

Locals take first at H-town Classic

HOUSTON — ATX 2013, a Pflugerville-based ninth grade AAU basketball team, have sprinted out to a great start for the Spring/Summer 2010 basketball season.

The team participated in three local tournaments and accumulated an impressive 12-0 record which included three tournament championships.

The team is comprised of Andrew Hill (Connally), Adrian Williams (Conally), Isaak Gonzales (Hendrickson), Josh King (Hendrickson), Jay Byrd (Pflugerville), Aaron McDaniel (Pflugerville), Tanner Thrift (Hutto), Leonard Allen (Round Rock), and Cory Scott (Copperas Cove).

The ATX ninth grade team continued playing great basketball as they ventured out this past weekend on their first road trip of the season which landed them in Houston to participate in the Houston Hoops/H-town Classic. This was a field of over 25 of the best teams from Houston, Dallas, San Antonio and Louisiana.

ATX opened pool play against a talented and athletic team, Franchise Air Force One. Air Force One took a very early lead which turned out to be short-lived.

A strong offensive first half by Leonard Allen and Josh King coupled with great team defense allowed ATX to capture a 30-14 lead at halftime.

ATX's defense wore down Air Force One and proved to

ment.

ATX had a poor shooting game from both behind the arc and from the free throw line. Despite their poor shooting woes, which included going nine of 25 from the free throw line, they still had a chance to win. After being down 25-23 at halftime, ATX fought back, gaining a brief share of the lead.

Down by only two, ATX had the ball inside in the hands of Allen with 15 seconds left for the possible tying score. A no-call on a missed point-blank shot allowed the Cowboys to regain possession and ultimately win 52-48.

Aaron McDaniel led ATX with 15 points in the losing effort.

It was a disappointing first loss of the season for ATX, however, it served as a wake-up call which spurred them on to win the next four games in a row, including the championship game of the higher platinum bracket.

ATX opened bracket play as the No. 2 seed in their pool and faced No. 1 seed Hammond Elite, a Louisiana team that had already beaten a good Gulf Coast Blue Chips team in earlier pool play. ATX got out of the blocks early. Before they knew what hit them, Hammond was down 19-1. ATX coasted to a 50-28 lead to advance to the next round of the bracket play.

The game against Hammond was a game that saw every ATX player score. Scott and Allen led the team offen-

point lead at one time but the Rohawks finished the first half on a run, pulling to within four points, 21-17.

That was as close as they would get, ATX ratcheted up the defense in the second half while at the same time pouring it on offensively. ATX outscored SA 35-13 in the second half, allowing them to cruise to a 56-30 win. Again the entire ATX squad got in the box scores. Scott (eight), Adrian Williams (seven), McDaniel (10), and Allen (19) led ATX offensively. The team shot eight of 10 from the charity stripe, Allen added an additional five blocks on the defensive end. The win catapulted ATX into the semi-finals against the Louisiana Bayou Flames, a big physical team that liked to get up and down the court quickly, a team that had already defeated a good Houston Shocks in their previous game.

The team lost Tanner Thrift for the rest of the weekend as he was getting confirmed and Andrew Hill stepped up both offensively and defensively. The first half against the Bayou Flames was a great display of basketball by both teams. ATX maintained a slight lead for the duration, taking a 28-26 lead at halftime. Josh King found the right time to get the hot hand from the perimeter, connecting on five of eight shooting from behind the arc, with three of those coming in the second half.

ATX built a 15-point lead, only to see the Flames connect

ATX again enjoyed substantial offensive contributions from several players. King led all scorers with 23, while Scott (16), McDaniel (nine), Hill (eight), Allen (eight) and Gonzales (four) also contributed. The team shot eight of nine from the free throw line as well.

The championship game followed just 30 minutes later, a game that saw ATX face the TX Blue Chips (SILVER) out of Dallas that had beaten the Houston Hoops (14U) in overtime to gain a spot in the championship game.

This was the third game for

both teams in less than six hours and the fatigue showed. ATX used some full-court pressure early to force some turnovers and gain a slight lead, a lead they would never relinquish.

King passed the hot hand to Cory Scott for the championship game, with Scott hitting from both inside and out, and going for a game-high 22 points. Andrew Hill continued to do a great job of filling the void of Thrift. Hill pulled down several rebounds as well as pitching in seven points.

The trio of Byrd, Gonzales and Williams continued to

apply stingy perimeter defense that led to several steals and break away layups. Allen was two points shy of finishing the game with a triple double.

ATX maintained the lead for the duration of the game after initially securing a 28-16 halftime lead. The Blue Chips got to within seven but that was as close as they would get. ATX held on for the 55-46 victory, securing the championship of the platinum division.

It was an outstanding tournament victory for ATX 2013, arguably the best tournament victory in the history of ATX 2013.



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short-lived.

A strong offensive first half by Leonard Allen and Josh King coupled with great team defense allowed ATX to capture a 30-14 lead at halftime.

ATX's defense wore down Air Force One and proved too much as ATX cruised to a 53-26 victory.

Several ATX players contributed offensively - King (nine points), Cory Scott (13), Allen (12), Andrew Hill (eight) and Jay Byrd (six).

Air Force One proved a formidable team going on to win four bracket games in a row later in the weekend to win the lower, gold division bracket.

Next up for ATX was the stronger of the two Houston Cowboys teams in the tourna-

ment early. Before they knew what hit them, Hammond was down 19-1. ATX coasted to a 50-28 lead to advance to the next round of the bracket play.

The game against Hammond was a game that saw every ATX player score. Scott and Allen led the team offensively, scoring 10 and 11 points respectively. Byrd would also add six points. Tanner Thrift had a strong game as well, finishing with seven boards and three blocks.

The win set up a game early Sunday morning against a familiar foe in Coach John Henry's talented San Antonio Rohawk squad, a long, athletic squad that ATX had faced in years past.

This was a see-saw game early on. ATX enjoyed a nine-

halftime. Josh King found the right time to get the hot hand from the perimeter, connecting on five of eight shooting from behind the arc, with three of those coming in the second half.

ATX built a 15-point lead, only to see the Flames connect on seven 3-pointers of their own in the second half to make it close.

In the end, ATX would ask Jay Byrd and Isaak Gonzales to lock down the Flames' hot shooters and that is exactly what they did, stifling them down the stretch.

This, coupled with the inside-outside punch of Allen and King proved to be too much for the Flames as ATX held on for a 68-61 win.



Courtesy photo

The ATX 2013 basketball team captured its fourth tournament title, winning the H-Town Classic.

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