

Oswego boys basketball team gives an assist to Cammeo

By MIKE LEOEUF

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OSWEGO — In the spirit of the season, credit the Oswego varsity boys basketball team with an assist.

Through their participation in Saturday's "Hoops for Hope" event at Laker Hall, the Bucs were eligible to have one of their players receive a \$500 Mike O'Brien Scholarship.

But instead of one of the Buc players getting the scholarship, the team has decided to donate the money to burn victim Cammeo Lazzaro, an Oswego High School senior.

"Coach (Warren Shaw) mentioned he thought it would be a good idea. We all decided it would be the best thing to do with it," Buc senior Tim Hilton said. "It's more important to help out people who need it."

Hilton's teammate, senior Mike Sellars, will accept the donation on Cammeo's behalf.

"I take it as an honor that I'd be chosen to give the scholarship to her and to represent the team," Sellars said. "Hopefully it will pick her up a bit. We're all glad to hear that she's doing a lot better."

The scholarship presentations will be made during Saturday's "Hoops for Hope" events at Laker Hall.

Alliance Bank is the event sponsor.

Underwriting the scholarships are Alliance Bank (Bishop Ludden), Fulton Savings Bank (Fulton), Pathfinder Bank (Oswego), and Community Bank (Hannibal).

"Hoops for Hope" is the annual Mike O'Brien Invitational basketball event. It is held in memory of Oswego's Mike O'Brien, who on May 1, 2005 fell to his death while attempting to summit Mount Everest in an effort to raise funds for, and awareness of, the Hereditary Disease Foundation (HDF).

All net proceeds from "Hoops for Hope" will benefit HDF.

Events on Saturday will include a youth basketball clinic; varsity boys basketball games; a community alumni basketball game; and a social gathering and silent auction at The American Foundry.

Here is the day's schedule:

- Noon — A youth basketball clinic and a Leprechaun basketball game will kick off the day at Laker Hall.
- 3 p.m. — Varsity boys basketball game between Fulton and Bishop Ludden.
- 5 p.m. — Varsity boys basketball game between Oswego and Hannibal.
- 7 p.m. — Alumni basketball game.
- 8:30 p.m. — Postgame social at The American Foundry with hors d'oeuvres, drinks, raffles, and a silent auction.

Scholarships announced

Members of the other three varsity boys basketball teams will receive \$500 scholarships on Saturday.

Recipients will be Fulton senior Derek Trail, Hannibal senior Ben Shortslef, and Bishop Ludden senior Connor Sweeney.

Trail didn't play for the Raiders last season, but his contributions continue to grow this year, Coach Fred Kent said.

"He does have a lot of talent. He's a very aggressive kid, very tough mentally," Kent said. "We're very fortunate he came out this year."

Shortslef is recovering from a knee injury he sustained during the football season. "He could have been a starter. He's one of our captains," Coach Ken Sturges said. "He has great leadership qualities, is a model citizen, and is a member of the National Honor Society."

Sturges said he is hopeful Shortslef can come back late in the season and contribute on the court.

Sweeney quarterbacked Bishop Ludden's football team to the state Class C championship. He earned first-team All-CNY honors, and is a co-captain of the basketball team.

"He's a very intelligent kid, a good decision-maker," Coach Pat Donnelly said. "He's a great leader for us."

The gesture by the Bucs to donate their scholarship money to Cammeo Lazzaro doesn't surprise their coach.

"They really do have a strong desire to give back to the community," Shaw said. "They want to make the donation on behalf of the entire senior class."

Each year, Shaw stresses the importance of giving back to the community. Playing in Saturday's fund-raising event is one way, and making the donation to their classmate is another.

"Last year we did a few Christmas donation things for children in need," Hilton said.

"Coach preaches that a lot about taking pride in basketball and being a part of the community," Sellars said.

Tickets for "Hoops For Hope" are available presale at the four high schools whose basketball teams will be playing that day. A percentage from those ticket sales will go back to each school for various uses.

At the schools, those purchasing admission to the games will receive a discount on the day-of-event price, plus a "Hoops for Hope" wrist band, which needs to be worn when attending the games.

For more information about the "Hoops for Hope" events, call Sean Broderick (593-5218), Will O'Brien (343-7263), or Tim Annal (342-5549).