

Wednesday, July 31, 2002 - Published on Wednesday & Friday


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Size a factor for AAU Yosemite Badgers

by Anthony Campeau
Sierra Star Sports

SACRAMENTO — Some-times size does matter.

It did this past weekend, in a big way as the 13-and-under AAU Yosemite Badgers girls basketball team traveled to Sacramento to be part of the biggest event of the year, the nationals.

The nationals bring together the best talents from across the country to compete in different age groups.

The tournament lasted a week. The games at the beginning of the week were pool-play and games at the end of the week were bracket-play.

The girls, however, did not fair well as they lost their two bracket games in the later rounds.

Size hurt Badgers

After pool-play, the girls opened the first round against a much bigger Tennessee TNTeam Pride team. The Badgers lost 56-23.

In the second and final game of the tournament for Yosemite, the Badgers fell 50-39 to the Island Girls from Hawaii.

"The girls played very well but the other teams were just so much bigger and quicker than us," said AAU club president Rick Slayton.

The girls struggled getting on the inside and resorted to shooting three point shots from all over the court.

First-class team

When asked if the girls may have been overwhelmed in playing in front of such a large stage, Slayton said, "Absolutely not. The girls had great attitudes on and off the court. Our girls were first-class sportsmen."

Despite the losses, Slayton feels the girls gained valuable experience and will be ready next time around.

"Nationals gave the girls a lot of experience," said Slayton. "Watching some of the best teams compete and knowing now what it takes to compete on that level is very important for the team."

Slayton added that the girls passing has improved tremendously and their individual skills are still improving.

This tournament was a spring-board for the Badgers as they now have a national tournament under their belts.

The team will lose only four players of the squad, Christin Day, Ashley Stearns, Sabrina Ressler and Terah Sondeland.

"These four girls played very well for us and we will be sorry to see them go," said Slayton.

New teams starting

But fear not, loyal basketball fans as these four will be back when the AAU club, according to Slayton, plans to make two new upper age bracket teams in the next few months.

"These girls will be the nucleus of our 15-and-under team," said Slayton.

Slayton feels it will get the girls ready for high school ball and beyond and it will also give them more exposure to scouts on the college level.

The will be no rest for the weary as the girls will travel to Reno on August 17-18 to take part in the 12-and-under division.

With the loss of the four older players, the Badgers will be able to drop down to their normal age division and the team should be a contender.

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