

2015 AAU 7th Grade Nationals Top Performers

Written by Mike Davis

KING'S ISLAND, OH – BallN Prep the Official Ranking Company for AAU Girls Basketball had the opportunity to take in the action at the 6th AAU National Championship and the following players were selected as our Top Performers and made our Watch List along with other deserving athletes:

Outside of her obvious physical talent 5'11" **Jasmine McWilliams '20** is a relentless defender and rebounder. She was unstoppable in the games I watched. She was quicker than other bigs down low and stronger than smaller players who attempted to match up with her. Jasmine stands out on a super talented team. She has great hands, runs the floor, blocks shots and puts the ball in the basket.

Sydney Parrish 5'11" '20 might be the most skilled player on the talented Sky Diggs Elite team. Sydney shoots the ball with the best of them. She is a willing rebounder in her own right and gives great effort. I think the thing that sets her apart is that she is a polished player on the perimeter for her age. She can easily shoot over most perimeter defenses and handles the ball well enough to blow by you (to the left or right) if you come out of your defensive stance. Simply...this girl has game.

In my opinion the best performer at the tournament this year was 5'8" do it all **Alexis "Lexie" Arden**. Arden is an obvious talent. She possesses all of the necessary skills to be a dominant player and she was during the tournament. Lexie is strong enough to go up against taller players inside and has the athletic ability to get up and over them if she needs to down low. Case in point, she was thrown an alley-oop in-bounds pass during a game. She can handle the ball and shoot it from the perimeter.

At 5'11" Kendall Bostic '20 completes a fantastic trio for Sky Diggs. Kendall has great skills, and shoots the ball really well. She was a problems for all of the defenders I watched try to guard her. Kendall handles the ball extremely well, and obviously understands the game as she played without any wasted motions. When she drives the ball she is going to score, or create for someone else to score.

Jayla Kelly 6' is another low post player with great skill in the class of '20 on display at the National Tournament. Kelly is strong and is nearly impossible to defend around the basket. She has good footwork and is tenacious on the glass. Jayla has good hands and does not back down when challenged by players her size. Jayla was a warrior all week for the Saint Louis Lady Bombers.

Madeline Westbeld a 5-10 post player is talented and highly skilled. Maddy demonstrated that she understands all of the nuances of the game, especially for someone in the class of '20. She scores the ball is an excellent passer and is very unselfish. Westbeld takes care of the basketball and handles it well. My favorite part of her game is her obvious competitive nature. She acts and plays like a winner.

At only 12 years old 6'2" Jakhyia Davis is and will be force to be reckoned with for opposing players. Davis tracks the ball on the glass, has excellent hands and makes pretty good decisions with the ball. She was essential to her team in breaking the press during the tournament. Early in a game vs. the ARK Mavs, Davis had 6 of her teams 12 pts., 10 rebs and 4blks. She is a stat sheet stuffer. Late in the game she rebounded the

ball took it the length of the court for a layup. It's scary to think of what could be if she really develops and gets a refined low post game.

Jaylyn James 5-9 is a pure athlete, she is flat out fast. She runs well and jumps high. Jayln has the ability to finish strong at the rim with both hands. She displayed a unique ability to slash to the hoop and gets there with the intention of scoring. Jayln showed that she is willing to shoot a mid-range jump shot, but is most special in the open court.

Running the point for the ARK Mavs was **5'6" Laykn Sanders '20**. Laykn possesses a high basketball IQ and is fundamentally sound. She is unselfish and gets the players around her involved in the offense. When needed Laykn has scoring ability and will make you pay from 3pt. range. She is a solid guard with her best basketball in front of her.

The Division 2 National Championship IN Garden Sparks boasts the **talented Kaitlyn Davidson 5'9"** who has good low post skills and moves with ease to the perimeter. Kaitlyn is a solid 3pt shooter and is willing to mix it up down low. Solid on the ball defense and a willingness to share the ball make her a solid player.

Paige Bueckers 5'8" PG '20 was a silent assassin last week during tournament play. Paige is an adept point guard who seems to relish in getting her teammates great open looks at the basket. She is a crafty ball handler and a deadeye shot. Paige seemed to play her best ball against the best competition. Paige has the skills to pay the bills.

When it comes to rebounding it would be hard to match **6'1" post player Malaysia Chames '20**. When Chames gets her hands on the ball it's over until she decides to outlet the ball or put it up and in the basketball. Chames is strong around the rim and is relentless on the offensive and defensive glass.

6'1" Katelyn Levings '20 is long and athletic. She runs the court well and is a presence on the defensive end with the ability to get out and contest perimeter shots. Katelyn has good hands and moves well through the lane displaying an ability to get open.

My tag line for **Myra Cuffee 5'8"** is that, Myra gets buckets. Honestly, she did not catch my eye at first, but every time I looked up Cuffee was making a play. She can score in multiple ways, from 3, driving the lane, offensive rebounds or turning defense into offense. Myra displays a toughness and swag that comes from being a winner.

Taylor Thompson is a solid low post player. Her best basketball is ahead of her. She is strong around the basket and tracks the ball off of the glass. Taylor does not shy away from contact and is able to hold her own. Taylor plays hard when she is on the court and gives 110%.

Ella Collier 5'10" '20 would be a good basketball player if she was 5-6. She understands the game; moves well without the ball and displays an understanding of the principles of the game. The fact that she is 5-10, handles the ball, is a good passer, shoots well and moves without the ball just make her that much more difficult to deal with...the girl can play.

Smooth describes **5'10" Alice Stevenson**. Alice is athletically gifted. She is comfortable on the perimeter and has the ability to operate down low. Her athletic gifts are obvious and are matched by her effort on both ends of the floor. Alice played on a very good

team. I would like to see her on a team where she is the #1 option. I bet that would be something to watch.

Lexi Taylor 5'9" G was good during the week for the KY Royals. Lexi has the ability to handle the ball and is capable at both guard positions. Her size provides flexibility for her on the court. She is able to shoot over top of defenses and can score going to the rim.

Size and skill set **Eve Monaghan 6'** apart from other players her size. Eve has good hands and is an effective passer, putting the ball where it needs to be...she looks comfortable facing the basket and was super in high – low action.

McKenna Winans is another 6' with game. A little overshadowed by some of her teammates, McKenna is a baller. She is going to go after the ball and give you everything she has while on the court. She effects shots on the defensive end and runs with the best of them. I can't wait to see what she becomes.

Justis Odom 5'9" '20 was the hero of the D2 Championship game. Justis gets it done in a variety of ways but mainly finishing on the break, and on the offensive glass. What I saw in Justis was a player who gives maximum effort and is relentless on defense making it hard to get into the interior.

Good, Good, Good, are the words that come to mind when talking about **PG Shelby Calhoun 5'8" '20**. She is a great ball handler and passer. She gets down and plays great on the ball defense and has great hands which she uses to get deflections on defense and get her team rolling on offense.

Kayln Ervin is another 5'8" PG who makes life miserable for opposing offenses. Kayln goes hard all of the time. She is a great on the ball defender and more than capable on the offensive end of the court.

Alex Goforth 5'10" is another one of those players who poses a problem for other teams because of her size and ability to play on the perimeter. Alex showed an ability to hit the three, finish on the break and create on the offensive end of the court. As she matures and gets stronger the sky is the limit for her. I like her game.

Olivia Wells-Daniels is not fancy, but simply gets the job done. At 5-10 with strong game she is going to get the AND-1 all day. She is hard to keep off of the glass.

Maggie Brown is a 6' who has the ability to step out on the perimeter and nail the 3 pointer. She has decent handles and seems comfortable outside or slipping down low to use her considerable size and skill.

Quick as a flash is the best way to describe **PG Quierra Love 5'3" '20**. Q is a true floor general and is a vocal leader, instructing teammates and getting them into the right position on the court. If you think for a minute you will back off of her so she won't go by you then she'll nail the jumper in your face.