



## Magic Roll Over Mineral Area, 66-57; 15-1 Mark Is Best Start

The STLCC-Meramec women's basketball team is on a roll like none other in its program history. About an hour after polishing off Division I foe Mineral Area 66-57, the team was summoned to center court for another victory - the President's Cup.

The prestigious academic honor, the President's Cup, goes to the team with the highest composite GPA from the fall semester. The squad happily huddled around interim president Zerrie Campbell as she presented the silver trophy.

The victories, both in the classroom and on the court, have been symbolic of the program's transformation from its years of struggling to find wins, to a team with a 15-1 record ranked 20<sup>th</sup> nationally by the NJCAA.

"It's just fantastic, I'm so elated for this team because they've worked so hard and deserve all the accolades that they're getting," said second year head coach Shelly Ethridge. "Not only are we doing the job on the court, we won the President's Cup academically so they're getting the job done in the classroom as well. I'm really proud of this team."

Against Mineral Area Wednesday (Jan. 19), Meramec methodically worked the ball inside to a bevy of height and skilled scorers to pick the Cardinals apart. Sophomore center **Kasei Evans** (Hazelwood Central) finished with 13 points and 9 rebounds. Evans, a constant force in the paint with her 6'0" stature and wide body frame has been the backbone of a deep team.

"We were real pumped up, we had never beaten Mineral Area before so this is a big win for us," said Evans. "We have a goal and we know where we want to go so it's easy to get pumped up. It's excellent, I'm excited. Last year we were kind of new to everything. Now, this year, we have a goal and we know everything we have."

The scoring leaders over Mineral Area were sophomores **Courtney Panus** (Pattonville) and **Sherie Cole** (Hazelwood Central) with 14 points each. **T.T. Johnson** (Hazelwood Central) added 10 points. Johnson, a transfer from NCAA Division II Southern Indiana, didn't hesitate to join the Magic's roster laden with Suburban North prep talent.

"With the people that I knew were coming to this team I knew were going to have a real good team," said Johnson. "We're going all the way, we're unstoppable."

Meramec looked every bit of unstoppable against Mineral Area with its multiple scoring threats and tenacious defense. The team pulled off "Coach E's" game plan to the hilt.

"We knew that we were really going to have to stop the perimeter game for them, that is their strength - they have nothing but shooters that can light it up," said Ethridge. "Our defense really, really was tough tonight for them to get a shot off. We really wanted to pound the ball inside offensively."

The Magic play Region XVI opponent Penn Valley at Meramec on Saturday, Jan. 22 in a 1:00 contest before traveling to Three Rivers on Monday, Jan. 24.