

Towanda boys basketball rejuvenated under new leadership

By RYAN LEMAY Staff Writer

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Towanda's Quadir Brice lays the ball in as Williamson's Tanner Adriance looks on during the 2019 NTL boys' Senior All-Star game.

Review File Photo

Entering his first season as head coach of the Towanda boys basketball team, and serving as a first-time high school basketball head coach, Hughesville native Landon Henry wants to establish a new identity and culture for the Black Knights program.

After the 2020 season former Towanda head coach Ryan Napp joined the Mansfield University coaching staff as an assistant coach. Henry originally planned to work under Napp at Towanda, but now finds himself in the driver seat of what he sees as a great opportunity.

Henry graduated from Wilkes University in 2021 and was a member of the varsity basketball program all four years.

Henry wants to take everything he learned on the basketball court and apply it to his coaching.

“I have played all my life and I had some great coaches that I was able to watch and learn from,” Henry said. “As a player, I always tried to be an extension of the coaching staff on the floor so I felt like that is what prepared me most to go into coaching.”

Henry has always considered himself a vocal leader on the court and a team-first guy.

Looking back on his basketball career, Henry wants to carry on the values of putting your teammates first and doing everything possible to make the team succeed.

Stepping into the role as a first time head coach, Henry is more excited than nervous at the prospect of leading a team.

“These kids are a great group to work with,” he said. They are very coachable kids, they are hard-working, they’re competitive, and they really come to work every day so it makes life easy on me. I’m just trying to guide them in the right direction.”

Winning is a primary focus, but Henry is also looking at the big picture in what he wants to accomplish as a basketball coach and instill upon his players.

“I always preach to these guys about communication, competition, and culture. We place an emphasis on communication because we need to be on the same page and we need to hold each other accountable,” he said. “We always need to compete because that’s what life’s all about. Whether you’re

winning an interview, or winning in the classroom everything is a competition. We want to set a great example in our community and be a great group of young men that people look at and say that they do things the right way.”

Henry is already very impressed with the group he has after working with the team for just a short period of time.

“We have a great senior class starting with Mason Hartman. He’s a big force who is strong, fundamentally sound and a really smart player. Then we have senior guard Dante Ottaviani who is a really quick and athletic guard and we are looking for him to have a great year,” he said. “Our junior class is really like the heart of the team. We’ve got a junior class that loves basketball. They’ve been working this summer and it’s really showing from what I’ve seen so far.”

Hartman believes that Henry has made a great first impression with the team.

“He’s awesome. He really feels like a player,” Hartman said. “He always wants us in the gym and wants us to get better every day. He’s really motivational and it is awesome for our team.”

Towanda hosts Montrose on Monday Dec. 13 in its first game of the season. Until then, Henry plans to take this role head on and get the most from his players in preparation for the season.

“The biggest thing for us is I want to build this belief system within ourselves, and as we journey through the season, I want our guys to really buy into what we’re doing,” Henry said.” I want us to find our identity and just compete on every possession and communicate with each other. If we do that the results will come.”

Connect with Ryan Lemay: (570) 265-2151 ext. 1633; rlemay@thedailyreview.com.

Ryan Lemay