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Campolindo brothers

By Jon Kingdon



Cade and Chase Bennett Photos Gint Federas

Last season, the theme song for the Campolindo boy's basketball team was "We are the Champions" by Queen. Though that may ultimately be their theme song once again this year, as this point, it could just as easily be "We are Family" by Sister Sledge. The team includes three sets of brothers: Chase and Cade Bennett, Rex and Cole Curtiss, and Carter and Aidan Mahaney. Just for good measure, the Cougars' head coach Steven Dyer is ably assisted by his younger brother, Chris, as his assistant coach, both of whom were also teammates when they played at Campolindo.

There is a unique relationship between brothers when they compete and play on the same team, says Dyer: "My brother was a better player than I was. It's a huge advantage to growing up and getting beaten up by your older brother. Last season, I had both of the Mahaney brothers on the team but to have three sets of brothers

on one team is pretty unique. Chase Bennett and Carter Mahaney and Rex Curtiss have all been supportive of their younger brother's basketball skills, so I think that has added to their basketball success."

For Cade Bennett, it was more than basketball with his brother. They've always been close and competitive. "We've been playing with and against each other all of our lives," Cade says. "Chase was a bit of a teacher to me."

Being only a year apart and playing the same position has not led to any dissension between the two, Chase says. "Looking back, it was always neck and neck. I'm a little better shooter but we work out a lot together so we have a lot of similar skills."

Two years ago, there were actually three Curtiss brothers attending Campolindo simultaneously. Oldest brother Harry was a baseball and tennis player while Rex and Cole were playing football and basketball. Unlike the Bennetts and the Mahaneys, with the Curtiss', there's a size difference between the brothers and each plays a different position in both football and basketball. Cole has a couple of inches on Rex and played on the defensive line for the football team and in the front court on the basketball team. Rex played wide receiver and had 34 receptions this past season and plays point guard in basketball.

Being so close in age led Rex and Cole to play the same sports: "Growing up, Cole was able to follow in my footsteps in the different kinds of sports we played," said Rex. "Since we were only one year apart, we tended to gravitate towards the same things. We really found our niche with basketball and football. When we were younger, I would work with him on his shooting and dribbling. He got the size so I ended up as a point guard and he played in the front court."

With two older brothers, Cade had the benefit of learning from both of them: "Unlike Harry, Rex continued to play basketball in high school and he has been an inspiration and someone whose skill I wanted to work up to. We've always played sports together growing up and I've always gone to his games and now that we're on the same team it's pretty special. I may take it for granted but what other opportunities am I going to get to play with my brother on the same team?"

Despite a two-year difference in their ages, for the Mahaneys, it's the second year that they have been teammates. "It's definitely been an advantage to being the younger brother because Carter had two years of high school basketball experience when I came in," Aidan says. "I watched his games when I was younger and I learned some stuff and coming in and having someone that knew what it was about on things, like the away games and how the crowd would react and what to do and what not to do was helpful."

Carter understood his role with Aidan: "I do my teaching. We have a younger brother in the seventh grade and we're both tutoring him. Playing together helped us when teams tried to press us, but we also had other good players on the team such as Jake Chan."

"It also helped that we're both good ball handlers and coach Dyer had confidence in us," Aidan says. Growing up together and playing together were two different things initially for Aidan. "At the beginning of last year, Carter had a lot more experience than me so I would go into practices and not be fully ready for what was to come and he was able to figure out things quicker than me, but with his help, I caught on pretty quick. We've always had a competitive spirit and I'm always trying to one-up him and it's just a healthy competition and it's made me a lot better because of it."

"Chase, Carter and Rex have all been supportive of their younger brother's basketball skills and that's led to a lot of their success," said Dyer. "You see competition between brothers all the time. They all enjoy that, especially with Chase and Cade who play a similar position and Carter and Aidan will go at it."

Cole Curtiss also felt there was a familial connection on the floor with Rex and the team: "We both know how each other plays the game and we're super competitive and I can tell when there are two brothers on the floor, they definitely want to win and I can tell if my brother is working hard, I'm going to work just as hard as him."

For Cade Bennett, it's more than knowing his brother's game; it's the closeness of the team as a whole: "Because we're so close with the team, it's not just me and my brother, we all have little communication things."

With the brothers all playing in various leagues and teams simultaneously, the effort required by the parents is something that should not be overlooked. Prior to high school, the last time the Mahaneys had played together was in the sixth grade.

"I played on the varsity as a sophomore and Cole was on the freshman team," said Rex Curtiss. "We would play at different locations so our parents would have to split up a lot of the time."

Growing up, the Bennetts, for the most part, played on the same teams, though there was one time that Cade was not up for playing against his brother: "When Chase was about 10 years old, we were on opposing teams, he did not want to play against me so he sat out the game."

Still and all, it's proven to be a positive for the brothers individually and the team as a whole as summed up by Cole Curtiss: "Overall, I think it's pretty cool to have three sets of brothers and two coaches who are brothers on the same team."



Rex and Cole Curtiss Photos Gint Federas



Aidan and Carter Mahaney Photos Gint Federas



Steven and Chris Dyer Photos Gint Federas

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