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All-SoCal team . . . headed by you-know-who

Written on March 31, 2018 by [Frank Burlison](#)

LAGUNA NIGUEL – The ultimate choice for the BurlisonOnBasketball Southern California Player of the Year got easier to make with each week in the final month or so of the 2017-18 season.

In its 10-game run to CIF Southern Section Division 1 and State Division I championships, Chino Hills High got strong performances from two of the state's most underrated (well, not any more, or course) seniors in 6-foot-2 **Ofure Ujadughele** and 6-6 **Andre Ball**.

But the lynchpin for Coach **Dennis Latimore's** team's success, during the 16-11 regular season and the playoffs, was 6-9 junior **Onyeka Okongwu**.

Onyeka was BurlisonOnBasketball's No. 1 freshman and sophomore for the past two seasons, so he didn't exactly sneak up on folks as a junior.

There were strong – and, often, overpowering – December efforts during the Battle Zone and Tarkanian Classic tournaments (at Corona Centennial and Las Vegas Bishop Gorman high schools, respectively), as well as against eventual Arizona state-champion Phoenix Shadow Mountain.

Those set the stage for January and the first half of February efforts against Spartanburg (SC) and its 2018 McDonald's All-American and Duke-bound **Zion Williamson** (on national television from the HoopHall Classic in Springfield, MA), as well as against tough Baseline League goes Etiwanda and Damien.

And, then of course, there were his performances in the Huskies' Southern Section championship win against Pasadena (38 points, 18 rebounds, six blocked shots and two assists), as well as in the team's Southern Regional come-from-behind win over St. John Bosco (12 points, 15 rebounds, seven blocks and three assists) and, finally, during last Friday night's State championship win against Las Lomas (27 points, 14 rebounds, five blocked shots and three assists) in Sacramento.

Voila!

Ladies and gentlemen, boys and girls: Okongwu was the oh-too-obvious choice as the SoCal Player of the Year – regardless of class standing.

Fifteen players (covering all classes) join him on the BurlisonOnBasketball All-Southern California team, two of those coming from State Open Division Champion Chatsworth Sierra Canyon.

FYI: Players who didn't become eligible until January (30-day "sit-outs" following transfers that didn't include valid change of residence) or players who missed more than half of their teams' games because of injuries weren't considered.

Meet Frank

Frank Burlison is a well-regarded basketball writer who was inducted into the U.S. Basketball Writers Association Hall of Fame in 2005. His opinions on the potential of high school and college players are widely respected and sought by college coaches and NBA scouts, personnel directors and general managers from coast to coast. Oh, yes – he can offer plenty of thoughts on movies, television and pop music. Yes, he can rank those, too. Hint: He's a big The Godfather, Larry Sanders, The Wire and The Beatles loyalist.



To learn more about Frank's scouting services, [click here](#).

Endorsements

"I've known Frank since he was a student at Long Beach State and no writer ever worked harder at studying and understanding basketball. When I was coaching I always put more stock into what he said about (high school) players than anyone I knew. As far as I'm concerned, he's the best there is at evaluating the potential of basketball players."

Lute Olson, Hall of Fame and NCAA Championship Winning Coach

"I have known Frank for 15 years and there is no one outside of those in the Clippers' organization that I trust more than Frank when it comes to player evaluations."

Neil Olshey, Portland Trail Blazers' General Manager

"Frank Burlison has always been a proponent of my talent and, even more so, of my potential – far before it was evident to most. Even as a smaller and determined player who was being overlooked by most high-major colleges and national scouting services, Frank always served as a friendly voice who got me into the door to most events to help me prove my talents."

Russell Westbrook, the No. 4 overall selection in the 2008 NBA Draft out of UCLA and an all-star guard for the Oklahoma City Thunder

To see what other people in basketball are saying about Frank, [click here](#).

Some of the players who fall into these categories include standout juniors **Cassius Stanley** (Sierra Canyon), **Jonathan Salazar** (St. John Bosco), **Jaden Shackelford** (Hesperia) and **Gianni Hunt** (Bishop Montgomery).

And, unlike my team ratings, San Diego-based players weren't considered since **Aaron Burgin** has made his well-informed San Diego selections as for PrepHoops.com.

Player of the Year

Onyeka Okongwu (Chino Hills) 6-9 Jr.

All-Southern California

Kalen Allen (L.A. Westchester) 6-6 Sr./Unsigned

Riley Battin (Oak Park) 6-8 Sr./**Utah**

Jules Bernard (L.A. Windward) 6-5 Sr./**UCLA**

Kihei Clark (Woodland Hills Taft) 5-8 Sr./**Virginia**

Devonaire Doutrive (Lake Balboa Birmingham) 6-5 Sr./Unsigned

Kessler Edwards (Etiwanda) 6-7 Sr./**Pepperdine**

Spencer Freedman (Santa Ana Mater Dei) 6-1 Sr./**Harvard**

Bryce Hamilton (Pasadena) 6-4 Sr./**UNLV**

Jaime Jaquez Jr. (Camarillo) 6-6 Jr.

Kenyon Martin Jr. (Chatsworth Sierra Canyon) 6-6 Jr.

Isaiah Mobley (Temecula Rancho Christian) 6-9 Jr.

Shareef O'Neal (Santa Monica Crossroads) 6-10 Sr./**UCLA**

David Singleton (Torrance Bishop Montgomery) 6-3 Sr./**UCLA**

Duane Washington Jr. (Chatsworth Sierra Canyon) 6-3 Sr./**Ohio State**

Brandon Williams (Encino Crespi) 6-1 Sr./Unsigned

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