Men’s Basketball Squad To Face Truman In Juco Shootout Dec. 13

The men’s basketball team will see a new face in the Rawlings Juco Shootout on Sunday, Dec. 13 when they square off with Harry S. Truman College of Chicago. The noon start is the first of four games on the day, featuring Missouri versus Illinois quality junior college basketball. The entire event is in the STLCC-Meramec gym.

Later in the day, nationally ranked Moberly Area College plays Vincennes at 2:00. At 4:00, a stellar match up has Three Rivers battling Southwestern Illinois. Both teams are lead by Hall Of Fame coaches - Three Rivers by Gene Bess, the all-time college basketball wins leader at any level, and Southwestern Illinois by Jay Harrington. Three Rivers has been ranked nationally earlier this season, getting off to a fast 6-1 start.

Closing out the day is perennial power Mineral Area against Shawnee at 6:00. The event draws a large gathering of four year university scouts from all over the country, including many NCAA Division I institutions and occasionally NBA scouts.

Meanwhile, the Magic have been looking to find their stride, hanging in there at close to the .500 mark. They battled a tough Brehm Prep team down to the wire, losing a 78-74 decision Nov. 18. Sophomore forward Josh Dale (Affton) had a strong night, scoring 26 points, while center Dallis Johnson (Lafayette) had 15 points and 12 rebounds.

However, the Magic would enjoy a laugher against Lindenwood JV three days later, racking up a 101-41 crushing of the Lions. In that contest, freshman guard Dietrick Sooter (Pierce City, MO) scored 8 points to go with 6 assists. Sooter has emerged into a starter with his steady ball handling and sound decision making, as well as few turnovers.

Kaskaskia was a surprise opponent for the Magic Nov. 14 in that they handled the Illinois team with ease, coasting to a 77-62 win with a whopping 41-15 halftime lead. Dale and Johnson lead the scoring attack in that game with 26 and 24 points respectively.

After the Juco Shootout, the Magic have a relatively quiet month of final exams for the student-athletes as well as the holiday break. However, old rival STLCC-Florissant Valley will come calling on Saturday, Dec. 19 for a Region XVI match up at 3:00. The Magic have not lost to the Fury (formerly the Norsemen) in nearly seven years.

Women’s Basketball Magic Features Suburban North Talent
When the STLCC-Meramec women’s basketball team squared off with Olney College Nov. 21, the game could have easily been mistaken for a prep Suburban North contest - the entire starting lineup for the Magic consisted of alumni from the deep-in-tradition and talented Suburban North Conference.

In that contest, sophomore Aretasha Barry, a forward who hails from Hazelwood East, freshmen Kasei Evans and Sherie Cole from Hazelwood Central, freshman forward Courtney Panus from Pattonville, and freshman guard Brandi Reed from McCluer North.

Also on the squad from North County is sophomore Ora Spivey, a guard out of Hazelwood East. As is any team in a transition year with a freshman-laden roster, the Magic have taken a few lumps, but are 5-4 as of Dec. 5 as they gain experience.

The team dropped its final game of November on the road to Penn Valley in Kansas City Nov. 24, 73-52. However, the Magic, under new head coach Shelly Ethridge and assistant coach Melanie Marcy, have played inspired ball against Florissant Valley and Olney.

In the Florissant Valley game, the Magic squandered a second half double digit lead only to have to battle for their lives in the final few minutes. With 4:40 remaining in the game and the score knotted at 61, there would be five more tie scores. Finally, with :19 left and the score tied at 68, Evans connected on a layup and drew a foul, propelling Meramec to a 72-70 first victory of the season. Against Olney, the Magic were never challenged, coasting to an easy 72-50 win.

In December, the team has a busy schedule, playing McKendree JV at home on Wed., Dec. 2 before hosting the Magic Classic that weekend. Meramec will play a game on Friday evening (Dec. 4) and on Saturday (Dec. 5) against opponents to be determined. After that, the team faces tough opposition in Three Rivers (Dec. 12) and Mineral Area (Dec. 19). The team caps off the month with rival Forest Park on Dec. 21.

**Grapplers Head To Wisconsin Before Holiday Break**

The wrestling team faces one more open tournament before adjourning for the holiday and semester break in a few weeks. They’ll travel to the University of Wisconsin-Parkside Open this Saturday (Dec. 5) before transitioning to mostly dual meets in January.

Most recently at the University of Missouri Open Nov. 22, no Meramec wrestlers placed but many were resting injuries and did not compete. That meet is a hotbed of NCAA Division I talent including universities like Oklahoma, Northwestern, Illinois, as well as Mizzou.

Earlier in the season, sophomore Craig Chiles (Hillsboro) placed at both the Lindenwood Open and the Oklahoma City Open. Chiles, a gifted 133 lb grappler, qualified for the NJCAA National Tournament a year ago and has higher aspirations this season, such as All-American status or a national title.