

SPORTS & LEISURE



Georgetown District High School's senior boys' basketball team attended the Hetherington Sound School in Bermuda last week to speak with the Grade 1-5 students as part of

their whirlwind trip to the island of 65,000 people on the North Atlantic Ocean.

Photo by Lynne Pettit

Sr. Rebels get a taste of island basketball

By **EAMONN MAHER**
Staff Writer

Just having returned from an international tournament on the island of Bermuda, members of Georgetown District High School's senior boys' basketball team now get to play host to their new North Atlantic buddies this weekend.

The Rebels finished fourth at last weekend's inaugural eight-team Bermuda Thanksgiving Classic, which featured teams from the host British territory, Toronto, Las Vegas and California in a pre-season tuneup for most of the entrants.

The trip provided the Georgetown students with the opportunity to sample the Bermudan culture in a Floridian-like climate for five days while also preparing on the court for the upcoming season against top-flight competition.

And the cultural exchange continues this weekend in Halton Hills as CedarBridge Academy in Bermuda will take part in the Rebels' Tip-Off Tournament starting Friday at 2:30 p.m. against the hosts. Georgetown's Christ the King is also entered in the

eight-team event, with the championship game set for 5:30 p.m. Saturday.

"The whole experience of being on a tropical island made it interesting in a lot of ways and just hanging out with your teammates—building chemistry for the season—it was a lot of fun," said GDHS co-captain and point guard Spencer Kardash.

Georgetown began the tournament with a pair of wins over Bermuda White 40-39 and Bermuda Red 50-26, then faced Francis Parker High of San Diego in the semifinals, a team that regularly sends players on to play for big-name NCAA schools on scholarships, resulting in a somewhat-flattering 66-34 loss.

"Playing a team with three D-1 players, they kind of beat on us," said Rebel co-captain and power forward Dylan Keith.

"We'll never see a team like that in Ontario, but the overall experience is something that I'll never forget."

The Rebels finished the tourney with a 42-30 defeat against Durango High of Las Vegas in the consolation final and Alex Garvey was named to the tournament all-star team.

Longtime GDHS senior head coach Steve Pettit has taken his teams on pilgrimages to hoops havens in Indiana and Boston in previous years, but said the Bermuda trip was unique in many ways.

The students were met upon arriving in their hotel by a multi-media contingent—all games from the tournament were streamed online—and the Rebels were treated to Thanksgiving dinner at a local church.

"The highlight may well have been when the co-ordinator took us to a feeder school of Grades 1 to 5 and

we did a presentation on being a student athlete making the right choices, and what these kids want to achieve doesn't involve going on to play in the NBA," added Pettit, who sported pink socks and Bermuda shorts while overseeing the GDHS bench.

"This trip had a different feel in the sense that Bermuda is trying to promote high school sports and sports in general. For our kids to be giving life lessons and exploring their own sense of teamwork was good for a team with just one starter returning this year. More importantly, (the Bermuda) kids coming here this week has created an international link to our community and in all my years of teaching this ranks right up there for being a successful educational experience."

The senior Rebels didn't have much time to recover from their trip before playing their first Halton Tier I regular-season contest Tuesday, posting a 50-46 road victory at Oakville-Trafalgar. Garvey led the visitors with 18 points.

Bermuda's CedarBridge will also travel to Acton today (Thursday) to face the senior Bearcats in an exhibition matchup and a trip to the NBA's Toronto Raptors' game on Sunday is planned.

'The whole experience of being on a tropical island made it interesting in a lot of ways.'
—Rebel guard Spencer Kardash

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