

Smedley

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grams he was able to lead and guide to success,” President of the Grant County Sports Hall of Fame Andy McCord said. “I think of his time at Eastbrook. I think of his time at Manchester and when he went to Northfield after he left Marion. He took Northfield to sectional championships and county championships. Moe’s legacy is one that, in my opinion, stands on its own. You don’t replace a Bill Green, but what you do is make your own mark, and Moe did that at Marion High School.”

Overall, Smedley finished his career with nine sectionals championships, three regionals championships, two semi-states, and a state title.

“One of the great things about Moe is he was always entertaining to watch on the sidelines,” McCord said. “He was one of those guys that made the game simple for his players. One of my favorite Moe Smedley quotes ever is, ‘You’re going to have a night where you don’t shoot the ball well, but you should never have a night where you don’t play defense well and don’t hustle.’” He preached defense, free throw shooting, and the fundamentals.”

Following the greatest coach in the history of the program, Smedley didn’t strive to be just like Green.

Rather, he incorporated his own style, coaching to the strength of his teams.

“Moe is one of those guys that made the adjustment through his career not only with the game itself, but with the style of play and with the style of players,” McCord said. “The game is different today than it was 10 years ago. Players are different. Kids, in general, are different than we were 10-20 years ago. But Moe was one of those guys who could adjust to a style and adjust to what his team’s strengths were.”

Smedley did not just teach the game of basketball while at Marion – he also strived to teach his players about life. He wanted his guys to not only be phenomenal players, but also tremendous young men once they left Marion and went out into the real world.

Randolph, who went on to have a remarkable NBA career, mostly in Memphis, credits Smedley for not only his development, but for all of his success in the league.

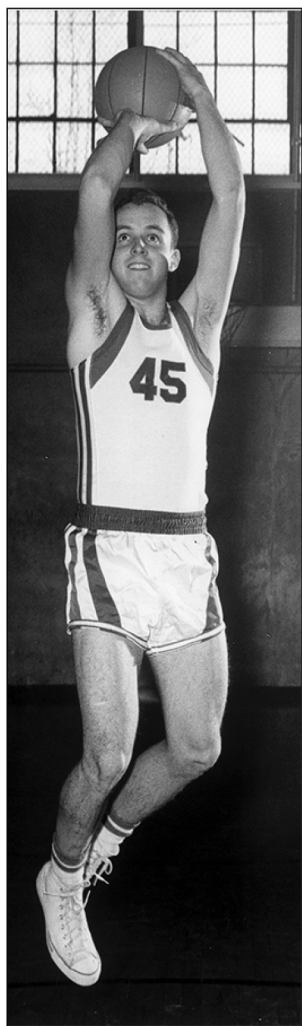
“Moe wasn’t out to win fans over, he was out to teach these young men that you can relate the game of basketball to life,” McCord said. “Sometimes you win. Sometimes you lose. You are going to struggle at different times in life, and you

struggle sometimes in a basketball season. Moe was able to do that not just with Marion, but wherever he stopped and had his coaching career. His most famous player is Zach Randolph, who had a great NBA career and is certain to be a Hall of Famer in his own right, but Zach, to this day, still has a love and admiration for Moe and what he did for him in high school. Moe was just a joy to be around.”

When it comes to all-time great coaches in Grant County, Smedley was the total package. He was successful on the floor, and he helped his players achieve their potential and find their path off of it.

And it’s those traits that have helped Smedley achieve Grant County immortality.

“Moe’s selection, in my mind, isn’t just because he was the coach of the Marion Giants,” McCord said. “My opinion is Moe Smedley belongs in the Grant County Sports Hall of Fame because of his work at Eastbrook, because of his work at Marion, and his work outside of the county as well. You look at his 35 plus years in education, his dedication to kids, and making kids not only better on the basketball court, but better men. That, for me, is Moe Smedley. His numbers



Moe Smedley as a high school player.

speaking for themselves, and Moe is certainly Hall of Fame worthy.”

Originally scheduled for April 26, the 12th annual Hall of Fame induction banquet has been postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. A makeup date will be announced by the Grant County Sports Hall of Fame at a later time.

Taylor’s Heiniger receives honors

Teegan Heiniger became the latest Taylor University student-athlete to be named a College Sports Information Directors of America Academic All-District standout, earning a spot on the NAIA Men’s At-Large District II Team on Thursday.

Heiniger was one of three men’s lacrosse student-athletes out of 10 total individuals to be honored from NAIA District II, which includes all NAIA institutions from the states of Arkansas, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi and Tennessee. The At-Large Teams include the sports of lacrosse, rifle, skiing, fencing, swimming, tennis, golf, men’s volleyball, gymnastics, water polo, hockey and wrestling.

Heiniger was tabbed for CoSIDA Academic All-District honors in his first year of eligibility and becomes the second Taylor men’s lacrosse student-athlete to receive the prestigious honor. The sophomore faceoff specialist and midfielder owns a 3.96 grade-point average in engineering and has started each of TU’s 13

games in program history. Over that time, Heiniger has picked up 82 ground balls, 163 faceoff wins, six goals and 11 assists.

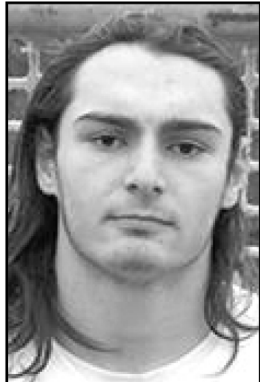
Heiniger’s honor moves TU’s nation-leading total of CoSIDA Academic All-District selections for the 2019

2020 year to 33. The sophomore will now advance to the ballot for the CoSIDA Academic All-America Team, which will be announced in June.

The CoSIDA Academic All-District award is designed to

recognize student-athletes for outstanding achievements in the classroom, as well as on the court or field of play. In order to be eligible for the honor, an athlete must have a cumulative grade-point average of 3.30, must have reached sophomore status academically with at least one full year at their current institution and must have participated in over half of the team’s competitions as a key contributor during the current season.

Student-athletes are nominated for the award by their school’s SID.



TEEGAN HEINIGER

Indiana Wesleyan’s season of growth

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in, but nobody knew how special Kyle was going to be,” Tonagel said. “Evan had not signed at that point and committed. So, we had no idea if we were going to have a good team, an average team, or a bad team.

“But once they showed up in the summer and they started playing, we began to see that this team had potential and that this time could do something special.”

The Wildcats got off to a strong start, beginning with six straight wins, including a 90-89 overtime triumph over No. 1 ranked Cornerstone in the first game of the CL/WHAC Challenge.

A tough one-point, 80-79 loss to No. 9 IU East ended IWU’s early season win streak, but the Wildcats continued to play excellent basketball through the middle of December, compiling a 12-2 record.

But heading into the New Year, the Wildcats seemingly became complacent, which resulted in three straight defeats.

Their first loss came against Our Lady of the Lake, where the Wildcats fell 87-80. Ten days later, IWU returned to Indiana to take on No. 6 Indiana Tech, but

were once again defeated, this time by a score of 88-84.

And to begin 2018, the Wildcats fell at home to conference foe Mount Vernon, 84-79, and for the first time, the Wildcats, and Tonagel, experienced some doubts.

“We just weren’t playing well. We weren’t connected,” Tonagel said. “I can’t recall too many three-game losing streaks in my 15 years. It’s one to miss shots or [play] bad defense, but when you’re not connected, and you’re not one heartbeat, that’s something that the players had to take ownership of.”

However, just like they had in 2014 and 2016, the Wildcats fought through the adversity, and in the end, it made them stronger, more connected, and better suited for a championship run.

Shortly after the Mount Vernon loss, Carlson held a players only meeting, in which he, and others, challenged the whole group, from one to 12, to step their game up and play the way they were capable of playing.

That meeting resonated with the entire team. Sure, there were some tough conversations and



Kyle Mangas drives to the hoop while the Indiana Wesleyan student section looks on.

multiple players were held accountable, but in the end, the Mount Vernon loss eventually changed the course of the entire campaign.

“When you can be open and honest like that with a team, that really makes that bond tighter,” Mangas said. “We had an even tighter-knit group from that point on.”

In the week that followed, the Wildcats had a renewed sense of

purpose. They attacked practice and workouts with a new vigor and intensity, and for the rest of the season, and through their championship run, IWU was locked in and focused on their main goal.

“The week after that three-game losing streak, we just got after it,” Coffey said. “We pushed each other. Coach pushed us. We were uncomfortable in a lot of different ways, and I think that’s what it

takes sometimes. Those are the times when teams really come together – through those struggles. It’s not always the big wins, but it’s through those struggles and the tough losses that the true team really stands out and shows up.”

The Wildcats ended the season with on a 14-2 surge, which included three double-digit victories in the Crossroads League tournament – a 102-78 triumph over cross county rival Taylor in the quarterfinal, a 90-77 victory over Huntington in the semi-final, and a 95-83 win over No. 8 Saint Francis in the championship game.

And heading into the national tournament, IWU’s confidence was at an all-time high.

“That was huge momentum. You want to keep playing in any tournament for as long as you can, and that was our third time playing Saint Francis,” Mangas said. “We were fortunate to get them at home, so winning that last game before the tournament...it boosted our confidence heading into the national tournament. It just gave us that belief of, ‘Yeah, we can make a run.’”