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## Fryer on basketball: Mater Dei bench takes on important role

December 21, 2015 4:18 PM

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By STEVE FRYER  
STAFF WRITER

Mater Dei has not enjoyed a great deal of depth on its boys basketball team in recent years.

But then, when you have **Stanley Johnson** on your team, how much depth would you really need?

This season, Mater Dei is deep. The Monarchs are so deep that during a game it might take a few seconds for Coach **Gary McKnight** to figure out which substitutes to select. He has many excellent choices.

The reserves came through in the North Orange County Championships. Mater Dei was missing three top players, including returning senior starters **MJ Cage**, who was All-County first team last season, and point guard **Bailey Stout**, and junior forward **Matt Weyand** who will start plenty of games. Cage has missed games because of a sore knee, Stout has a hamstring issue and Weyand is recovering from a sprained ankle.

On Saturday, the Monarchs beat Ayala of Chino Hills, 72-68, in overtime in the championship game of the North Orange County Championships at Sonora. Reserve junior forward **Justice Sueing** scored 23 points with 11 rebounds and six assists, and reserve sophomores **Harrison Butler** and **Michael Wang** added 12 points each. Wang had 11 rebounds.

Sueing and Butler were named to the all-tournament team.

**Spencer Freedman**, a starting sophomore guard who transferred from Santa Monica, scored 19 points and was selected the tournament's most valuable player.

"I'm very proud of how we won those last two games," said McKnight, including the Monarchs' 12-point win over Servite in Friday's semifinals. "Basically, we did it with four sophomores, two juniors and a senior."

Mater Dei had a 35-28 lead at halftime, led by four after three quarters and were taken to overtime by what one might call executive order - Ayala's **Miles President** made a buzzer-beating 3-pointer.

Like Mater Dei, Ayala likely will be on the CIF-Southern Section's Open Division "Watch List" that debuts Jan. 11.

The Monarchs have no games this week as they prepare to play in the prestigious Beach Ball Classic in South Carolina.

Jump stops around Orange County boys basketball:

- Servite beat Downey, 57-53, to finish third in the North Orange County tourney.
- The two-day Orange County North-South Challenge at El Toro concludes today with six games. Among them

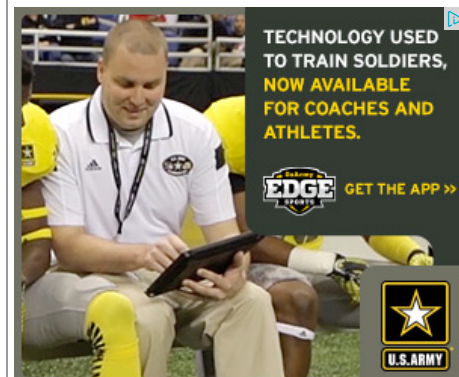
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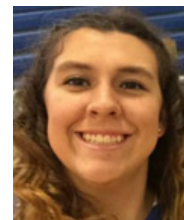
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are Capistrano Valley vs. Corona del Mar at 1:30 p.m. (CdM beat CVC by five points in the Wilkins Classic last week); and county No. 3 Orange Lutheran vs. No. 4 Los Alamitos and UC Irvine signee **Eyassu Worku** at 7:30 p.m. Admission is \$7 for adults, \$5 for high school students and children 13 and younger, and free for children 5 and younger.

- The post-Christmas tournaments begin Saturday, including the Orange Holiday Classic, the Estancia Coast Classic and the Tustin Classic.
- The Orange Holiday Classic, which has been played for decades, is at Hope University in Fullerton (on Nutwood Ave., across the street from Cal State Fullerton). Among its eight first-round games Saturday is O.C. No. 6 Servite vs. No. 10 Yorba Linda at 1:50 p.m. The championship game is Dec. 30 at 8:30 p.m.
- The Estancia Coast Classic is at Estancia. Among its 16 teams are Calvary Chapel, Fountain Valley, Pacifica and Dana Hills. Its championship game is Dec. 30 at 7:30 p.m.
- Northwood, champion of last week's Irvine World News/Gary Raya Classic, is in the Tustin Classic at Tustin. Also in that 16-team tournament are San Clemente, Clovis West and Colony of Ontario. Colony is No. 6 in the CIF-SS Division 3AA rankings. The tournament's championship game is Dec. 30 at 7:30 p.m.
- Corona del Mar beat Laguna Beach, 57-44, Saturday in the championship game of the Wilkins Classic at Westminster. The tournament did not select an MVP or an all-tournament team.
- Corona del Mar coach **Ryan Schachter** said his MVP nomination would have been the Sea Kings' **Matt Ctrvrtlik**, who scored 18 points with 14 rebounds against Laguna Beach. **Sam Kobrine** scored 20 points in the championship game and, like Ctrvrtlik, made four 3-pointers in the game.
- Capistrano Valley Christian beat Huntington Beach, 56-45, in the third-place game in the Wilkins tournament. CVC coach **Zach Brogdon** said his all-tournament nominations would have been led by **Cameron Conley** and **Amazon Nwoye**.
- Ocean View won the Loatella Tournament. The Seahawks beat Western, 64-63, in the tournament championship game. Ocean View's **Zamir Kelly** was tournament MVP.
- **Roger Holmes**, Santa Margarita's first basketball coach and who later was the coach at Marina and his alma mater Fountain Valley, is co-coach with **Tim Walsh** at Ocean View.

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Which quarterback do you think is a lock to make the All-County team?

- ☐ Santa Margarita's KJ Costello
- ☐ San Juan Hills' Patrick O'Brien
- ☐ Tesoro's Devon Modster
- ☐ La Habra's Eric Barriere
- ☐ Brock Johnson, Mission Viejo
- ☐ Lj Northington, Orange Lutheran
- ☐ Chase Garbers, Corona del Mar
- ☐ Mater Dei's JT Daniels
- ☐ Los Alamitos' Jack Telenko

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