

# -Flying Knueppel Brothers-

Winter Newsletter '02-03

## F. K. B. Basketball Club 2002 Season Recap

### *Brothers Struggle On Court; Experience Great Moments Off*

The summer of 2002 was a strange one for the Flying Knueppel Brothers. We had originally planned to play in five tournaments but due to unforeseen circumstances only played in two (Belding and Peoria). On our way to South Bend, we totaled Klay's truck and were unable to continue (No one was hurt, but our spirits and mode of transportation were significantly damaged). We had also planned on playing in Lafayette, but Kon and some of his buddies won the Milwaukee Hoop-It-Up and were scheduled to play the regionals in Orlando the same weekend (by the way, Kon's team won in Orlando and will be playing for the national championship at the NBA All-Star game in Atlanta this February.). Finally, we had also planned on playing in the Milwaukee Gus, but due to family conflicts we were unable to. As to our tournament play, we did not fair very well in Belding, and we nearly won our bracket in Peoria but fell short. Disappointing results on the court, but great times had by all off of it.

In Belding, the orange flecks you saw on our legs were not a result of playing a five-set marathon at Roland Garros. We were so rusty we were concerned we might stain the Dream Court. In the end, our play did just that. We struggled all weekend and lost to two tough teams. However, in Knueppelian fashion we fought to the end, and despite our rust, forced our opponents to battle to the finish. Next year we plan to have a few tournaments under our belt before Belding so that we are ready to win it.

At Peoria we were seeded 2<sup>nd</sup> out of 30 teams, and we played much better than we had at Belding. On the first day we posted a couple of wins and then lost to a team which included Trevor Hoffman from Kent State (of NCAA fame), Kevin Frey from Xavier, and Kevin Otter who recently played professionally in Australia (and whom Gus has dubbed the Big "O"). Surprisingly, we had a difficult time defensively (☹). On day two in Peoria, we worked our way to the final 8 and then had four consecutive bad calls go agasint us. Regardless of the four consecutive screwy calls, we did not "finish" the game and we take full responsibility for that. We need to improve our strength and conditioning to ensure stronger finishes in 2003. Despite our disappointing on-court performance, we shared many great moments during the 2002 season:

- *Miss Elizabeth's Fan Club makes the trip to Belding.* We once again had the opportunity to interact with one of the greatest teams in Macker history. These guys truly represent what Macker is all about—they have a great time playing and interacting with opponents; they cherish the opportunity to mingle with the locals; they enjoy traveling the country together valuing family over all else; they exhibit tremendous sportsmanship; and yet they play like crazy to win (if you've ever watched them on the court, they spend quite a bit of time yelling at each other—great to see the competitive fire!). We're looking forward to crossing paths with MEFC in 2003.
- *Fike's opening shot at Belding.* One MEFC member, Jerry Fike, was tabbed to shoot the tournament-opening shot at Belding. After missing the 3-point shot, he put in a lay-up to placate Gus; however, a determined Fike immediately stepped back to the 3-point arc and in front of hundreds in the backyard drained it.
- *521 Elizabeth Street.* We finally made the pilgrimage to the site of the original tournament in Lowell. Each of us took an emotional shot in the old McNeil driveway, which still had the original Gus emblem on the backboard. Wow.
- *Mary Ann Gwatkin.* Probably the greatest highlight on Elizabeth Street was our visit with the original Macker neighbor. It's rare to meet an elderly woman who says she's thankful that the new neighbors have children who shoot hoops in the driveway. She said there's nothing like the sound of a ball bouncing late at night. (If only the Gwatkins had been our neighbors growing up!)

- *Ice Mike's big win in Peoria.* One of our good Macker friends and frequent competitors, Ice Mike, led his team to victory over David Booth's team (4-time defending champions) in Peoria. Later in the tournament Mike was also "Peoria-ed"; however, the victory over Booth and company was a career highlight for Ice Mike, and we were fortunate to share the moment.
- *Macker cookout in Milwaukee.* We hosted our second annual barbecue in Kole's backyard during the Milwaukee Gus. The Macker workers as well as a number of Top Men's teams, hailing from St. Louis, Miami, Peoria, and Grand Rapids hung out and enjoyed great food and friendship. The White Ghost (Ben Stutler) even made an appearance (ask him about his Friday night accommodations in Milwaukee).

We look forward to more great moments during the upcoming season!

## **Off-Season Activities**

### *Winter Basketball Highlights*

We've often discussed in casual conversation with spectators and opponents the reality that Kon is an unbelievable five-on-five player. This off-season, Kon has been tearing up the courts. Some highlights: 1) In a recent winter league game, Kon scored 88! Amazingly, this point total occurred during two 18-minute running-clock halves. As part of his point total, Kon drained 17 threes. 2) During a recent game with the Wisconsin All-Stars against Marquette University and their coach, Macker Hall-of-Fame inductee Tom Crean, Kon led all scorers with 24 points. Hilariously, George Thompson, the Marquette play-by-play man, wondered why Kon was not on an NBA roster somewhere.

### *Winter Fitness Program*

In preparation for the 2003 season, the Flying Knueppel Brothers have searched the world over for the optimum physical training program and the ideal diet. After a great deal of research, the four of us have adopted the Russian fitness program espoused by former Red Army lieutenant colonel Nikolay Amosov. Amosov was so fit that in his seventies and eighties he performed two open heart surgeries a day, an average of eleven hours, wearing out two support crews along the way. In his spare time Amosov ran the Kiev Cardiovascular Surgery Institute of the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences and managed the famous Biocybernetics Department of the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences Cybernetics Institute, all the while continuing his daily intense exercise regimen.

To compliment our fitness program, we've also adopted the Warrior Diet of modern Renaissance man Ori Hofmekler. Ori, who is a world-renowned painter, developed this special diet while he was serving in the Israeli Special Forces. According to Ori: "This revolutionary diet addresses the fact that we have lost touch with the natural wisdom of our instinctual drives. We have become the slaves of our own creature comforts—scavenger/victims rather than predator/victors. When it comes to informed choice, we lack any real sense of personal freedom. The result: ill-advised eating and lifestyle habits that leave us vulnerable to all manner of disease—not to mention obesity and sub-par performance."

### *Winter Eating Program*

Speaking of ill-advised eating habits, we continue to balance our intense warrior diet with some good old-fashioned, artery-clogging, screen-enhancing food. Klay demonstrates mastery at the grill with his phenomenal beef tenderloins (ask him for the recipe); Kole enjoys twice-weekly trips to the soul food mecca of Milwaukee—Mr. Perkins' Family Restaurant; Kon can frequently be found at Ghengis Khan's Mongolian Barbecue; and Klint continues his regular consumption of the famous Renard's cheese curds.

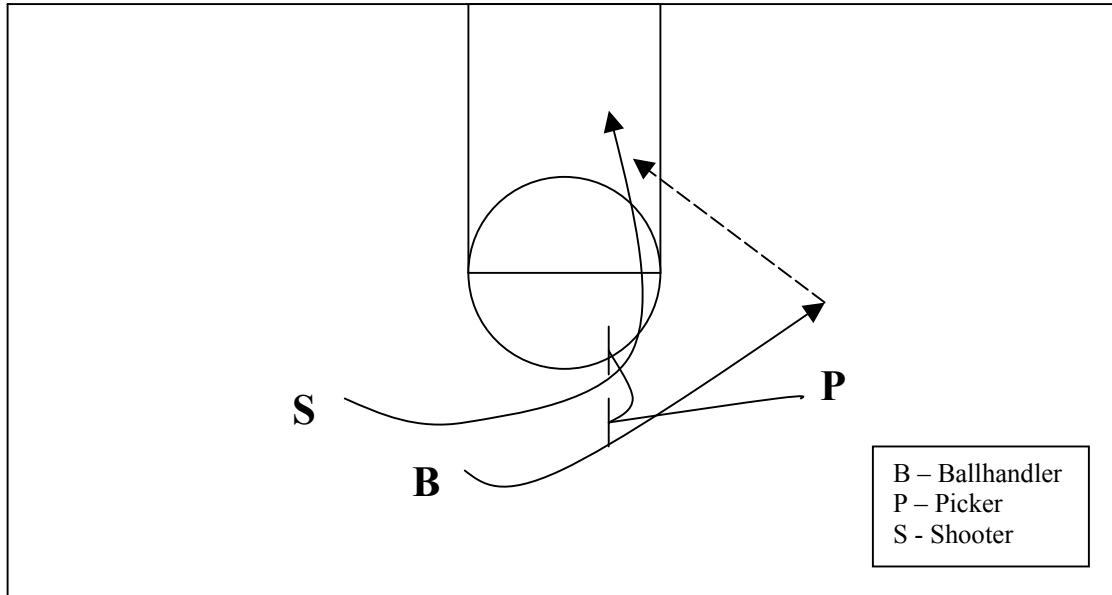
### *Officiating 2003: Points of Emphasis*

As sports officials hold pre-season meetings, we have utilized our connections with *Referee* magazine editor Bill Topp to urge the following points of emphasis for basketball officials, particularly in the 3-on-3 half-court game: 1) Enfolding one's arms around the waste of an opposing player is indeed a foul, as is tackling a player who is moving without the ball. 2) There are moments when a defender will be surprised by a screen. In such cases, said defender does not then have the right to run full-speed over the screener

who is set and knock him into next week. 3) Short, slow, intelligent basketball players who are from out-of-town can, at times, be fouled by players who are quicker and more athletic, even if those players are Division 1 legends from the town in which the game is played.

*Play*

In our continued commitment to improving 3-on-3 play everywhere we offer one of our plays for general consumption. As many of you know, we utilize a complex, highly-researched naming system to disguise our plays.



**"Marquette"**