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MAGIC News

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Men's Basketball Hands Forest Park 92-65 'Payback'

They say paybacks are plain. . . well, you know what they are. And, the Magic's 92-65 pasting of Forest Park Wednesday night was pure payback with a capital "P". The Highlanders gained the wrath of Meramec in the Region XVI Tournament last year when it ended the Magic's season with a 89-85 upset.

"We watched the actual tape from last year when we lost so that really makes you think about how bad you want to come back and get your revenge," said sophomore **Clay Zerr** (St. Charles.) "We didn't really say much. We try to do more than we say."

And do they did. Forest Park immediately established a pace that would make a Roadrunner cartoon pale in comparison. The animated pace eventually worked against them.

"They're willing to be very aggressive at the cost of fouling a lot." said coach **Randy Albrecht**. "When they get aggressive and foul, your team tends to get aggressive and foul, and that makes for a long and ugly game."

The near two hour game was that and more. Meramec broke the game open late in the first half and gained a 46-34 halftime lead on the strength of 13 points by center **Bill Brandenburg** (Kirkwood.)

"It kind of bothered us from the beginning but at halftime we got it together and we came out stronger and took care of the ball a lot better in the second half," said sophomore guard **Jake Prosser** (Francis Howell North.)

In the second half Meramec blew the game wide open, leaving the Highlanders on the short end of the 92-65 final score, thanks in part to a year ago.

"The mood in practice last year, was like 'oh, we're playing Forest Park, we're used to beating them," said Prosser. "Coming off a loss to them last year practice was a little more intense. I think it helped out."

Brandenburg led the scoring with 19 points. He also collected nine rebounds. **Josh Dale** (Affton) had 18 points, while **Eddie White** (Parkway West) scored 12 points along with six rebounds. Zerr had nine rebounds. The win may carry future benefits for Meramec.

"We always call it the neighborhood rivalry - Flo, Forest Park, and us," said Albrecht. "At the end of the year we'd like to have the better record which we've been fortunate to have recently. Within the district

you like kids for recruiting to think we've got the best program. It's hard for them to argue they're better than us if they can't beat us."

Earlier in the month, it was a mixed bag for the Magic. They recorded a big win over Div. I Broward (a team at 13-1 entering the game) in Fort Lauderdale 72-52. Yet, the Magic gave up a three pointer at the buzzer to Mineral Area to carry the contest into overtime where Meramec would lose, 77-74.

On the more bizarre side, the Magic set a new team record for fewest points given up in one half when they held the Washington U. JV squad to just four points at the half (51-4 halftime score.) Sharp shooting forward **Stanley Crawford** (Hazelwood Central) led scoring with 17 points. Utility swingman **Brandon Crites** (Hallsville, MO) had a season-high 15 points in the 94-24 blowout.

February will lead the Magic out of the regular season and into the Region XVI Tournament on Saturday, Mar. 1 at Westminster College in Fulton, MO. Seeding will depend on how Meramec emerges in several key games in the coming weeks against Florissant Valley, Penn Valley, North Central, and Forest Park.

Women's Basketball Squad Evens Mark With Win Over Highlanders

Despite their lack of depth on the bench with just eight total players, the Magic women's basketball team has won three of its last four games and enters its Saturday, Feb. 2 game at Cottey College with a 12-12 mark.

The latest victory was a 72-48 win over Forest Park Wednesday night (Jan. 30) that saw Meramec race out to a 31-14 halftime lead. **Capri Savage** (Orofino, ID) had her best game of the season, scoring 25 points that included 6 three pointer's. **Michelle Senf** (Mehlville) had 19 points along with 9 rebounds, while **Jonica Booth** (Ft. Zumwalt S.) had 13 points.

That threesome, along with strong shooting from center **Cynthia Abernathy** (Timberland), has become the team's winning formula of late.

February will lead the team into the Region XVI Tournament (which Meramec will host) with six games leading up to the post season. They'll be seeking a season sweep of Cottey College when they visit Nevada, MO Saturday (Feb. 2) following a 62-54 win over them Jan. 5.

Three other games against Region XVI opponents that will decide post season seeding will see Florissant Valley, Penn Valley, and North Central all battle Meramec.

Grapplers Prep For Central District/National Qualifier Event

In their final stepping stone to the most sought-after portion of the season, the wrestling squad will head to Triton College in the Chicago area for the Central District Meet, which qualifies wrestlers for the NJCAA National Tournament.

The Magic pulled out of the Harper Duals Feb. 2 as several team members were battling an area-wide wave of upper respiratory infections. The move gives wrestlers more time to heal, and train, for the all-important Central District.

Meramec goes in well-armed with seven team members nationally ranked. **Miles Bolin** (Ft. Zumwalt W.) is ranked seventh at 125, **Aaron Senzee** (Kearney, MO) is ranked second at 141, **Kyle Foley** (Oakville) is ranked seventh at 149, **Dirk Hurrin** (St. Agnes, VA) is tabbed tops in the nation at 174, **Deron Winn** (Liberty, MO) is second at 184, **Jamelle Jones** (Dover, DE) is first at 197, and **Ryan Sutton** (Oakville) is third at 285.

In addition, while unranked, the Magic have two other proven winners and dangerous grapplers within their weight classes: **Bobby Conn** (Marquette) at 157, and **Donald Woods** (McCluer North) at 165. As a team, Meramec is ranked second nationally.

The NJCAA National Tournament is Feb. 22-23 in Rochester, MN.

President's Cup Awarded To Softball Team For Academic Excellence

The softball team captured the first semester President's Cup award for academic excellence, achieving the highest composite grade point average among Meramec teams. The team was honored at halftime of the Jan. 30 men's basketball game in ceremonies with Manager of P.E./Athletics **Bob Bottger** and campus president **Dr. Paul Pai**.

Also honored with athletes on the Coaches Honor Roll with a 3.00-3.49 first semester GPA, and the Athletic Director's Honor Roll for 3.50-4.00 GPA's.

Twenty two student athletes earned their way onto the prestigious Athletic Director's Honor Roll, while 27 more won a spot on the Coaches Honor Roll.

Baseball Magic Sign Prep Seniors For '09 Campaign

It was time to sign on the dotted line for seven high school seniors Jan. 15 when they inked scholarships to be a part of the Magic baseball program in '09 with coach Tony Dattoli.

Signee **Justin Wilson** brings a .383 average and 21 RBI's as a junior in '07 into his senior year this spring at St. Charles West.. The Magic also strengthen themselves at pitching with a pair of lefthanders in **Brandon Gass** from O'Fallon Township (Belleville) and 6'4" **Michael Baker** (Cassville, MO.)

Shoring up the shortstop spot will be a trio of middle infielders in **Jerry Roam** (Francis Howell N.), **Michael King** (Independence, MO), and **Stuart Robertson** (Rockwood Summit.)

Nick Woodson (Francis Howell N.) signs on as a third baseman.