

Love of the Game Links These Titans

Alfred Dunn, 1925 and Ottawa-Glandorf Team, 2008

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OTTAWA – Alfred Dunn was a center for Ottawa High School in 1925 when the team became county champs. “Then,” Dunn said, “every time a team made a basket, we went back to the center for another jump ball.” My, how things have changed!

This past Thursday, five players from the O-G Titans, District III victors, arrived at Putnam Acres, along with coach Josh Leslie, to reminisce with Dunn about a game they all love.

As the Titans and Coach Leslie will always remember winning the District III State Championship, Dunn also has vivid memories of a game he once played as well.

Back then, the court wasn’t what it is now. This game, a return game between Ottawa and Delphos St. John’s was played in the old Armory on a concrete floor. Dunn said, “We made sure the court was freshly waxed. The Ottawa team had ‘Sullivan Soles’.” These were special soles that the Ottawa team had added to their shoes so they wouldn’t slide around on the court. Delphos had not thought that far ahead. “Ottawa beat Delphos because they couldn’t stand up on the slippery floor,” said Dunn. “Each time an Ottawa player would shoot, Delphos players would slide on by.”

According to Dunn, Ottawa High School played at least one game each week while sharing practice time with the girls. Players helped each other to improve as they were working with only one or two balls each year.

Evidenced by the Delphos game played on the concrete floor of the Armory, each game venue

brought its own interesting complications. Many other schools had small courts and quirks.

“In Columbus Grove, the basket was so close to the ceiling that we couldn’t shoot a long shot; we had to get really close to the basket,” he said.

Playing in Miller City presented another object to work around, literally, as there were two stoves in each corner right along the court that were used to heat the building. “We had to be VERY careful,” said Dunn.

When it comes to the Titans, Dunn has been a fan forever. He watched both games when the Titans recently competed at State. He even had his lunch brought in that so that he wouldn’t miss a single moment of the action on the court.

His advice to the Titan players was this. “Things happen. If you’re ever playing a game and you just can’t seem to make a basket to save your neck, don’t worry because the next time everything works out all right.”

Team Members – Kenneth Quinn, George Heckman, Raymond Moore, Alfred Dunn, Kenneth Rush, Bob Fenbert, Albert Roof and Paul Quinn. The coach was Elmer Unverferth.

Ottawa had played Leipsic four times that season, winning the first three times by one point in each game, 20-19, 22-21 and 27-26. However, even though Ottawa won the Putnam County Tournament, they lost the fourth contest in the Districts to Leipsic 26-16.