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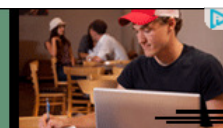
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## LEUZINGER CLAIMS FIRST CIF CHAMPIONSHIP

By RON GUILD, Sports Editor

Story Created: Mar 8, 2010 at 5:03 PM PDT

( Story Updated: Mar 8, 2010 at 5:03 PM PDT )

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Leuzinger High School has a fairly rich history in boys basketball.

The program has produced such current NBA players as Dorell Wright and Russell Westbrook and a college player Donnell Beverly (Connecticut).

What it didn't have until Saturday was a championship.

The Olympians (24-7), reversing the disappointment of last year's title game loss to Thousand Oaks, claimed the first Southern Section crown in the 82-year history of the school with their 58-39 victory over Santa Monica in the IA final at the Honda Center in Anaheim.

Reggie Morris Jr., in his eighth year in charge of the program, acknowledged the coaching influence of his father, Reggie Sr., who directed Manual Arts to a pair of City Section titles.

"I have a lot to live up to as far as coaching goes," he said. "All the things I got from my dad, I use as a coach. I also feel blessed to have had great players here."

He has pretty good ones now.

Amir Garrett, a 6-6 junior forward who played at Sierra Vista in Las Vegas a year ago, is the leading scorer for the Olympians. He had 14 points and five rebounds against Santa Monica (24-7).

Delon Wright, whose brother, Dorell, plays for the Miami Heat, had 13 points, seven rebounds, seven steals, four blocked shots and four assists.

Aqeel Quinn had 13 points.

The returning players used last season's loss in the final as motivation going into the current season.

"Last year hurt real bad, so when we went into the summer, we talked about winning a championship," Quinn said. "When Amir came in, I really thought we could do it."

Garrett was happy to help them get over the hump.

"It means a lot winning a championship because I heard they were heartbroken when they lost," he said.

By jumping out to a 22-5 lead after eight minutes, Leuzinger was able to establish control early and never give it up.

Santa Monica, held to 29.1 percent shooting from the field, still trailed by 16 points at halftime and 22 after three periods.

"Leuzinger jumped on us from the get-go," Vikings coach James Hecht sad.

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"A point of emphasis for us was winning the battle of the boards, and we lost that. We gave them too many second-chance points. Plus, we didn't take care of the ball."

Hecht was especially impressed with Wright.

"He's a well-rounded player," the coach said. "We noticed on tape he does a bit of everything. He's good on the inside and good on the perimeter."

James Montgomery, whose 10 points led Santa Monica, was caught off guard by Leuzinger's fast start.

"We weren't expecting them to jump out like that," he said. "It kind of shocked us and took us a whole quarter to get ourselves together. By that time, it was too late."

Leuzinger hosts Washington Prep Tuesday in the first round of the Division I regionals.



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