

Lake Erie Defenders – Ohio Program

Below is some information about our Ohio program. We hope to have the same success in Pennsylvania as we have had in Ohio.

Our program started 14yrs ago with 1 team with my oldest son, who has since graduated college and coaching in our program now, to currently about 14 teams on both the girls and boys side from 4th grade through varsity.. In those 14yrs and growth from 1 team to 14 teams we have never had a tryout. All of the players on our teams have been either referred to our program or we have watched the kids play. We could have a few more teams, but one of the things that is very important to us is making sure we have a good coach who fits the values of our program. The goal of our program is to help develop players for their respective high school teams. We want the player to contribute and help them be successful with their school team. We have had tremendous success in accomplishing this feat year after year.. For those that want to play college basketball we will help them achieve that goal also. Every player in our program that has wanted to play college basketball we have helped them get into a college to achieve the players goal / dream. (19 players from our program have played or play college basketball). We have a numerous amount of players that come through our program that also play football, volleyball, softball or baseball in college as well, including one NFL player (Luke Farrell) & 1 MLB player (Drake Batcho). We have players from as far as Erie PA, Youngstown area, Solon, Twinsburg, Lakewood and every where in between.

Our program has been successful because we focus on fundamentals on both offense and defense. We teach team basketball, there are no individuals. We teach kids how to gain 1 step and 1/2 second advantages. Often we will get "big" kids in our program who only play inside for their school team and are not allowed to shoot outside shots. We will help develop their outside game. We encourage kids to shoot if their open, do not force shots (value the possession). We will teach guards who do not post up, how to post up, recognize the mismatch. We teach the players to do all the little things, box out, help defense, plant and go, etc....We teach players to be good team mates, everyone is going to make a mistake during the game, teammates need to pick each other up and not point fingers. Our program has had 38 players earn All-Ohio honors, many multiple years and 23 players who have joined the 1,000 point club for their high school teams which is very difficult to accomplish. We have also have conference and county MVPs let alone the countless conference awards the players have earned. Our one team was ranked 22nd in the country last year. These are kids that we work with and have help developed over the years.

Here is my basketball background - I played high school basketball at Madison & College basketball at Mount Union college for 2 years, before injuries kept me from playing more. My college coach the one year was Dan Hughes who coached in the WNBA, won coach of the year and WNBA Title. He was also selected to be an assistant coach for the USA women's national team. I learned alot from him, that I

pass along to the players and coaches in our program. I also have run numerous basketball camps some with Phil Hubbard, back in the day (used to play for the Cavs), I had a chance to go overseas to play, but I choose to stay here with my wife, fiancé at the time. I ran the Madison youth basketball program for 17 yrs and have coached high school. I have players that come from over an hour to play for me and in our program. When the kids get older we take some teams to showcase tournaments to give them an opportunity to play against top competition and get them in front of college coaches (one year one game we had over 50 college coaches, including Pitno & Huggins watching our game) These experiences has allowed me to help develop many players to have a very successful high school and / or college careers.

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