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RIVERSIDE – Here are five observations from the second CIF Southern Section Open Division semifinal played Saturday night at Cal Baptist University and won by Mater Dei, 76-66, over Etiwanda:

*Monarchs' senior **Spencer Freedman** continued to show why there isn't a better "floor leader/point guard" in Southern California.

His numbers (22 points, two rebounds, five assists, three turnovers and a steal) weren't overwhelming but his poise against a very good half-court defensive team and ability to run his team's offense to near-perfection was what ultimately enabled the Monarchs to pull away in the fourth quarter.

He'll get significant immediate playing time at Harvard.

*His fellow Ivy League-bound (Pennsylvania) teammate, **Michael Wang**, was nothing short of superb Saturday night as well.

Is there a more offensively "skilled" player in Southern California at his size (6-foot-9ish), regardless of class standing?

It's doubtful as he demonstrated via a 23-point (seven of 13 from the field, including three of four behind the arc, and six of eight free throws), 10-rebound and eight-assist (with a single turnover) effort against the Eagles.

In the Freedman-Wang duo, Coach **Gary McKnight** and his staff have two of the half-dozen or so best passers in Southern California.

***William Breidenbach** remains a strong candidate to be the BurlisonOnBasketball SoCal Freshman of the Year.

That was evident as he hit five of eight shots for 10 points to go with eight rebounds while also doing a reasonable job of defending one of the better senior posts (**Kessler Edwards**) in Southern California.

***Elijah Harkless** of Etiwanda was the Most Outstanding Player winner while leading the Eagles to the Classic at Damien Platinum Division championship in the final week of 2017.

But he remains one of the region's most under-appreciated players.

He did his best to keep the Eagles within striking distance Saturday night while going for 23 points (including three of five from behind the arc) with four rebounds and three assists despite being limited to 22 minutes because of foul issues.

***Camren Pierce** only played about 10 minutes and didn't score against Mater Dei.

But his quickness, defensive tenacity and skill as a handler have been apparent all season.

Look for him to be one of the better 2020 guards in SoCal next season.

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