

### What Basketball Means To Me

This is the hardest point to score of my life! I can always score! Always! Why go cold *now*? At this crucial moment in my career I have thirteen points. Why go cold *now*? Time is winding down. The four minutes left on the clock don't feel like much time at all. My friends and family are here to see me break the record. What if I can't do it? They will be so disappointed! Pull it together. This is *your* goal. This is what *you* want. Leave everyone else out of the equation and do what *you* love. Play basketball!

I run down the sideline while our point guard pushes the ball up the court. I feel better. Let's go! A few passes around the perimeter and the ball is in my hands. My defender is giving me space, so I let the ball go. The shot arches high and drops through the net! I broke the record! Everyone in the stands goes crazy. My team runs over to hug me and the game is stopped. My coach makes some brief gobbled speech. I can't remember what he said. The game resumes. Then the game ends. We won and everything seemed to have happened so slowly yet so quickly.

I had done it! I had beaten the Waldorf record of most points scored in a high school career! It was a goal I set to break four years earlier and I did it. It was one of my proudest moments!

Basketball was never forced on me. I fell in love with it all on my own. I had always been a competitive swimmer. Swimming ran in the family. I swam competitively for over eight years. However, I fell out of love with swimming and in

love with basketball. At school I would play during breaks and whenever I could. I would play with the boys on the black top everyday. With time and work I improved.

I was never forced to play basketball. Everything that I have done with the sport is due of my own motivation and love of the game. No one forced me practice or join an AAU team. All these things I did independently. Basketball made me fight for what I wanted. I wanted to be a better player. I wanted to play in college. I wanted to break records. I had to make these goals happen for myself.

Everything I have accomplished - all the trophies, championships, MVP's and statistics - has been because I love hard work. That is why I will always love basketball. One's success is a direct result of the work and discipline one puts in. My basketball career has been insanely successful. The goals I have set thus far I have reached. College basketball will be different, but I am excited for the new challenge. Now it is time to set new ambitious goals that I can't wait to reach for and accomplish.