The "Stars" Come Out

Corie Blount Speaks At Camp

BY GABE HYATT

Two of Monrovia's finest were out on the last day (August13) of the "A Game Fundamental Basketball Clinic" put on by Coach Rodney Jefferson. Corie Blount, who attended Monrovia High School, came out to lend his support and speak to the kids not only about basketball, but about life and making smart decisions. Blount has played in the NBA for 11 years. Also in attendance was Monrovia standout Bryant Markson, who now attends The University of Utah.

The week long clinic began with representatives from the Los Angeles Sparks, including head coach Ryan Weisenberg. Kids attending the clinic received tickets a to Sparks game at the end of the week. Kids also received great advice on life from L.A. Sheriff's Commander Roberta Abner.

While the whole week was wonderful for the kids, the highlight of the week was the visit by Corie Blount. Blount has traveled around the NBA for 11 seasons, including stints with the Chicago Bulls, Los Angeles Lakers, and Philadelphia 76'ers, among others. He has played with the likes of Scottie Pippen, Allen Iverson, and Kobe Bryant. He told the kids about his travels throughout the NBA with the best story being about the great Mi-chael Jordan. Blount recalls being in the gym shooting around right after he was drafted when Jordan walked in to the gym. Blount asked if he wanted to shoot around and if he was going to be in the gym the next day. Jordan responded by saying, "I don't think so, I have some big decisions to make by tomorrow." The next day, Jordan retired.

Corie Blount began his career at the University of Cincinnati before being drafted by the Chicago Bulls. Blount was never "the star" growing up in Monrovia, but was driven to make things happen. His route to the NBA wasn't your typical one. The 6-10 Blount was only 6-5 as a senior in high school but improved and grew as a player at Rancho Santiago Junior College. Blount was named California JUCO Player of the Year in 1991, and from there went on to star at Cincinnati.

Blount stressed to the kids how important it was to be a good person. "People will help you if you are a nice person," stressed Blount. "It makes life a lot easier." He also spoke on how important school is and much it means to finish school.

On the basketball side, Blount talked about how it's not always important to be flashy and score 30 points. Blount has made a living playing the game right and fundamentally sound. He plays solid defense, is a good rebounder and makes the open shot. Blount stressed footwork, repetition and hard work. He also said how important it was to work on the fundamentals and listen to coaches on every aspect of the game.

Corie concluded his speech to the kids by telling them to come to next year's clinic because going to be even better. Blount has not been able to get involved as much as he would like to but expects that to change. "I have the right people behind me now and I want to start getting involved more with this program and the community," says Blount.

He plans on one day returning to Monrovia when his career is over. "I would like to play two or three more years; if I can play more than great." Blount currently resides in Cincinnati with his wife of five years and three kids. He has a real estate company in Cincinnati as well but is hesitant as to whether or not he will stay there after his NBA career is over. "I don't know if my knees can handle that cold weather out there. I can see myself coming back to Monrovia, maybe coaching at the high school (Monrovia High School) and getting more involved in this clinic. Plus I still have all my friends out here."

Bryant Markson was a standout at Monrovia High School and now plays at the University of Utah. You can see him play this year during the college season with numerous televised games.

Blount and Markson signed autographs and posed for pictures for the kids. Coach Jefferson was extremely pleased with how the clinic went and the response of the kids. He and Blount promised that next year's clinic will be special.