out and congratulate the other team members and coaches because we were still friends, still fellow-believers trying to encourage each other. And for the most part, our kids responded very, very well to other players and coaches.

Am I Dreaming?

The very opposite of the things I have described above may well have been observed by the reader at various MACS tournaments. When competition occurs, there are, at times, some beasts that rear their ugly heads. I realize that and we all deal with some of those same beasts at our schools. However, what I have observed overall, and what I would like to continue to see from all participants, coaches, players, parents and fans, is a realization of the big picture. We are all in this together and when my team wins, I want you to celebrate my victory and when your team wins (even if your team beat my team), I want to be able to celebrate your victory. I want all of our MACS schools to do well.

Is it possible for coaches and players to be disappointed in defeat, but collectively gather themselves and go out and have the right attitude toward a team who just beat them? I think it is. Is this something that we should regularly see at our tournaments? It certainly is! I believe, in the majority of our tournaments, this is what I have observed.

I praise the Lord because this is one of the main things that sets apart our MACS State Tournament from the others. And it is what I want my children, the students of Fourth Baptist, and all of the MACS students



to experience and live out.

What Are We Really Showing A Watching World?

At tournament time in our building are fans: parents, students, relatives, friends and "an internet world" watching our games. The question which must be considered is: What would others, not associated with our schools, observe as a result of watching the live stream and hearing the play-by-play of the games (from our own Adam "Hot Rod" Keim)? Are we self-absorbed and only concerned with winning? Or are we recognizing a bigger picture of the importance of education as a character-building activity and as a testimony of God's grace?

Let's continue to strive together for great tournament competition, educating our fans and teaching our students the proper responses to authority, winning and losing. Through it all, may God receive the glory as we compete in a manner which honors our Lord Jesus Christ.

- Mr. Alan J. Hodak, Administrator, Fourth Baptist Christian School and Executive Director, MACS



Summer Sports Camps at Fourth Baptist

(Open to all MACS Schools)

June 8—12 Basketball Camps

Aug 3—7 Volleyball/Soccer Camps

Camps are for students in grades 3—12

Contact Alan Hodak at ahodak@fourthbaptist.org for more information.



2015 – 2016 MACS School Year Events

June 8 - 12 – Basketball Camp at Fourth Baptist (all MACS Schools invited)

August 3 - 7 – Soccer/Volleyball Camp at Fourth Baptist (all MACS Schools invited)

August 28 – Rosemount Jamboree & MACS Pastor/Administrator Fellowship at Rosemount

October 8 - 9 – WI/MN Teacher's Convention at the Wisconsin Dells

October 22 - 24 – MACS State Volleyball and Soccer Tourney at First Baptist, Rosemount

November 6 – Choir Festival at Fourth Baptist – Concert at 6:30pm with combined choirs

January 22 – Student Leadership Conference at Fourth Baptist

February 4 – Speech and Bible Festival at Woodcrest

February 25 - 27 – MACS State Basketball Tourney at Fourth Baptist

March 4 – MACS Jr. High Festival

April 8 – MACS Fine Arts Festival at Fourth Baptist and MACS Annual Meeting at Fourth Baptist

May 13 – Granite City Baptist Annual Track Meet, St. Cloud



Minnesota Association of Christian Schools

MACS Fine Arts Festival—April 10, 2015 at Fourth Baptist Christian School

The Senior High MACS Fine Arts Festival was hosted by Fourth Baptist on April 10, 2015. 225 students from nine MACS schools participated in the annual festival. 29 judges assisted us with critiques of musical performances, science fair presentations, and visual art displays. We are thankful for the abilities that the Lord has given to each of our students and trust that the process of preparing and performing at the festival will encourage students to continue to develop their talents for the Lord's service.
—LK





A Sampling of our MACS Students' Award-winning Handiwork

