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LAMORINDA SPORTS

Jordan Allred – from Miramonte to Moscow ... Idaho



Jordan Allred

Photo Gint Federas

By Jon Kingdon

With the onset of the coronavirus, this was a particularly difficult year for the seniors of Lamorinda – limited to Zoom classes, anticipating graduation, the lack of social interaction, the potential elimination of all sports teams and anxiously awaiting to learn which colleges they would be accepted to and deciding which school to ultimately attend. For Miramonte senior basketball player, Jordan Allred, the college question had long been answered, having committed as a junior to attend, and play basketball at the University of Idaho.

The love of basketball came early and naturally to the Martinez native. “My father (Dave) played basketball at Chico State and still gets out and plays,” Allred said. “My parents never forced me to play but I was inspired to play a game that my dad loved.”

Allred began playing for Cal Stars in the fourth grade, eventually playing for the NIKE 17U Elite Basketball Youth

League. It was in the club teams where she was first exposed to Kelly Sopak, her coach at Miramonte through her junior year. Sopak witnessed firsthand Allred’s evolution as a player. “Jordan started to stand out in the eighth grade,” Sopak said. “Our team at Miramonte was so good, her playing time as a freshman was limited but she just took off as a sophomore.”

With her playing time limited that first year in high school, Allred looked to her family for support. “At that point, I was not much of a play maker so I wasn’t able to really show my abilities which hurt my confidence. My parents were very encouraging, telling me that I had to be a team leader. As I got more confident in myself and what I could do as a player, that was when I began to play more and more.”

From that freshman year, Allred’s scoring, assists, and rebounds increased each season, finishing her senior year averaging 19.7 pts, 7.6 rebounds and 4.9 assists per game. “What often gets overlooked by people is a player’s

IQ,” Sopak said. “Jordan’s basketball IQ is so high; it allows her to do so many things on the floor and that is why she is so versatile.”

Vince Wirthman, in his first year as the Miramonte head coach, came to rely heavily on Allred, with all-star Mia Mastrov opting to graduate early to attend the UC Berkeley. “Jordan naturally took over the leadership of the team and was a lot more vocal this year,” Wirthman said. She is very confident with a beautiful, pure shot and she had the green light to shoot all the time. We needed her to score, and she took good shots and did not force anything. She’s a complete player and has no real weaknesses in her game.”

After playing for Sopak on the club teams and at Miramonte, Allred and Sopak went head-to-head when Carondolet came to play at Miramonte. “Actually, I had coached against Jordan at times with Cal Stars but coming to Miramonte and coaching against her and the rest of the team was really strange.”

Allred had a similar reaction: “It was weird, and it sucked that we lost but I still respected Kelly.”

There was a substantial difference in coaching styles between Wirthman and Sopak. Things were a bit more democratic under Wirthman. “Vince was very good at listening to us,” Allred said. “He wanted to know our ideas and what we thought we should do to make the team better. Kelly was hardcore and he ran everything.”

It was love at first sight for Allred when she visited the University of Idaho. “The campus was beautiful, and I really liked the small town feeling there,” Allred said. “Everyone was very welcoming to me. Plus, they use a fast-paced offense and are good at sharing the ball. Everything was just perfect when I was up there.”

Idaho head coach Jon Newlee agreed with Allred in believing that she will fit right into his program: “Jordan’s an outstanding shooter and in our program, that’s a highly valued skill. We are in the top 10 in the NCAA in shooting threes. I really think that she is the total package, playing physical bas-

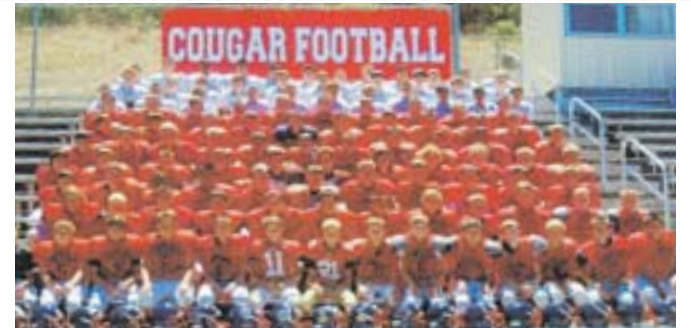
ketball, taking charges, diving on the floor, and making all the hustle plays.”

Unlike her freshman year at Miramonte, Allred is going to have a real opportunity to play upon arrival at Idaho. “I’m not afraid to play freshmen,” Newlee said. “We’ve had the freshman of the year the last couple of years for our league. I love to target them, and I love to play them. We play four guards a lot of the time and that’s where I see her. Jordan can get the rebound and bring the ball up the floor. We want our guards to be able to create, drive, kick the ball out and

shoot the basketball. She’ll certainly be able to fit in as one of the four guards out there.”

Allred, who plans on majoring in business and marketing, is confident in her ability to handle the academics at Idaho even with the travails of this last year, at least socially. “It was really hard because of how scared people were of COVID and it cut a lot of people out. However, on Zoom, school seemed easier. I believe that Miramonte has prepared me for college, and it may even be easier than at Miramonte.”

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