

Returning players spark 3-0 start Akman, Bradlow take charge after 13 players move on

by Michael Goldfarb

The boys middle school basketball team enters the regular season relying on its perimeter players. To compensate for a dependency on guards, the team stresses rebounding technique.

After losing 13 players, including all five starters, the Lions' only veteran players are guard Josh Akman and forward Adam Bradlow. As a result, the team turned to them to lead the team.

"Akman and Bradlow are returning players, so they know what is going on," said seventh grade guard Ezra Weisel. "They help us in practice if we don't know what to do."

The Lions came out flat in their first game, and it appeared that the team would need the help their co-captains provide in practice. However they recovered to dominate the Eshkol Academy Lions, winning 48-15 at home on Nov. 26.

"We were nervous at the beginning of the game," said Weisel. "We played much better in the second half, though, [and] shot the ball extremely well."

The Lions played a sound game, making most of their free throws and shooting well from the field. Eighth grade center Saul Krosnick led the Lions' balanced scoring attack with eight points, as 14 players scored.

The Lions' accurate shooting reflects their talent and depth at the guard position, with Akman leading the backcourt corps.

Having a roster heavy with guards comes with certain drawbacks, as well. Ac-

ording to Weisel, Head Coach Mike Remington emphasizes rebounding technique in practices because the team carries so many guards.

According to eighth grade guard Joshua Lieberman, "Rebounding might be difficult this year, because we aren't that big."

After opening the season with a convincing victory, the Lions looked ahead to their PVAC opponents.

"Covenant Life and St. Anselm's are always tough games, [but] all games are important," said Remington before the Lions' conference opener.

Almost prophetically, the team battled the Covenant Life Cougars to open the PVAC schedule on December 3. The game was tight throughout, as the Lions struggled to hit shots the way they did against Eshkol.

The Lions' leaders stepped up when the team needed them most. Bradlow scored with under a minute left in regulation to tie the game at 19, and Akman scored eight points in overtime to lead the Lions to a 29-24 victory.

Snow postponed the Lions' Dec. 5 and Dec. 11 games against the Hebrew Academy Cougars and the Queen Anne Lions. With a win against the Sandy Spring Wildbeests sandwiched in between, the team stands at 3-0 on the young season.

The game against the St. Anselm's Panthers on Thursday Dec. 19 looms large, though. Going on the road to play the Panthers, who eliminated the Lions in the PVAC semifinals last season, should be a good measuring stick for how much the team has

really lost.

After getting out to a quick start, the team seeks to maintain their success throughout the rest of the regular season. As the season wears on, few games figure to go the Lions way much like the season

opener.

"We believe that with hard work and a collective team effort, we will get to the championship. We would like to succeed not only as individual players, but as a team as well," said Lieberman.



photo by Zachary Krame

Eighth grade co-captain Adam Bradlow (middle) drives down the middle of the lane over Eshkol Lion defender Yitzhak Rozen (25), as teammates (from right) Scott Goldfarb and Saul Krosnick crash in, preparing for a rebound. The Lions beat Eshkol 48-15 Nov. 26.

Sports Notes

Thanksgiving alumni football game a rout

The fifth annual Paul J. Blank Invitational football game took place on Thanksgiving Day, Nov. 28, between the class of 2002 and the combined classes of '98 and '99. The combined classes of '98 and '99 won by a score of 30-0.

The game, organized by rabbinics teacher Paul Blank, is between past classes each year on Thanksgiving. In order to play in the game, alumni must receive an invitation from Blank, and must make a donation. It is done very professionally, according to Blank, and has referees, a halftime show and an MVP trophy, among other things.

"I've never participated in such a well run, efficient game," said junior Josh Lipsky, one of the referees. "Since the alumni play this game every year they were expecting a professional atmosphere, and that's what they got."

Even though, according to Blank, the game is for fun and brings out passion in the form of "hard hitting and tough tackling," the most important aspect of the game, is that all the money that is raised goes to the Association for Safe International Road Travel (ASIRT). During halftime, Blank gives out information about ASIRT, and talks about the importance of the organization.

"I challenge the students to go back to the university campuses and to promote the idea of safe international travel," he said. "People have gone to their deans of their universities and have given out information about this."

Gudelsky to step down

After volunteering since 1986, boys varsity soccer Head Coach Barry Gudelsky resigned following the Lions' semifinal defeat to the Grace Brethren Eagles. The team's third

place regular season finish was the best result in his tenure and the first season with a record over .500.

Gudelsky, part-owner of the Rockville Sportsplex, resigned to pursue business interests in a Sportsplex in Loudon County, Virginia, to be called either Loudon County Sportsplex or Steeplechase Sportsplex, he said.

According to Susan Goldstone, mother of junior goalkeeper Joshua and former Lions defender Adam ('00), Gudelsky decided months before the announcement that he would resign, but struggled to find an appropriate time for the announcement.

Goldstone missed only a handful of games in the seven seasons that her sons played for Gudelsky.

"The thing I'll miss most is how calm he generally is on the sidelines," she said. "He gets [his message] across well."

Alumni return for yearly basketball game

The annual alumni basketball game, billed by its advertisement flyer as the "graduates of the 20th century against the graduates of the 21st century," took place on Nov. 30.

The game was played in honor of Aron Sobel Z"l ('87), who played varsity basketball during his time at JDS.

Ten alumni played in the game, the minimum number needed for five on five basketball. They included five members of the class of '02 and three members of the class of '01. All of the players played on the varsity basketball team in the past.

According to Nathan Bortnick ('01), the game is about much more than just basketball.

"It's nice to go back to JDS because it's like family," he said. "It's an excuse to go visit with the people that you might not see otherwise during the year."

Trivia Question

In the fifth annual Paul J. Blank Invitational football game, who won the game's most valuable player award for the second time?

Hint: The winner is an alumnus who graduated before the turn of the millenium.

For the answer to this question, log on to www.lionstale.org