

Warriors embrace life after Oglesby, Washpun

Written by Jim Ecker

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Josh Oglesby and Wes Washpun led Cedar Rapids Washington last season in scoring, rebounding, assists, steals, blocked shots and eye-popping maneuvers.

In other words, they did it all.

Brad Metzger could coach another 50 years and not find another pair like them, but he's not feeling sorry for himself. In fact, he welcomes the challenge of life after Josh and Wes.

"I'm definitely not feeling sorry for myself. That's the furthest thing from the truth," he said.

Oglesby has found a new home with the Iowa Hawkeyes and scored 16 points Thursday against Northern Illinois with four 3-pointers, his speciality. Washpun is a freshman at Tennessee, where he has played in four of the Volunteer's first five games, including 19 minutes against Duke.

They put on a terrific show for the Warriors during their careers, but that show has closed and Metzger is trying to produce another successful version. The Warriors don't have show-stoppers, but they may have more depth than they did a year ago when they finished 17-9.

"We may be able to play a lot more people, which means the competition and competitive drive is pretty high right now," Metzger said. "So it makes for a good practice."

Sean Bredl, Cyb Moa and David Tann started for Washington in the quarterfinals of the Class 4A state tournament last March against Linn-Mar and are back this year as seniors. Bredl averaged 4.9 points and 4.1 rebounds last season, making him the top returning player in both categories.

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Moa averaged 3.9 points last year, but none of the other returning players averaged more than two points per game. Metzger is not sure where the scoring will come from this season.

"Probably 10 different guys," he said.

McCauley Todd played in all 26 games last season and started two contests, so he returns with a good deal of experience. Heath Clark, Paul Nash, Jason Oney, Brock Butterfield, Zachary Williams, Austin Bergstrom, David Rosenthal and Peter Holmes all got a taste of the action last season as well.

Oglesby and Washpun raised the bar fairly high for Washington the last two seasons with back-to-back trips to the state tournament. Now it's up to the next group to keep it going. Metzger hopes the success Oglesby and Washpun enjoyed will rub off on this year's team.

"I think any kid dreams about competing at a high level in a big arena with a lot of fans," Metzger said. "They want to work a little harder in the offseason and they want to shoot a little more. We had a great offseason because of that."

Metzger doesn't know if the Warriors have the talent to make the state tournament for the third straight year, but he's not going to rule it out.

"The more you do it, the more you expect it, the more you want to be back there as a team," he said. "Regardless of who's playing and who's not, it becomes personal goals and team goals to do certain things."

The Warriors might have a secret ingredient this season, something not evident on a stat sheet.

"We have a lot of guys that we put on the floor that have around 4.0 GPAs," Metzger said. "So

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we're a high achieving team in the classroom, and honestly that spills over.

"They can conceptualize a lot of what I'm doing so we will be able to make a lot of adjustments and changes and do a lot of things during the course of the year."