

SPORTS

Brook Hill hoops camp attracts players from all over East Texas

M.D. 'Doc' Smith
Bullard Banner Sports Editor

The impact of new head basketball coach, Wally Dawkins has already made a vast change for the Brook Hill basketball program, as he and his staff held the first-ever, Wally Dawkins Brook Hill Basketball camp this past week.

Two sessions daily last week accounted for 96 campers, 47 in the younger group, 49 at the mid-day session at the Brook Hill Lower School Gymnasium.

"It was a great turnout for this being the first time for me to do this at Brook Hill," said the former Whitehouse head

basketball coach now in his first year at the helm of The Guard.

"We had a great staff, and we could see improvement in the kid's each day they came out, worked hard and were one of the most attentive groups I have had in a camp before," Dawkins commented.

Joining Dawkins with staff instruction included his former assistant at Whitehouse, and now Wells High School head coach, Mike Ward. Class 4A, first team, all-state player from Whitehouse, Kyle Ford came over to aid his old coach, while current Guard players like Mason Spradlin, and Tyler Baker chipped in as well.

Former Brook Hill stand-

outs, Spencer Denman and Gretchen Puffer also were also on hand to lead the daily workouts and add to the successful week of basketball.

"I think all the kid's really enjoyed themselves and they were all a very attentive group so it was fun working with kid's that were wanting to learn, and not just pass some time," Dawkins added. "I think we had kid's come in from six different schools too, so that was encouraging that we are making positive steps at Brook Hill and we are working toward building a successful basketball program."

(To contact Doc Smith, email him at, news@bullardnews.com)



Photo by Doc Smith

Brook Hill's new head basketball coach, Wally Dawkins gives opening instructions to campers in one of two sessions held this past week at the Brook Hill Lower School gymnasium.

Hargraves ready for new challenge at BHS

M. D. 'Doc' Smith
Bullard Banner Sports Editor

Bullard High School recently hired Hank Hargraves from East Chambers to man the boy's basketball program for the Panthers for what we hope is a long, and successful career.

During the hustle and bustle of getting moved, cleaning out old offices, putting together new offices and learning who his players are, the nine-year veteran took the time for a little bit further in-depth conversation about his move, desires, and goals.

Although the new coach could be confused a little with former coach, Ryan Tomlin as they could pass for brothers, Hargraves had some great goals and insight to the Panthers future.

BBN: Growing up playing at East Chambers, were there any basic fundamentals that have stood out and you have stuck by in your coaching tenure?

Coach Hargraves: I like to believe that my teams can control how hard they play every game. I want my teams to not only control the tempo of the game, but to bring a level of intensity that cannot be matched by the opponent.

BBN: How well did your team do while playing at East Chambers?

Coach Hargraves: We have had a tremendous amount of success in the last six years. My teams have won 13 playoff games during that time, and we made a trip to the regional tournament four straight years. I believe that a combination of talent and discipline gave us the opportunity to play at such a high level for so long.

BBN: Granted you coach what you have to work with but given the



Courtesy Photo

Welcome the Hargraves Family: from left to right- Future Bullard All-Star, Major (age 5), Head Coach, Hank Hargraves, his wife Daisy Mae, and one-year old, Panther cheerleader of tomorrow, Ivey Mae.

ideal situation, what type of basketball are you most accustomed to?

Coach Hargraves: I enjoy coaching an up tempo style of play that allows players to play, shooters to shoot, and allows athletes to be athletes. I want my teams to disrupt the opponent's normal style of play, which will allow us to score more points and have more fun.

BBN: Have you had enough time yet to determine the main focal point for the team this season?

Coach Hargraves: I have only seen them play a few summer league games which did not include one of the more athletic players. At this point I want to find that player who didn't necessarily stand out last year, and I want him to find a role on the team. The system that I intend to put in place will heavily rely on role-players. It is these players that can make the difference between winning or losing by one.

BBN: Being new to the district, what do you think of the new realignment with some of the top Class 3A schools in the league?

Coach Hargraves: It is necessary to play a schedule that prepares you for playoff experiences. Without a doubt, Region III is the toughest in Texas. I have spent a lot of time playing the top teams in the region, and I know what it takes to beat that kind of talent. It will take a great deal of dedication from all the players in the basketball program to help us win the region.

BBN: Give us an idea of your basic coaching philosophy during games?

Coach Hargraves: Well Doc, I'd like to think that I could sit back and enjoy the game, but it usually doesn't work out that way. My philosophy comes down to just motivating them to play for each other, and the rest takes care of

itself.

BBN: What was your most enjoyable season of coaching thus far?

Coach Hargraves: My most enjoyable year by far was 2005. East Chambers had not won a playoff game in five years and we won four that year. We beat the number one team in the state (Kountze) in district play. They had previously won a state title in class AAA, and most folks never believed we had a chance to compete with them. Later, we lost to them in the Region Finals, and one week later they won back-to-back state championships. It was a great season for us, and I will never forget it.

BBN: If there is one big lesson learned thus far in your coaching career, what would that be?

Coach Hargraves: I want the Bullard Panther Basketball team to enjoy the good times and learn from the bad. It is important as a leader to not get too high or low during the season. I enjoy the pressure of winning games, because it means I have put my players in a position to be successful. I look forward to the 2008-2009 season, and want to invite this community to jump on board.

BBN: How do feel about the addition of an established, experienced

assistant coach in newly-signed, John Lambreth?

Coach Hargraves: I have had a chance to talk with Coach Lambreth a few times and I can not tell you how great it will be having an assistant with his knowledge, he's been to battle, he knows what it takes to win, and and he had had some great teams so his added input on the bench I am sure in gong to be invaluable."

Coach Hargraves comes to Bullard after posting a 149-58 record in six-years at the helm of his alma mater, East Chambers.

In his six year tenure, East Chambers won four district titles, and qualified for four regional tournament appearances. Hargraves is a

graduate of Lamar University and has also served as an assistant coach at Hardin-Jefferson High School in East Texas.

Bullard Banner News

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