

Ross looks back on 2007-08 basketball season

Editors' note: Sports Editor Dan Everson conducted an e-mail interview with basketball coach John Ross, discussing the past season of SLUH basketball. The following is a transcription of the interview.

PN: Who were the team's outstanding players this season. Was there an MVP? If so, why him?

JR: Tim Cooney led us in scoring and rebounding, so I would say he was our best. Both Tim and Luis Soffner were named to the second team All-MCC.



Senior forward Luis Soffner made the All-MCC second team with the Basketbills after earning All-State honors in goal for the Soccerbills.

PN: What were the highlights of the season?

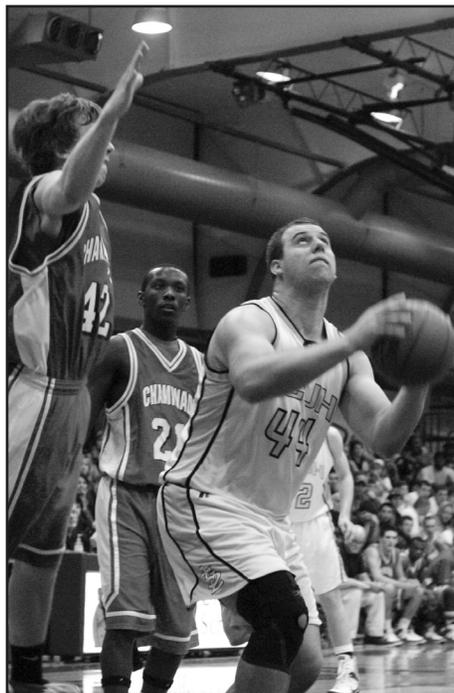
JR: We had big wins versus Maplewood, Kirkwood, and Chaminade. Also, beating Vianney three times, including a dramatic win at the buzzer in districts, was a highlight.

PN: The win at Chaminade handed the Red Devils their first and only conference loss. What was your reaction to that?

JR: After our home loss to Chaminade in

December, we started to focus on our second game with them. I felt like they were a good match-up for us and that we could beat them. Plus, they were a similar team to Webster. It was a huge win for us because it was a win we worked towards for several weeks.

PN: The team suffered from a lack of depth at forward this year, with both senior Ben Evans and junior Markus Brooks out. How did you deal with that lack of depth?



Senior forward Ben Evans (44) missed most of the season with a dislocated knee.

JR: Unfortunately, several players had to play out of position. Plus, the disadvantage in size hurt us in games, especially when we weren't hitting outside shots.

PN: Jared Fechter's basketball wrap article (see issue 24, page 4) describes this year as a "down year" for the Metro Catholic Conference (MCC). What did you think of the conference this season?

JR: I don't think there is such a thing as a down year in the MCC. I do think that players that may have "ended up" at Vashon are now making other high school basketball programs better all over the area.

PN: What is your reaction to finishing fourth in the MCC?

JR: Finishing fourth was disappointing. We

very easily could have won a couple more, and Chaminade could have lost a couple more. It illustrates how important each game, each possession, each free throw can be. You have to play your best at all times. There are no second chances.



Junior Darrin Young avoids DeSmet star Will Bruin as he leaps toward the basket.

PN: What is your reaction to your overall record of 12-14?

JR: Looking back, if we would have shot just average from the free-throw line, we would have won at least five more games. It is frustrating, but it is also a challenge to the returning players—a challenge to not have poor free-throw shooting affect our record so dramatically. Having said that, I do feel that we played hard every game. As a coach, that's all you can ask.

I will add that this team was one of the most selfless teams I have ever coached. They had great leaders and the players accepted their roles. That is rare, but it makes the season that much more enjoyable.

All photos by
Zac Boesch,
PN staff photographer.