

Lincoln High School Dream Team



PHOTO BY WYNDE DYER/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Lincoln High School players get along well with Coach Troy Berry, but also afford him a great deal of respect.

continued ▲ from Front

took over five years ago and now ranks 15-1 in league, he might be celebrating his 40th birthday this year as his team celebrates winning the state championship.

After high school, Berry was drafted into minor league baseball by the Philadelphia Philly's, where he played out three seasons before returning to basketball at San Francisco City College.

His two years of junior college basketball landed him a position on the Oregon State lineup, along with Gary Payton of Seattle Supersonic's fame.

After college Berry settled down to start a family. He and his wife have two sons, Troy and Branden, who both play basketball and a daughter, Ashley, who is a student at University of Oregon.

"My boys will both be pretty good ball players," Berry said. "But not Ashley — the makeup's too perfect, the nails are too long and she does too much catalog shopping to have time for basketball."

After a stint of coaching junior varsity basketball at Benson, Berry got the offer to coach for Lincoln. The school's basketball program hadn't won a city championship since 1964. Berry knew he would be at the helm of a sinking ship, but he also knew it was his chance to be a head coach for a school with high academic standards and a desire to improve its sports program.

"Lincoln has an appetite for winning," Berry said. "These are really exciting times right now and I'm glad to be here."

Others are likewise glad to have him. On top of revitalizing the program in just a few years, Berry has Division 1 college coaches visiting to recruit his kids and players eager to perform well on and off the court.

I call him a manipulator of young men's minds — and I say that in a very positive way.

— Lincoln Freshman Coach Brett Carson on Varsity Coach Troy Berry

"He's a winner and a motivator," said Brett Carson, Lincoln's freshman boy's basketball coach. "I call him a manipulator of young men's minds — and I say that in a very positive way. He gets the kids to feel good and in return they play good. His players have a tremendous amount of respect for him."

Berry's players agree. They describe him as a perfectionist, someone who always pushes them to be the best they can be — in school, in life and on the court.

"He's had a profound effect on my career in basketball and on my life," said senior player Neal

Zumwalt. "He's always very nice and approachable but he demands perfection."

The high standard Berry sets rubbed sophomore forward Latravis Turner the wrong way when he was a freshman. Turner, one of just three African American players on the Lincoln team who commute to school from Portland's eastside, said when he joined the team he had troubles but Berry helped to put them in perspective.

"I had an attitude problem and because of it, I was having problems in practice and outside of school," Turner said. "He told me to be more humble and I realized that I don't want to end up on the streets or in jail."

Turner said Berry has been a good role model for him in a school where he rarely sees other black faces.

"It's a whole different environment up here," he said. "I'm not used to be around all these proper talking kids and stuff. But coach is always there when you need him and he's always good to be around."

As far as Berry is concerned, Lincoln was the first school to offer him a head coaching position and he will always be grateful for that regardless of the school's location or demographics.

"Other people may look at it like, 'What's he doing coaching on the Westside?'" Berry said. "But this school gave me a chance so I can't worry about what other people think."

Coach Harris Leads By Example



PHOTO BY DAVID PLECHL/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER
Lincoln High Coach Valaida Harris directs her players at a recent game. Harris calls the playoff bound girls one of her most talented teams.

continued ▲ from Front

and life skills, you get to watch them grow," she said. "You're doing something that these kids love."

But when it comes down to performance in life and basketball the key is the same — respect. Harris cultivates a meaningful rapport with the girls off the court well.

"I know the girls. They're comfortable talking to me about a lot of things," she said. "They know we wouldn't lead them in the wrong direction."

The girls are certain not to stray from the straight and narrow if they follow their coach's

It's not just about basketball... It's about being a respectful young lady

— Lincoln High School Coach Valaida Harris

handful of basic precepts on life and respect.

"The 'Valaida Rules' are things I don't let them do around me," she said.

That means no spitting, no cussing and no disrespect to parents.

"It's not just about basketball," said Harris. "It's about being a re-

spectful young lady."

Apparently it's also about being a darn good basketball player.

Harris' players are showing no signs at slowing down. And with just four seniors she expects to come out strong again next year.

"This is a good group," she said. "Collectively it's my most talented team."

POPEYES

Salutes Black History for 2003

Located at:

3210 NE MARTIN LUTHER KING Jr. Blvd
&
5939 NE MARTIN LUTHER KING Jr. Blvd



"We have a wonderful history behind us . . ."

Carter G. Woodson,
Founder of Black History Month

The City of Portland,
Multnomah County
and the Port of Portland
proudly honor the
accomplishments of
Black Americans and their
contributions to our economic
and social equity.

We have a wonderful future before us!



MULTNOMAH COUNTY
Herman Brame: (503) 988-5111 Ext. 24266
www.co.multnomah.or.us/contracts



CITY OF PORTLAND
Bureau of Purchases Buyline: (503) 823-6855
www.ci.portland.or.us/purchase/purchase.htm



PORT OF PORTLAND
FaxBack Line: (503) 944-7592
Rhonda Edmiston: (503) 944-7587
www.portofportland.com