

WEEK OF 3/1/2015

MINOR DIVISION:

Bulldogs 34, Hawks 16:

WOW - what a finish to the season for the Bulldogs! Everything came together in the final game. Team spirit was at an all-time high today as well. All of the girls were really supporting each other as the buckets started dropping in. The Bulldogs Kathryn Torla played her finest game of the season and was the leading scorer with 12 points. Kathryn also handled the ball very well, dribbling with her eyes up and even added an amazing cross-over that left her defender helpless as she drove to the basket and scored. Kerry Garde and Corrine Daly both had super solid games today with 16 points between them. Hazel Borio played well with 2 points, and our best defensive player, Madison Donelson, contributed her first basket of the season as well. Kelly Taylor ended the season by scoring 4 points and also played great help defense with her teammates. Clair Johnson gave 100% effort and made a couple of great steals near the end of the game. The coaches of the Bulldogs couldn't be happier with the end result of the game and the season in general.

JUNIOR DIVISION:

North Carolina 42, Georgetown 14:

It's hard to believe that this amazing season of North Carolina basketball has come to an end with a fabulous team effort against an aggressive Georgetown team. North Carolina worked on some new plays during practice this week and did everything we could to run them during this game. Ask any North Carolina player what happens if "Ice Cream" works, you will be surprised at the answer! (And the

same thing happened even when it didn't work). Therese Maloney had a season high of 16 points in today's match up. And every single player on North Carolina's bench scored. Nothing makes our Coaches prouder than when the players on the court work together to make sure everyone is part of the win. This team is truly a "team" and a group of players that all want to play together again next year! Thank you all the families and fans of North Carolina basketball! We had a great season and thank you for sharing your player with us!

SENIOR DIVISION:

Sparks 44, Mystics 33:

The Mystics gave it their all in a playoff game on March 1 against #2 team the Sparks. Despite a slow start in scoring, the Mystics never relented and fought their way back to a single digit deficit late in the game. The first half of the 4th quarter was particularly exciting as the Mystics put 13 points on the board due to a scrappy defense which picked off some Sparks' passes and capitalized on them. Carly Drusedum contributed with 6 points that quarter, showing her ability to execute lay-ups from the left side of the basket. Zoe Minchini was tough on the boards, as were Sophia Boudreaux and Ava Chabot. The Mystics showed some nice improvement from the free throw line too, as Aaliyah Sanchez, Ava Chabot, Isabela Lebron-Rivera, Sophia Ellavsky, and Zoe Houde each calmly added points to the board from the line. Isabela Lebron-Rivera excited the bench and the fans with a 3-pointer in the 3rd quarter, which hit nothing but net. The Mystics continued their balanced scoring in this last game, with 8 of 10 girls scoring. Kudos to 8th grader Sophie Boisvert who had injured herself at a lacrosse event in the morning, but simply could not pass up playing in the game. All in all it was a well-played game and the girls on both sides showed good poise and improved basketball

skills. The Mystics' enthusiasm and drive were notable and commented on by one of the Sparks' coaches. Good luck to the Sparks in the remainder of the playoffs!

WEEK OF 2/22/2015

MINOR DIVISION:

Bulldogs 12, Owls 12:

The Bulldogs came out firing, but the shots just wouldn't go down today. Kerry Garde, Corrine Daly, and Kathryn Torla provided the "O" and Madison Donelson contributed her normal amount of rock solid "D". Hat's off to the Owls for pouring in 2 much needed buckets with the game clock winding down to bring the game to a tie.

JUNIOR DIVISION:

North Carolina 26, Pittsburgh 14:

It was another great day for North Carolina Basketball! Fans never would have known that North Carolina hadn't played basketball in over 2 weeks with the amazing passing game we saw today. This team continues to run their plays and work together, making sure that every player contributes to the win. Isabella Gwiazdoski and Kayla Yousman are real play-makers, passing the ball for teammates to score. Nora Hanlon continues to dominate under the boards, rebounding and boxing out. Charlotte Mandell has found her groove and moves around the count on defense like a pro. Ashley Gelber could have given lessons today on the hustle back on defense, with Anabel Dease and Lila Pierce setting picks and opening up the offensive. We think Therese Maloney enjoys just quietly scoring without making a big deal about. However, today's MVP has to be Jenna Verengia! Coming off the bench at half time, Jenna was an all around player. She rebounded, she scored, she hustled

up and down the court, passed the ball, and we couldn't be more proud of her this season!!!

Maryland 33, Syracuse 12:

In its last game of the 2015 West Hartford Girls Basketball League season, Maryland faced a multi-talented and well-coached Syracuse team. Both Maryland and Syracuse came to Sunday's match undefeated, and fans flooded Conard Gymnasium to witness these two Titans battle it out on the hardwood floor.

Maryland jumped to an early lead by surprising Syracuse with a new offensive game strategy. As Syracuse met Maryland's guards Mia Olson and Jess McNally at half court, Maryland alternated pulling their center and their strong side forward up from the base line and post up at the top of the key. There Maryland's guards fed some well-timed passes to the post player and then charged the lanes. Maryland's post player then fed the ball back to their guards who drove deep into Syracuse's paint for the score. McNally and Olson both played a superb offensive and defensive game for Maryland. These two finely-tuned machines shared the responsibility of seeing Maryland's offense run to near perfection, while keeping Syracuse scoring to a minimum while on defense. Olson scored Maryland's first basket and did her part to help her team hold onto the lead for the entire game by driving the lanes for many more scores. McNally also made sure her team never fell behind as she worked hard for the many points she earned and ended the game with a crowd jumping three-point shot that hit nothing but net. Olson and McNally were the glue to Maryland's 2015 offense, and they never disappointed when they were called upon.

However, Maryland's talented offense alone did not secure their victory this afternoon. Maryland's game plan was to keep Syracuse's score to a minimum. One key element to

Maryland's defensive success was Emma Main. Main moved from forward on offense to guard on defense in order to halt Syracuse's offensive attack. Main worked tirelessly as she fought off picks and chased Syracuse's talented shooters all over the court. Main's hard work and selfless contribution to her team helped keep Syracuse's score to just two points a quarter. While watching Main play defense, one might be fooled into thinking Maryland had six players on the floor. While Main grabbed a well-earned rest on the bench, Maryland's other forward Savannah Paolitto added to Maryland's iron clad defense by popping up from the baseline and picking the pocket of Syracuse's guards on several occasions. Paolitto's moves were fast and well-timed, never missing an opportunity to put her team back on offense with countless steals and subsequent fast breaks.

Maryland's center Elizabeth LaMarco stood strong and tall as she protected Maryland's paint forcing Syracuse to take deep outside shots. LaMarco eyed shots from the hands of Syracuse's shooters to the boards and then she leaped high as she tore down countless rebounds. As Maryland fought to get the ball inside the lanes, LaMarco would suddenly appear unguarded and dead center in the paint. With arms stretched high LaMarco grabbed some well-thrown passes from her teammates and popped in a few of Maryland's 33 points. LaMarco split her duties with Maryland's other center Savannah Peak. Peak was relentless under the boards as she refused to see any offensive or defensive rebounds land in the hands of Syracuse. Her offensive rebounds were pushed backed up and into the hoop, or fed outside to the waiting hands of her guards. The baseline and the boards were no place for the meek in this matchup and Peak was one of the reasons why. She played today's game with the focus and intensity that is only found in a dedicated athlete. Her desire to help her team capture a win was unmatched.

Maryland's defensive stance was also aided by another talented athlete, forward Kellie Yezza. Yezza has a textbook rebound style so much so that she actually has a rebound technique named after her called the "Kellie Attack." Yezza is not a big fan of jump balls and when another player dares to put their hands on any of Yezza rebounds, Yezza quickly tears it away. The Maryland fans and Yezza's teammates have become so accustomed to the "Kellie Attack" that they cheer and jump to their feet when they see her do it. But Yezza is not the only aggressive forward that Maryland puts on the floor. Anastasia Caldwell is a newcomer to the team and has settled into her position as one of Maryland's forwards flawlessly. Defensively, Caldwell held her ground and protected Maryland's hoops when Syracuse tried to break down Maryland's defense. Caldwell knew where her ground was and was determined not to let anyone into it. Offensively, Caldwell cleared the left side lanes for her guards to drive into then followed them in and grabbed a few rebounds. On the other side of the paint, Bea Sierra mirrored Caldwell's style by keeping Syracuse at bay and fighting successfully for many offensive and defensive rebounds. Sierra contributed to Maryland's offense by setting some great picks and launching up a few effective set shots that helped Maryland maintain its lead.

When Maryland needed to reset their offense, they turned to their wing Gabrielle Wojdyl. The ever so reliable Wojdyl was always positioned at the top of the key like a beacon in the fog. When Maryland found Syracuse's defense too tough to penetrate Wojdyl was Maryland's safety net and go to player. Maryland's reset offense started with Wojdyl and thanks to her positioning and skillful pass techniques her team was able to challenge Syracuse's defense from another angle.

Maryland also owes a debt of gratitude to their other wing Haven Ganci. Ganci's quick thinking and lightning fast feet

stopped several fast breaks attempted by Syracuse. If not for Ganci determination and hard defensive playing style Syracuse could have had a few easy scores. Ganci was also responsible for putting Maryland back on offense as she forced and grabbed many of Syracuse's turnovers.

The Maryland players and coaches wish to thank Syracuse for a well-played and exciting game. We are humbled by our victory and feel honored to have shared the basketball court with such a talented group of athletes on the Syracuse team.

SENIOR DIVISION:

Sparks 39, Mystics 23:

The Mystics succumbed to #2 team the Sparks in their last regular season game. The Sparks' capitalized on their tremendous height advantage and could not be stopped despite the best efforts of the Mystics. Mia Jaworski, coming off a week of illness, played her usual brand of tough defense. Aaliyah Sanchez had her best scoring day of the season, contributing 12 of the Mystics' points. Other scorers were Ava Chabot with 2, Carly Drusedum with 3, Sophia Boudreaux with 4, and Zoe Houde adding 2. Zoe Minchini played tough on defense, as did Sophia Ellavsky. The Mystics hope for a better result when they again meet the Sparks in the playoffs.

WEEK OF 2/8/2015

MINOR DIVISION:

Cardinals 26, Bulldogs 22:

Well it had to end sometime! The Bulldogs had their 4 game win-streak stopped by a great performance by the Cardinals. The Bulldogs played with some grit and nearly overcame a 12 point deficit to give the Cardinals all they could handle. The Bulldogs leading scorer was Kerry Garde

with 14 points. Kerry also won the team "tasty jumper award" today with an all-net jumper from just right of the free-throw line! Madison Donelson is the heart of the Bulldogs defense with her relentless commitment to "D". Corinne Daly and Kelly Taylor kept up their steady level of play with 4 much needed points each. Francesca Giordano put some solid defensive heat on the Cardinals today as well. Even though the girls were disappointed at the loss, they learned not to give up and by playing hard, anything is possible. Finally, a great job shout-out to the coaches of the Cardinals for calling a very fair game as referees.

JUNIOR DIVISION:

Syracuse 44, UConn 25:

UConn and Syracuse played a great game this week. UConn was powered with tough rebounding and solid defense. The well-coached squad had a very disciplined approach. Syracuse had their fast-break working and was impressive in their passing. Jordan Farrell and Lola Smith had their heads up and made some great passes to find open players. Chasse Gengras was the hardest working player on the floor for Syracuse in the victory.

Maryland 40, North Carolina 14:

North Carolina played a difficult game today, down to 7 players in our rotation. However, that didn't stop our players from being aggressive to the very end. Very quickly in the game, North Carolina was able to read Maryland's offensive and played them close to half court, forcing them to rethink their passing game. Our focus on defense lead to a lower scoring game for North Carolina, however, the score doesn't always reflect the team work experienced by this group on the court today. Our MVP's include Anabel Dease for stealing the ball not once, but twice from players much bigger than

she is; to Ashley Gelber for an unbelievable jump to steal the ball on defense; and to Nora Hanlon for her continued "take no prisoners" attitude under the basket and getting the most rebounds for North Carolina.

The excitement continued as the West Hartford Girls Basketball League marched into week six of the 2015 season. With a February squall looming outside, a storm of excitement brewed inside Conard High Gymnasium as Maryland hosted a very well-coached and talented North Carolina team.

For the second week in a row, Maryland looked to their veteran point guard Mia Olson to command and set the pace for Maryland's offense. With North Carolina's defense pressuring Maryland at half court, Maryland's center Elizabeth LaMarco zipped up from deep in the paint and set some perfectly timed rescuing picks that allowed Olson to drive to the hoop undefended. North Carolina soon adjusted to Maryland's offense and Olson found it more and more difficult to drive the lanes. Instead of forcing her shot, Olson quickly passed the ball back to LaMarco, who fed the hoop with some beautiful foul line shots. Maryland's forward Savannah Paolitto, in spite of an injury, played guard, dribbling, passing, and shooting like no one's business as she played a very integral part of Maryland's win.

Defensively Maryland had their hands full with North Carolina's quick moving offense. Lucky for Maryland, forward Anastasia Caldwell played a rock solid defensive game. Caldwell was unscored upon in today match. She gave North Carolina shooters the far side of the three-point line, but held strong when N.C. tried to drive inside. Not hurting for forwards, Maryland alternated Bea Sierra and Kelley Yezza into the game to guard the baseline. Yezza played like her legs were spring loaded. This amazing talent leaped high with

her arms stretched, tearing down rebound after rebound. As North Carolina's defensive players tried to lock grips on the ball with Yezza, there were no jump ball calls. Yezza ripped the ball out from the hands of N.C.'s players and put it in the able hands of her guards. Bea Sierra seemed to feel that Yezza had the defense cover and took it upon herself to represent the baseline players by draining a baker's dozen of baskets.

Gabrielle Wojdyl and Haven Ganci were asked to do double duty as guards. Normally, Wojdyl and Ganci, alternating from guard to their wing positions. Wojdyl fought the clock as she slowed Maryland's offense down and secured the win. Ganci took a different approach, driving deep into N.C. territory and challenging the big players in the paint. Both Wojdyl and Ganci did a very impressive job on defense as well.

Emma Main and Savannah Peak shared the same mind today. Main and Peak attacked N.C.'s half court press with a different twist than Maryland's first quarter offense. Main, Maryland's center playing point guard today, patiently dribbled up court, while Peak positioned herself deep in the paint. As Main met N.C.'s defenders at mid-court Peak shot up to the top of the key and caught a perfectly timed pass from Main. Peak then pivoted on her left foot and flipped the rock to Main who without hesitation drove to the hoop and scored to the cheering of the crowd. Main and Peak continued to operate on the same page as they not only complemented each other, but helped make Maryland's win an all-around team effort.

Although Maryland captured the win today, it was a hard earned victory. This game resembled a chess match as the North Carolina coaching staff read Maryland's offense and adjusted their players in position to defend it, forcing Maryland players to stay on their toes. The Maryland team

and coaches would like thank North Carolina for a well-played and exciting game.

WEEK OF 2/1/2015

MINOR DIVISION:

Bulldogs 22, Hawks 16:

The Bulldogs are on a roll, with their 4th straight win! Plenty of great "O" & "D" today! First the "O", Kerry Garde was on fire again today, leading the Bulldogs offensive battery with 12 points. Right behind her was Corrine Daly who continues to amaze her coaches and teammates with her fierce court presence and determination. Corrine had 6 points today and made so many steals that someone almost called the WHPD! Hazel Borio had 4 points and has had a major improvement in her dribbling and passing. Madison Donelson and Lilly Grose had their best games of the season today. Madison shut down any hopes of "O" for the other team, and Lilly was in great rebounding position many times this afternoon. Great job shout-out to the Hawks for playing a great game. Every girl on the Bulldogs has a great attitude and great team spirit. That is what is making it such a fun B-Ball season for us all!

JUNIOR DIVISION:

Syracuse 38, North Carolina 20:

Syracuse played a very well-coached and disciplined North Carolina team on Super Bowl Sunday. North Carolina had great offensive sets and ran their pick-and-roll plays to perfection, resulting in lots of open shots. Syracuse had to scramble to switch on defense to keep up the pace with Ruth Dunlap leading the way. For Syracuse, Jordan Farrell dazzled with great dribbling and lots of great shot

opportunities. Congrats to the Carolina squad for a great game!

Today's game was a hard fought battle between really good teams. North Carolina played some great defense and stopped several scoring opportunities by a strong Syracuse team. North Carolina's offense took a while to get warmed up, a foul shot by Kayla Yousman got the "ball" rolling. North Carolina continues to pass well and move the ball around the court. And as we say, "sometimes your shots fall, sometimes they don't". Our MVP's for today's game include Maggie Mieczkowski for her team spirit and loyalty. Maggie has suffered a season ending injury but came to today's game, dressed and ready to cheer her team on. And Lila Pierce for her never ending passing and defensive play. Lila worked really hard setting a screen for her teammates and helping them to score.

Maryland 41, Providence 17:

As the West Hartford Girls Basketball League reached the mid-point of the 2015 season, two very well-coached and gifted teams battled it out at the Conard High Gymnasium. Maryland hosted Providence in a game that proved not to disappoint either fan or player. The mighty Maryland team made several player adjustments throughout the game, but Maryland just could not shake away from Providence's relentless attack. Had there been additional playing time in this game, the score may have been a lot different.

Maryland's guard Jess McNally, who was suffering from a bruised right palm sustained earlier this week at practice, refused to take the advice of coaches and team trainers to sit this one out. McNally was quoted as saying, "My team is always there for me, and I will always be there for my team".

McNally showed how an athlete deals with adversity and overcame her injury by switching from her prevalent right handed dribble to a left-handed dribble. Despite her physical limitations, McNally was able to feed her teammates with some amazing pinpoint passes. McNally also kept the attention of the high school scouts by left-handedly maneuvering through a tough Providence defense and scoring many of Maryland's first half points.

With her teammate injuries on her mind, Mia Olson knew she would have to step up her game and that's just what she did. Olson commanded Maryland's first quarter offense with the authority of a stout leader. She fought aggressively on defense, keeping Providence's offense at bay. On Olson's watch and under her leadership, Maryland was able to gain a comfortable first quarter lead.

Gabrielle Wojdyl also shouldered a great deal of Maryland's injury dilemma as she heard duty call. When Maryland's offensive found it difficult to breach Providence defense, Wojdyl positioned herself at the top of the key and took control of the rock allowing Maryland to reset their offense. Wojdyl's quick thinking allowed Maryland to regroup and attack Providence's mighty defense from another angle. Maryland's guard Haven Ganci stepped in and relieved an exhausted Wojdyl and aided Maryland's win by leading Maryland's offensive repositioning schemes and cautiously defending the top of the key on both offense and defense. Ganci challenged Providence defenders by tenaciously and successfully driving Providence's well-guarded lanes over and over again.

Maryland's offense could not have succeeded without the fast moving and quick thinking Maryland forwards and centers. Maryland's center Savannah Peak exhibited one of her best performances of the season. Peak set picks for her guards and owned the boards on both sides of the court. Peak not

only kept Providence's offense out of the paint, forcing them to shoot outside, she also had her first double-double for points and rebounds. Maryland's other center Elizabeth LaMarco played a superb offensive game. After scoring Maryland's first two baskets she switched gears and set some well time picks for her guards, allowing Maryland to gain a comfortable first half lead. Late in the third period as Providence threatened to close the gap, LaMarco stalled Providence's momentum by nailing a perfectly formed three point shot that brought the crowd and Maryland's bench to their feet.

Maryland's forward Kelley Yezza played a flawless defensive game. On offense Yezza dragged Providence defenders up from the base and out of the lanes allowing her teammate plenty of room to drive to the hoop. Late in the fourth quarter Yezza showed her offensive talents by firing up some beautiful set shots. Another one of Maryland's unsung heroes was Maryland's forward Savannah Paolitto. Paolitto played a patient and disciplined offensive game, and a relentless and quick-paced defense effort. Paolitto's offensive determination was rewarded as both her baseline and outside shots hit nothing but net all day long. Yezza split her duties with teammate Bea Sierra. Sierra had some big shoes to fill as she relieved Yezza throughout the game. In her first season with Maryland, Sierra has played like a season pro and today was no different. Sierra was able to allude her defender and position herself smack in the middle of the paint with waiting hands. Her teammates fired the ball to her and before Providence could react, Sierra would sink the shot and hustle back down court. Offensively Sierra was in the zone and she also gave a stupendous defense effort for Maryland. One of Maryland's most versatile player Anastasia Caldwell did such a great job at forward for the team that her coaches thought she deserved a shot at bringing the ball down court.

Caldwell skillfully transitioned from a baseline player to point guard like the multipurpose player she is. As Maryland's starting guards watched from the bench, the outcome of the game would lie on Caldwell's ability to lead. In the final minutes of the game, Caldwell patiently steered Maryland's offense to a slower pace in order to run out the clock. Caldwell then protected Maryland's lead with a strong defensive performance.

As well as Maryland played, the most impressive aspect of the game was the relentless effort and fortitude that Providence demonstrated in today's match. The Maryland team and coaching staff were honored to share the court with such a talented group of athletes as the Providence team and their coaches.

SENIOR DIVISION:

Storm 35, Mystics 23:

The Mystics dropped a game to the Storm, although the game was closer than the score indicates. The Mystics had balanced scoring, with 7 of 9 players putting up points. Aaliyah Sanchez was high scorer with 6, with Zoe Houde and Sophie Boisvert each contributing 4 a piece. The Mystics picked up their defense in the 3rd quarter, causing some turnovers and turning up the excitement for the fans. Sophia Ellavsky showed us some of the shooting prowess she demonstrated in practice by adding a key basket in the 3rd quarter. Isabela Lebron-Rivera, Mia Jaworski, and Sophia Boudreux played consistently good defense and Ava Chabot worked hard on the boards. The Mystics gave it their all and had fun in the process - good game!

WEEK OF 1/25/2015

MINOR DIVISION:

Bulldogs 24, Stags 17:

What a great game for the Bulldogs! Despite being short-handed by 4 players, the other Bulldogs came ready to play today. A spectacular performance was had on both sides of the court by Kerry Garde today! Kerry finished with a season high 16-point game! Corrine Daly is continuing to make incredible progress in developing her game with 6 points today. Hazel Borio had a very solid game and scored her first bucket of the season. The coaches "Scrappy-D" award goes out to Lauren Fressola, who seemed to be everywhere on defense. Claire Johnson did an excellent job of setting up some nice plays at the point guard position. Kudos go out to the Stags Team for not giving up and almost catching up to the Bulldogs late into the contest.

JUNIOR DIVISION:

Maryland 52, UConn 26:

In week four of the 2015 West Hartford Girls Basketball League, Maryland faced a well-coached and talented UConn Team. Right from tip-off, these two teams challenged each other until the final buzzer. In the first quarter of play, point guard Mia Olsen directed Maryland's offense. Olsen positioned her teammates with hand signals as she crossed mid-court. As Olsen gestured the plays, Maryland's center Emma Main snapped into action and set several well-timed picks for Olsen, whose many scores gave Maryland a first quarter lead. After Main set her picks she instinctively pivoted around UConn's defenders and positioned herself in the paint to grab any offensive rebounds and place them back up for the score. Main also battled the boards on defense and captured any missed UConn shots. Maryland's offense design had wing Gabrielle Wojdyl slide up to the top of the key and allowed Maryland to reset whenever the need

was there. Wojdyl played an outstanding defensive game as well, as she forced many turnovers into fast breaks. Maryland's forward Savannah Paolitto was an unstoppable force. Paolitto had the touch on offense as she patiently tossed up and dropped in some magnificent set shots and was intense on defense. Maryland's other forward Anastasia Caldwell had a busy day under the boards. Caldwell aided Maryland's victory by providing an impenetrable defense against UConn's towering baseline players while doing some impressive ball handling on offense.

Once Maryland's first squad found themselves in need of a break, they grabbed the seats on the bench left vacant by Maryland's second quarter crew. Maryland's point guard Jessica McNally captained this fresh squad as they took to the floor in the second quarter. McNally brought a different twist to Maryland's first quarter offense. Instead of trying to drive through UConn's tough defense McNally took advantage of being unguarded behind the three-point line and fired a series of three pointers that brought the crowd to their feet. McNally also fed some amazing passes to each of her teammates who responded in kind. Maryland's center Elizabeth LaMarco showed one of her best defensive performances as she fed McNally with several stolen balls and defensive rebounds. After LaMarco fired passes to McNally she made chase down court. McNally stymied UConn's defense by tossing the rock back to LaMarco who flew up to the backboard and guided the ball into the hoop. Maryland's forward Bea Sierra contributed to Maryland's score by hitting some textbook form shots from deep inside Maryland's end of the court. Maryland's other forward Kelley Yezza kept UConn's defense at bay by working overtime to keep the paint sealed. Yezza then lit up the score board on offense as her hard-to-defend jump shot swished into the bucket time and time again. Just when the Maryland fans

thought things couldn't get any better, Maryland's wing Havyn Ganci made a statement to the crowd. An incredibly focused Ganci stepped in and up to run Maryland's offense. Ganci showed some great ball handling skills. She wove in and out of UConn's defense and skillfully dropped the ball in the hoop. On defense she showed the determination of a true champion by holding UConn from penetrating the lanes.

Maryland's two squads would continue to alternate throughout the rest of the game as they battled a relentless and multi-talented UConn team. Maryland was very humbled by their victory today and are very grateful to UConn for such a well-played game.

Syracuse 38, Villanova 24:

Villanova and Syracuse played a great game on Sunday. Villanova displayed great court awareness with solid passing and great defense. Syracuse was led by Mi Mi Villaparedos who played inspired defense throughout the game on a very talented Villanova player. Lily Borowiec played excellent at point guard for Syracuse.

North Carolina 32, Providence 16:

There's nothing better than North Carolina basketball on a cold Sunday afternoon, and today was no exception. Our team continues to play real team basketball, opening up the court, passing the ball, and setting up every player with the opportunity to score. Providence was a strong team, making us work hard defensively. Many North Carolina players "set the pick" and worked on our offensive plays. We have two outstanding players for today's MVP's. The first is Isabella Gwiazdoski, for not only scoring 8 points today and leading our offensive effort, but for her team leadership in making sure that every player feels that she is part of the team. The second is Charlotte Mandell, who scored her first points of the season. I really need to point out that the others players

that were on the floor with Charlotte, Therese Maloney, Maggie Mieczkowski, Isabella Gwiazdoski, and Jenna Verrngia, had all decided, while still on the bench, what they each needed to do to make sure Charlotte scored today!

SENIOR DIVISION:

Sun 29, Mystics 26:

The Mystics continued their balanced play with all but 2 players putting points on the board in a heartbreaker loss to the Sun. Zoe Houde emerged as the high scorer for the Mystics, with 3 baskets. Ava Chabot, Isabela Lebron-Rivera, Sophia Boudreaux, and Sophia Ellavsky had 4 points each. The Mystics were their own worst enemy in terms of taking care of the ball, but solid defensive efforts came from Carly Drusedum, Aaliyah Sanchez, and Mia Jaworski. The Mystics energized the crowd by putting 7 points on the board in the first part of the 3rd quarter and another 9 in the last part of the 4th, to draw within 3 of the Sun.

WEEK OF 1/18/2015

MINOR DIVISION:

Cardinals 24, Owls 18:

This was a spirited defensive-minded game today. Maeve D. of the Cardinals had her best defensive game to date, as did Maggie M. Olivia J. had a breakout game on the offensive side, and Ruby C. and Shannon F. continued their spring punch. Teagan D. landed a big basket late.

The Owls started the game on defense with a rebound by Sophia Murkette, but a steal by the Cardinals prevented the lay up. Next time down Sophia took the first shot for the Owls and scored. Back on defense, Isabella Mangini got the rebound and pushed it up the court. Anna Siciliano set a

powerful screen for Isabella but the Cardinals defense forced a missed shot. Charisse Thorpe got the rebound and passed to Jordan Dimauro for the shot. Jordan's shot fell just short but she hustled to get her own rebound and then she took it to the basket. The Cardinals got the rebound and faced the Owls tough "D" on the other end. Macy McPhee scored the 2nd shot for the Owls as they ended the first quarter."

The Owls started out strong in the 2nd Quarter with a rebound by Jordan, who passed to Isabella, then back to Jordan for the score. The remainder of the quarter saw a lot of back and forth due to pressure "D" by both teams. Sophia had a big bucket off a pass from Macy. The halftime score was 6-14.

The 2nd half of the game the Owls continued playing great defense. Jordan had great steals, and Charisse, Macy McPhee, Sophia and Jacquie Hamad were very strong on the boards. Baskets by Danielle DiGiacomo, Macy, and Sophia kept the Owls within reach. They were still down by 8 going into the 4th quarter, and Daniele and Jordan had some big shots. Once again, Sophia also scored for the Owls. The Owls never gave up and pressured hard on defense...but the Cardinals were just too tough as they won the game 26-18.

Bulldogs 12, Bluejays 4:

The Bulldogs celebrated their second win in a row against the feisty Bluejays! Corinne Daly scored the games long-awaited first bucket, and also managed to win her coaches weekly "tasty jumper award". Corinne has really improved her game over the past three weeks, and she plays tough on both ends of the court. Unfortunately, the Bulldogs offense was still on Christmas break today. Kerry Garde and Kelly Taylor were the leading scorers with 4 points each. Madison Donelson played her usual ferocious "D" today along with the rest of her teammates who did not make it easy for any the

opposition to score against us. A great job shout-out to the Bluejays for not stopping until the final buzzer sounded today!

JUNIOR DIVISION:

Villanova 42, Pittsburgh 20:

The Villanova Wildcats won their first game of the season, defeating Pittsburgh 42-20. The Wildcats were led by Sophia Lynch and Hannah Duzy who both scored 16 points. The Wildcats also got excellent all-around games from Maeve Moylan, Kaitlyn Puleo, and Madison Chase.

Although Pittsburgh lost against Villanova, the Pittsburgh girls made some noteworthy plays. Brooke Martindale not only demonstrated good sportsmanship in supporting and encouraging her team-mates but made some strong passes. One such pass was made to Ashley Ho in the first quarter in which Ashley made herself open to receive Brooke's long pass and make a hoop. In the second quarter, Brooke Barry made two strong passes to Nia Carroll. Emma Keller brought the ball to the hoop with a strong dribble for a score. Calista Carlson scored after receiving a pass from Emma Keller. Brooke Martindale continued to play great defense and bringing the ball up court with a strong dribble. Ashley Ho made excellent attempts at making baskets and Weronika Milewicz made an excellent effort at providing unwavering defense and catching rebounds. In the 3rd quarter, Brooke Barry made 2 baskets; one off a rebound. Emma Keller brought the score up by scoring again. After Ashley Ho made an awesome basket, Weronika Milewicz made another. In the 4th quarter, Carly Rabinovich demonstrated a strong controlled dribble and made a pass to Emma Keller who then scored. Evelyn Stewart supported her team through passes; Lucy Buccilli did the same while also attempting baskets. Carly Rabinovich made a good attempt at grabbing

rebounds and making herself open. Ashley Ho made the final basket for her team off a nice rebound.

UConn 30, Providence 26:

UConn delivered a very strong team effort with seven girls contributing to the scoring. Excellent work on defense by Maggie Slap. Ava Greene played a solid floor game contributing on defense, on the boards, and with passing and ball handling. Riley Dagnall, Samantha Barnett, and Nicole Chen scored key buckets in a third quarter surge for UConn.

Tennessee 32, North Carolina 10:

Our coaches often say that the score means nothing, it's how you play the game that matters. North Carolina played some amazing basketball on Sunday against a tough Tennessee team. North Carolina hustled down the court, playing some very aggressive defense, and never once giving up, no matter the score on the board. North Carolina continued to have strong passing and even "set the pick" on more than one play. Our coaches couldn't be prouder with our entire team's "never give up" attitude. Our valuable players for this game are Ashley Gelber for her "in your face" defense and Kayla Yousman for scoring her first points of the season and for her use of the pick on defense.

Maryland 52, Georgetown 24:

In week three of the 2015 West Hartford Girls Basketball League, Maryland's front office decided to make some changes in their coaching staff. Coach Jennifer Peak and Coach Steve McNally were promoted to co-head coaches and called the shots in today match as Maryland faced a very tenacious Georgetown team.

Coaches McNally and Peak decided to mix things up and implemented, what team trainer John Olson described, as an inverted position game strategy. Maryland's point guard

Jessica McNally was moved to center. Mia Olson, Maryland's other point guard, was assigned to play forward in today's match. McNally and Olson handled their new assignments like only truly talented athletes do. They captured rebounds and defended the boards like they were born to play in the paint, all while finding time to toss up a few jaw dropping baskets. These two team players knew that it was time to let others shine. After getting their fill of scores, they selflessly shared the wealth and fed the ball to a variety of their teammates.

Maryland's wings Gabrielle Wojdyl, Haven Ganci and starting forwards Bea Sierra and Anastasia Caldwell were called up and re-positioned to point guards for today's game. They heard opportunity knocking and quickly answered the door. Wojdyl was a fierce force on offense and protect the ball like a bear would safeguard a cub until she was decided it was time to release it and carefully sent it up and into the hoop. Ganci excited the crowd by exhibiting perfect set shot form while sinking several outside shots. Many of Ganci's shot came after her many quick steals on defense. Sierra was everywhere and anywhere her team needed her to be as she played relentlessly on defense and was impossible to defend on offense as she dropped several shots in from both sides of the basket. Caldwell contributed to Maryland's win by operating Maryland's offense like she had ice-water in her veins and had even more steadfast determination on defense. These four multi-talented players put the Maryland fans at ease by delivering a flawless game on both offense and defense. They commanded Maryland's offense with a cool and composed demeanor and played defense like only poised self-confident athletes can.

Maryland's centers Elizabeth LaMarco, Savannah Peak, and Emma Main, along with forwards Savannah Paolitto and Kelley Yezza also received new position assignments from

Maryland's bench. These board dwellers emerged from the baseline and took control of Maryland's offense. Main brought the crowd to their feet as she hit a net ripping three-pointer from deep outside. Paolitto picked the pocket of Georgetown's guard and broke out on several fast breaks with lightning speed and showed great ball control as she weaved down court and leaped for the boards. Peak left her place in the paint for the open floor as she charged down court and followed her outside the key shots to the boards and made sure the rock found its way in for the score. LaMarco drained a few foul line shots and had a great defensive game. Yezza played her best offensive game of the year as found herself in the zone an unable to miss a shot. Main, Paolitto, Peak, Sierra, LaMarco, and Yezza amazed and surprised the crowd as they watched these versatile players dribble the ball down court and execute a precision timed offense. These players adjusted well to their new surroundings, but they must have been homesick for their place under the boards, because with ball in hand they passionately drove down the lanes into the paint, up to the hoops, and landed back down to the baseline, the place they use to call home.

Coaches McNally and Peak refused to comment on the change to Maryland's coaching staff. However, they both agreed that today these extremely gifted Maryland players proved that they can achieve anything that they put their minds to. The Maryland team would like to thank the Georgetown team for a well-played, fun filled game.

SENIOR DIVISION:

Dream 36, Mystics 25:

The Mystics dropped a hard fought contest with the Dream in both teams' second game of the season. The Mystics took an early lead, but the score was tied 8-8 at the end of the 1st

quarter and 10-10 midway through the 2nd. The Dream then went on a scoring spree, hitting almost every shot they put up and by the end of the 3rd quarter held a 10 point lead, which the Dream extended to 18 halfway through the 4th. Never count the Mystics out though. Carly Drusedum put up all 5 of her points in the 4th quarter and Sophia Boudreaux added 6 more in the second half to make the game's end exciting for the fans. Sophie Boisvert and Aaliyah Sanchez had 4 points each for the game and Isabela Lebron-Rivera scored her first bucket of the season. Some key rebounds were pulled down by Ava Chabot and Zoe Minchini, and Mia Jaworski showed a lot of hustle on both ends of the court.

WEEK OF 1/11/2015

MINOR DIVISION:

Bulldogs 22, Owls 16:

The Bulldogs were hot today in their first victory of the season! The entire team worked together well and were really into the game! The following Bulldogs played super-tough "D" today: Lilly Grose, Clair Johnson, Francesca Giordano and Lauren Fressola. Kelly Taylor and Corinne Daly tied each other for today's "tasty jumper" award. Kelly and Corinne also played some very aggressive "D" to complement their offensive efforts as well. The leading scorer for the Bulldogs was Kerry Garde, who had a sensational game, with a season high 14 points! Special shout-out #1 goes to our "3rd grade super-star" Kathryn Torla, for her contribution on both ends of the court today. Special shout-out #2 goes out to the Owls team who played hard to the last second of the game today.

It was a back and forth battle with steals and rebounds throughout the game but the Bulldogs pulled away in the last half to take the Owls 22-14.

The first quarter was close with a score of 8-8 but with the Bulldogs adding two buckets and Sophia Cote adding one for the Owls, it brought the score to 12-10. The second quarter proved to be a battle as there were plenty of steals and jump balls, but no one scored on either team until less than 10 seconds to go when the Bulldogs scored to make it 14-10 at the half. Jacqueline Hamad scored in the third quarter for the Owls to cut the lead to only 2: 14-12. But then the Bulldogs scored two buckets to make it 18-12. With only seconds left in the quarter, the Owls attempted three shots but none of them hit. The Owls cut the lead to 4 when Isabella Mangini missed and put it up again for a bucket. Score was then 18-14. But with the Bulldogs making two more shots, the score was 22-14. The defense became more intense with both teams and there were plenty of steals and great passing but no one scored. That is until the Bulldogs made the last bucket making the final score 22-16 and the Bulldogs won. Great hustle and effort by both teams!!

JUNIOR DIVISION:

Maryland 22, Tennessee 14:

In Week 2 of the West Hartford Girls Basketball League 2015 season, Maryland and Tennessee played a game of an exasperating 48 minutes of shots that just could not find their way into the hoops. Both squads fired tirelessly, shot after shot only to see them bounce off the back of the rim, slide around on the inside of the hoop and fly back out, or bounce back out into play for some other unexplained reason. After the game both the Maryland and Tennessee coaches would comment on the possibility that an evil curse loomed over the hoops at Conard Gymnasium on that Sunday afternoon.

Tennessee fought the curse and took an early lead as Maryland struggled to find its groove. Down by 4 going into the second quarter, Maryland's offense showed a little life as guards Jess McNally and Mia Olsen fought fiercely against the hoops that showed them no mercy as the two gathered the lion's share of Maryland's points. Meanwhile Maryland's centers Emma Main, and Savannah Peak, along with Maryland's forwards Savannah Paolitto and Kelley Yezza battled to beat the mysterious force that held Maryland's shot percentage to an atypical low, as the numerous rebounds that rained down on the court were pushed back up to the boards over and over. These players also fed their many defensive rebounds to the hands of Maryland's guards as Maryland tried to rally up some fast break points.

Maryland's hard fought win could not have been obtained without the incredible offensive and defensive efforts of guards Havyn Ganci, Gabriella Wojdyl and forwards Anastasia Caldwell and Bea Sierra. Tennessee threw everything they had at these four talented athletes and Ganci, Wojdyl, Caldwell and Sierra not only met the challenge, but they overcame it. These four young players played like well-seasoned veterans as they forced turnovers on defense and enabled Maryland's offense to slow things down and control the clock with some well-timed precision passes.

The Maryland and Tennessee teams left court having learned one of the many lessons that competitive sports teach you; that sometimes in life the ball just doesn't bounce your way. The Maryland team wishes to acknowledge the talents of the Tennessee team, and their coaches and would like to thank them for a well-played and exciting game.

Tennessee lost to Maryland, 22-14, in an intense game. The game started off close with great defensive plays led by Brooke Nemirow, Kallie Guerraz, and Carmen True . Although

Brooke was undersized compared to her opponent she played “big” and contested the shots of Maryland. The strong defense continued throughout the game with Sophia Cieplinski and Maleea Griffin-Prado fighting for the ball, blocking shots, and grabbing rebounds. Luna Laila Caplan scored 4 points in the first half by driving hard to the basket. Maleea followed with 2 points of her own.

In the second half Tennessee came out strong with Ella O’Connor, Samantha Kruezek, and Ella Varano working together with great passes and strong defense, resulting in Ella V. scoring 2 points. In the last quarter of the game, the pressure was on. Tennessee came out determined to play hard. Grace Araya led the defensive pack, with the help of Sierra Stevens, and the continued aggressiveness of Maleea, and Sophia. The game concluded with Luna scoring 4 points, and Kallie 2 points. Congratulations to Maryland on their victory.

Syracuse 25, Georgetown 10:

Georgetown played their first game of the season after their bye-week and met Syracuse. Georgetown played tough and never gave up despite great rebounding from Syracuse. The Junior Hoyas had many great passes and lots of open shots. Syracuse was led by Lola Smith who displayed great energy and toughness, grabbing lots of rebounds and passing to her teammates.

North Carolina 28, Villanova 24:

North Carolina and Villanova played an amazing game of basketball on Sunday with both teams going point for point and beginning the second half tied up at 22 each. North Carolina pulled ahead and maintained the lead with outstanding defensive play, gaining rebounds, and moving the ball quickly up the court. Six out of the nine players on

the court scored: Talia Greenspoon with 14; Maggie Mieczkowski with 2; Isabella Gwiazdoski with 4; Therese Maloney with 10; Jenna Verrengia with 6, and Shoshana Levy with 2. North Carolina's unselfish play and passing to the open player contributed to the win. Our most valuable players for Game 2 are Talia Greenspoon for her leadership and skill on offense and Nora Hanlon for her aggressive defense and excellent rebounding.

UConn 34, Pittsburgh 26:

Elizabeth York scored 14 points and Emma Clifford had 10 to lead UConn.

SENIOR DIVISION:

Storm 26, Dream 19:

Week 2 of the WHGBL season began with a cut-throat match-up between The Storm and The Dream. Erin Murray and Olivia Marcella led an unrelenting Storm offense against a strong and talented Dream team. As a strong two-headed tandem, they took the ball hard to the hole, and found Emma Boulter open underneath for several great shots. Danielle Weinberg and Julia Marcella clamped down on defense, blocking shots and stealing balls that led to fast breaks and fouls on the other team.

Dinaka Onoh and Bryanna Olsen crashed the boards hard, and were rewarded with some great baskets. They were fed by the lightning-quick Marissa Lazinsk, who not only distributed the ball, but had some beautiful baskets. She was freed up repeatedly by solid screens set by Ali Sauer, when she wasn't busy scooping up loose balls and rebounds. Mia Ferguson showed great anticipation in the passing lanes, stealing the ball several times for some great break-away layups.

The solid defensive effort put forth by the entire team enabled the Storm to break away from a Dream team that kept the game tight until the very end.

WEEK OF 1/4/2015

MINOR DIVISION:

Camels 22, Bulldogs 12:

Hats off to the Camels for playing a great game! The Bulldogs did a good job trying to shake-off the long holiday break. Emma DeMichele "broke the ice" with the 1st Bulldogs bucket of the season. Kathryn Torla's impressive long-range jumper amazed the crowd! Kerry Garde was the leading scorer for the Bulldogs with 6 points. Claire Johnson and Madison Donelson played some tough "D" for the team and by the end of the contest today all the girls got into the excitement of playing their first game of the season. Congrats to the Camels! Expect some seriously feisty play from the Bulldogs to come this year!

JUNIOR DIVISION:

Maryland 52, Villanova 28:

Maryland and Villanova met at Conard High School gymnasium for an exciting hour of basketball Sunday to open the 2015 season for West Hartford Girls Basketball. Shortly after tip off, Villanova fired the first shot to get things moving. Maryland answered right back, settling in to hold the lead throughout the game.

Maryland's new recruits, Bea Sierra, Havyn Ganci, Gabriella Wojdyl, Anastasia Caldwell and Kellie Yezza, mixed in with the veterans like peas and carrots. Guards Ganci and Wojdyl complimented the athletic talents of Maryland senior guards Jess McNally and Mia Olsen in a total team effort to keep the score table staff busy.

Meanwhile Maryland's well-seasoned and able-bodied senior forwards, Savannah Paolitto and Emma Main found support from Sierra, Yezza, and Caldwell as the players down below owned the boards and the baseline. Maryland senior centers Savannah Peak and Elizabeth LaMarco aided the win by strong rebounding, putting the ball back up into the hoop.

The Maryland Basketball Team would like to thank the very talented and well-coached Villanova team for a well-played game.

Syracuse 25, Tennessee 15:

Syracuse and Tennessee played a great game to open the season. Tennessee had great hustle and determination and scored on hard work inside. Syracuse prevailed in the end through great rebounding and getting lots of second shot opportunities. Charlotte Kennedy was a standout player for Syracuse. Both teams are looking forward to a great season ahead!

Tennessee opened the season with aggressive defensive plays and fast offensive breaks. Standouts on defense were Sophia Cieplinski, Maleea Griffin-Prado, Ella Varano, and Carmen True. They were hustling to the ball, and staying on their player throughout the game. Offensive standouts were Ella O'Connor, Ella Varano, and Luna Laila Caplan with excellent passing and shots to the basket. Luna scored a total of 10 points making her a standout in the game. Ella V. made a point off of a foul shot, and Sophia landed 2 points. The passing fundamentals learned in practice showed in the game with Grace Baument, Samantha Kruezek, and Grace Araya. Kallie Guerraz showed good rebounding skills, and Sierra Stevens and Brooke Nemirow worked well with the team. Congratulations to Syracuse on their victory 20-13.

Providence 24, Pittsburgh 23:

Providence beat Pittsburgh 24 to 23 with no time remaining with a game winning foul shot by Libby Schmerzler. Leading scorer for Providence was Marisa Adams.

North Carolina 46, UConn 22:

It was a great day for North Carolina's season opener against UConn. North Carolina came out strong, hustling to get the ball up the court, and passing well in a real team effort for the win. Our defense stopped UConn's drives to the basket and opened up several fast break opportunities for our offense to score. Passing to the open man and unselfish play was the name of the game. Seven out of eleven players scored: Therese Maloney(14), Nora Hanlon(6), Ashley Gelber(8), Isabella Gwiazdoski(8), Jenna Verrengia(4), Anabel Dease(4), and Lila Pierce(2)! Today's MVP's are Theresa Maloney for scoring our first points of the season and for being high scorer; and Anabel Dease for her determination and never giving up attitude, which makes us all forget she the smallest team member!

SENIOR DIVISION:

Storm 23, Sun 18:

The Storm and The Sun kicked off the 2015 WHGBL season in grand fashion. The Storm and the defending league champions took part in a nip and tuck game that wasn't decided until the very end.

Marissa Lazinsk helped lead a strong Storm attack on offense, frequently feeding a speeding Mia Ferguson and Dinaka Onoh for layups underneath. Ali Sauer and Bryanna Olsen helped clean the boards and helped with putbacks. Erin Murray and Olivia Marcella pushed the team forward and keep the team driving hard. Emma Boulter and Danielle Weinberg had a strong presence down low, keeping

the Sun off balance all game. Julia Marcella was a stalwart on defense, leading to steals and strong drives to the basket.

Despite falling behind in the fourth quarter, the team pulled together to play lockdown defense and mount a solid comeback to take the lead, a position from which they never looked back.

Lynx 29, Mystics 22:

The Mystics opened the season with a hard fought contest against the Lynx. The game was tied at the end of the 1st quarter while both teams worked off their opening game jitters. The Lynx then put on a bit of a scoring run in the second quarter and the first half of the 3rd. But the Mystics showed great fortitude in never giving up and made a couple of strong runs, outscoring the Lynx in the second half of the game and coming within a couple points of a tie, but unable to close the Lynx out. Scoring by the Mystics was balanced, as 6 out of 9 players put up points, with the high scorer for the Mystics that day being Aaliyah Sanchez, with Sophia Boudreax and Mia Jaworski also contributing multiple baskets. The defense by the Mystics got strong contributions from Zoe Minchini, Carly Drusedum, and Ava Chabot.