



Osceola HS (Seminole) Girls Basketball **Nominated by: Amanda Marie Green (Student)** **Champions**

In an age that has successfully put more pressure on students than ever before, the ability to juggle athletics alongside academics in itself, in my opinion, makes everyone on a sports team a champion individually. But I'm not writing this essay to talk about individual champions, or even the championships of other teams. I want to tell you about the basketball team I've played on at Osceola Fundamental High School and the girls on that team who I've grown to love, respect, and care for over the last 3 years and who I'll spend my senior year with.

By my freshman year I had never picked up a basketball. But my height and stature was noticed by our Coach, who approached me the 2nd week of school and asked me to play JV. This is where I believe the first aspect of a championship team came in and I realized how special our group of girls was. Immediately, I received support and training from the other girls, and not only the freshman I already knew, but the girls who had been there for several years already. They wanted me to succeed with them. They showed me what it was like to be on a team that truly cared. Our team is a championship team because we care about one another.

Girls who didn't even play on JV but understood the importance of the JV team since Coach had it as a filter to Varsity were amazing to work with. My freshman year Varsity and JV had losing seasons. By sophomore year I was still playing JV but I'd become a starter and that year we had a winning season, even though Varsity didn't. But this year I witnessed something magical. I saw girls who'd been Varsity since day 1 and girls (like me) who'd just moved up that season come together and beat teams we hadn't even competed with for at least a decade. We beat our team rival (Seminole) for the first time in years. We'd been kicked around and beaten down for nearly a decade and we came back this year dissatisfied with what we'd received in years past. So we persevered. Our team is a championship team because in the face of adversity and doubt, we continue to fight with strong, passionate hearts.

So far, this has all been on-the-court examples of our champion-nature. But every girl on our team juggles academically challenging classes in addition to the rigorous practices and games during the season. Many girls even add things like instruments (one is trying to continue violin in college), jobs, and two or three more leagues into the mix. How we manage to do this

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would be a complete phenomenon except that I know our secret. It's the study sessions we hold before each game, the notes we share and advice on AP classes we give to the girls in the grades below us.

We can succeed in difficult classes not only because we want to and help each other do so, but because we have a coach that pushes us to succeed on and off the court. I'm the girl trying to continue a violin career in college and even though I may not be the best on the team, Coach Nash has supported me with the violin as if he were my violin teacher. He's gone to performances of mine and had me play the national anthem at senior night. His support of our team has shown true dedication and only furthered our image as a team worthy of the title, "Champions". Our parents have also helped us tremendously with fundraising, attending every game, and supporting us through every hardship our team has endured. We are a championship team not only because we succeed on and off the court, but because we have an indestructible support system that has led us to our first winning season for as long as anyone can remember.

I could go on forever describing how amazing and enlightening an experience it was to watch each girl grow individually as well as together into a team best described as one indivisible unit. But I should come to a close soon and tell you in one sentence why our team is a championship team. The Osceola Fundamental High School Girls' Basketball Team is a championship team because we believed in ourselves when no one else did, and after a lot of blood, sweat and tears found the best part about being on a team and what truly makes you a champion is not necessarily winning the championships, but rather the journey it takes together and the experience you gain being a part of a team that is so special it can never again be duplicated.

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