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# NEW REGIME: THE BEST PLAYERS AND SNEAKERS FROM THE 2016 SPALDING HOOPHALL CLASSIC

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Every year for the Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday, some of the country's best high school basketball teams travel to Springfield, Massachusetts—the birthplace of basketball—to play in the Spalding Hoophall Classic. Held at Springfield College, the tournament has become one of the nation's top amateur basketball events (<http://blog.champssports.com/inside-2015-spalding-hoophall-classic-basketball-tournament/>) and has hosted names such as **Kevin Durant**, **Kyrie Irving**, **Anthony Davis**, **DeMarcus Cousins**, **Andrew Wiggins**, and more.

This year, for its 15th anniversary, more than 55 teams and 20 states across the country were represented. On Monday, the marquee and final day of the tournament, the next-tier of trendsetters and superstars (<http://blog.champssports.com/best-high-school-basketball-players-since-2000/>) took center stage.

**[RELATED: Fame Game: Inside the 2015 Spalding Hoophall Classic, America's Best HS Basketball Tournament (<http://blog.champssports.com/inside-2015-spalding-hoophall-classic-basketball-tournament/>)]**

The first game of the day featured Bentonville High School from Arkansas against Hall of Fame coach Bob Hurley and New Jersey's St. Anthony Friars. Kentucky head coach **John Calipari** was in attendance to catch a glimpse of McDonald's All-American **Malik Monk**, who will play in Cal's backcourt next season. Monk (No. 8 in the ESPN 100) is a special player and fits the mold of other athletic guards such as **John Wall** and **Eric Bledsoe** that have suited up for the Wildcats.

Despite that, Bentonville had a tough time against St. Anthony's. The Friars did not stray away from playing against a McDonald's All-American and mostly doubled-teamed Monk whenever they had the chance. They were led by senior guard and Georgetown commit **Jagan Mosley** and the game MVP, junior guard **R.J Cole**. Cole put up 23 points to lead the Friars to a 72-50 win. The Friars wore a plethora of Nike models ranging from Kyrie's, LeBron 13s, Hyperdunks, and custom St. Anthony KD 8s.

Monk rocked the Nike KD Trey 5 III and had the crowd on his side after throwing down two emphatic dunks. What stood out to me was how much he has worked on his game and body throughout the past year. He has NBA-ready athleticism and has the potential to be a one-and-done prospect under Calipari.

Kentucky has the No. 1 recruiting class ranked by ESPN (Monk, point guard **De'Aaron Fox** (No. 7 in ESPN 100), man-child **Edrice "Bam" Adebayo** (No. 4 in ESPN 100), skilled forward **Wenyen Gabriel** (No. 15 in ESPN 100), and **Sacha Killeya-Jones** (No. 27 in ESPN 100)) and there is chatter this is their best class yet under Coach Cal. With Kentucky known as "NBAU" the recruiting job for Calipari never ends. It is a reason why he is one of the greatest college basketball recruiters and was in Springfield throughout most of the weekend to try to land a few more prospects.

**[RELATED: The 10 Best High School Basketball Players Since 2000 (<http://blog.champssports.com/best-high-school-basketball-players-since-2000/>)]**

The next game featured Maryland's basketball powerhouse DeMatha Catholic coming back from behind to beat Chaminade Prep 72-69 in overtime. Chaminade, the No. 14 team in the nation, is led by Duke commit and arguably the No. 1 player in the country, **Jayson Tatum**.

At first glance, it's not hard to see why Tatum is considered the best in the country. Though he struggled throughout much of the first half, the 6-9 forward still posted 40 points and 14 rebounds. During the second half, he picked it up and consistently answered for the Red Devils. Tatum handles the ball like a guard and worked on his body this past summer to take more contact when he gets to the rim. He missed the game-tying three at the end of overtime but you can tell he has that competitive edge that will carry over to the next level.

In addition, he already has the sneaker game down, rocking one of 2015's biggest releases (<http://blog.champssports.com/the-most-important-sneakers-of-2016/>), **Drake's** OVO Jordan X. The rest of his squad brought the heat as well with the LeBron 13, Air Jordan "Bred" XI, Air Jordan XIII, and KD8s. (DeMatha might've won the game but definitely lost this battle, wearing mostly team colorways for the KD 8 and LeBron IX.)

Duke is going to be a monster team next year with a historic recruiting class led by Tatum and **Chris Webber** clone **Harry Giles** (No. 1 in ESPN 100). The Blue Devils also signed point guard **Frank Jackson** (No. 11 in ESPN 100), who dropped 49 points on Saturday (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JD1Y3sLsTTI>) at the Hoophall against Arizona commit **Kobi Simmons**.

DeMatha, which boasts NBA alums like **Victor Oladipo**, and **Jerian** and **Jerami Grant**, has a few special players of their own. Washington commit and McDonald's All-American **Markelle Fultz** (No. 10 in ESPN 100) and junior **D.J. Harvey, Jr.** (No. 17 in ESPN 60) both did solid jobs in their victory over Tatum's squad. Fultz is a natural leader and stepped up big in crunch time. He finished with 20 points, five rebounds, five assists, three steals, and more than a few reactions from the crowd with some nifty crossovers. Harvey, a 6-6 wing considering suitors like Duke, Arizona, and North Carolina, is a 2017 prospect oozing with potential. He has a long list of suitors that includes Duke, Arizona, North Carolina and a bunch more. DeMatha kept things simple in terms of what kicks they wore on the court. They mostly wore team colorways of the KD8's and LeBron Soldier 9.

#### [RELATED: LeBron's Best Moments in the Nike Zoom Soldier Series

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The next game featured prestigious basketball powerhouses Mater Dei and Oak Hill (without stud prospects Giles and Mississippi State recruit **Mario Kegler** (No. 32 in ESPN 100)). Both head coaches—**Steve Smith** for Oak Hill and **Gary McKnight** for Mater Dei—are two of the best high school basketball coaches in the country when it comes to top-level talent. Oak Hill's alumni speaks for itself with **Carmelo Anthony**, **Kevin Durant** (did not graduate from Oak Hill), **Brandon Jennings**, **Ty Lawson**, **Rajon Rondo**, **Jerry Stackhouse**, **Josh Smith**, and **Ben McLemore** all playing for the Warriors.

With Mater Dei lacking Oak Hill's star potential, everyone believed this game would be a true smackdown. But the Monarchs, led by 2018 guard **Spencer Freedman**, came to play and kept things really close until the last quarter. Oak Hill got contributions from Alabama commit **Braxton Key** (No. 54 in ESPN 100), **Matt Coleman** (No. 21 in ESPN 60), and **Ty-Shon Alexander** (No. 44 in ESPN 60) in a 74-55 victory.



Oak Hill is sponsored by **Jordan Brand**, so their level of heat on court is almost always unmatched. On court for the Warriors were OVO Xs, custom XX9 Lows, the Super.Fly 4, the "Gamma" XII, and the "Bulls Over Broadway" Air Jordan X. Mater Dei mostly wore the new Kobe XI, which mixed perfectly with their color scheme.

While Oak Hill has the history, Montverde Academy has the spotlight. Led by head coach **Kevin Boyle**, the Florida-based



school has

grown into one of the most respected basketball programs in the country, having won three straight high school basketball national championships. (For the Hoophall, the team donned a special pair of the Nike Kobe X with a large 3 imprint on the side of the sneaker.) Montverde has been producing raw talent, such as Los Angeles Lakers rookie **D'Angelo Russell**, Sixers prospect **Joel Embiid**, and LSU phenom and probable 2016 No. 1 pick **Ben Simmons**. Boyle is one of the most respectable coaches in the country, having also led some notable St. Patrick's squads in the past with **Kyrie Irving** and **Michael Kidd-Gilchrist**.

Montverde's 81-67 win against California's Sierra Canyon was a glimpse into the future. The No. 3-ranked Eagles are stacked with so much talent that two of the most talented players in the country, sophomores **Silvio De Souza** (No. 2 in ESPN 25) and **E.J. Montgomery** (No. 3 in ESPN 25), barely played. In their absence, **Simi Shittu** had a breakout game for the Eagles, earning MVP honors with 24 points and 10 boards. Shittu is only a sophomore from Canada and had scouts talking about his relentless play.



The Eagles received help from Ohio State-bound forward **Micah Potter**. Potter is a big kid and showcased a soft touch from midrange. He is going to be solid contributor for **Thad Matta** and the Buckeyes for years to come.

Sierra Canyon, not to be overlooked, is another team boasting huge potential with junior forward **Cody Riley** (No. 29 in ESPN 60) and crafty point guard **Remy Martin**. UConn coach **Kevin Ollie** was in attendance to check out

Riley; the 6-7 monster did not disappoint. Riley dominated the boards, finishing with 25 points and 15 rebounds.

What's scary is that Sierra Canyon also recently landed transfer and 2018's No. 1 player, **Marvin Bagley III**. Bagley III sat on the bench wearing the "72-10" Air Jordan XI after being ruled ineligible to play this year by the California Interscholastic Federation Southern Section. Next year, though? Look out.



The game of the night had to be Florida's High Point Christian Academy going against the No. 1 team in the nation, Chino Hills High School from California. With both squads donning the new adidas D Lillard 2, Chino Hills won 100-75 and had the crowd on their feet throughout most of the game, showcasing their high-octane offense led by the Ball family. McDonald's All-American **Lonzo Ball** (No. 5 in ESPN 100) and his younger brothers **LiAngelo** (2017) and **LaMelo** (2019) are all committed to UCLA. In this one, all three shined. LiAngelo scored 29 points and wasn't afraid to pull from 30 every chance he got. Meanwhile, LaMelo finished with 21. Chino Hills ultimately slowed down one of Kentucky's top recruits, High Point's Bam Adebayo, who finished with 13 points and 18 rebounds in the loss.

But while his two brothers are talented, Lonzo is on another level. After finishing with a staggering line of 16 points, 18 assists, 10 rebounds, four steals, and three blocks, Jerry Meyer, the Director of Basketball Scouting for 247Sports, called him the "most intimidating prospect (<https://twitter.com/jerrymeyer247/status/689562606034669568>) I've scouted in 13 years in the business." without a doubt, Lonzo is the best passer in high school basketball and even landed the top spot on ESPN's Top Ten Plays after throwing a one-handed full-court pass (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ydDnGpGovSI>) to LiMelo off a ball that was going out of bounds.

We were in the house for all of it. Continue above to see some of the best action and sneakers from the tournament's biggest stars.

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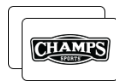
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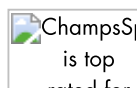
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