

The Ones Counted Out

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First Reader: Professor Simon Surowicz

Second Reader: Professor Anna Ozbek

Interview Log and Source List

- Mark Morgan, Senior at Purchase College & Player on the Men's Team, 10/18/22, In-Person Interview

Subject: Profile, Aspirations, Time in the Bronx

Contact: mark.morgan@purchase.edu

- Mark Morgan 2, Senior at Purchase College & Player on the Men's Team, 2/10/23, In-Person Interview

Subject: Post-Suspension, Injury, Reflection on Negative Experiences, Remainder of the Season

Contact: mark.morgan@purchase.edu

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- Maxwell Pearce, Professional Basketball Player for the Harlem Globetrotters, Artist, Purchase College Alum, 3/3/23, Zoom Interview

Subject: Challenges for Division III Basketball Players, Lack of Resources, Determination

Contact:

914-787-9383

- Daniel Bozzelli, Head Coach of the Purchase Men's Basketball Team, 3/8/23, In-Person Interview

Subject: What Makes Division III Special, Troubles Balancing School and Basketball for Student-Athletes

Contact: daniel.bozzelli@purchase.edu
585-309-4782

- Mark Morgan 3, Senior at Purchase College & Player on the Men's Team, 3/10/23, In-Person Interview

Subject: Post-Season, What's Next, Pro-Invitational, Moving On

Contact: mark.morgan@purchase.edu
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- Brandon Burnett, Profession Basketball Player, Purchase Alum, 4/7/23, In-Person Interview

Subject: The Obstacles Division III Basketball Players Face, The Work Ethic of Division III Athletes, Reality of the Talent at the Division III Level, The Likelihood of Going Pro

Contact: [@_bigbliggity24](#) on Instagram

- Mike Kitts, Coordinator of Men's Basketball Officials for the Division III Skyline Conference, 4/7/23, Zoom Interview

Subject: How Officiating Division III is Different, The Physical Difference in Division III Basketball Players to Division I and II Players

Contact: kittsie03@aol.com
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Works Cited

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- Nichols, Brett and Smith, Mark A, et al. “Factors Influencing College Selection by NCAA Division III Men's Basketball Players.” *Journal of Amateur Sport*, vol. 6, no. 1, 2020, pp. 32–51., <https://doi.org/10.17161/jas.v6i1.8297>.
- Scott, Ryan. “True Tales of Going Pro.” *D3hoops*, 19 Jan. 2017, <https://www.d3hoops.com/columns/around-the-nation/2016-17/going-pro-from-division-3>.

Transcription:

Tobias Havard (Narration) 0:02

According to the NCAA, well over half a million high school students play basketball. Just under 3.5% go on to participate at the NCAA level spread across all three divisions. While just 1% go division one, only 1% also go Division Two, and division three is nearly identical as just 1.4% of students get to that level. Division three basketball players don't have the same spotlight as the athletes who attend higher rank schools. But if you pull back the curtains get, inside those gyms, and ask the people who surround them what they're like, is there really much of a difference?

Mark Morgan 0:40

Basketball is just like a therapy for me, like my takeaway, like I feel like saved me from everything, There's been nights where I could have been doing other things but I was playing basketball until like three, four in the morning... I just knew it.

Coach Dan Bozzelli 1:01

Go out there and have some fun alright? Hit them first right that's what we're trying to do here, impose our will, be the most exciting 40 minutes of college basketball. Alright everyone get a touch he we go. Big deep breath in. Here we go Hit first on three, hit first on three, 1,2,3

Team 1:40

HIT FIRST!

Unknown Speaker 1:53

Run the Jewels - Ooh la la

Run the Jewels - Ooh la la

Jun the Jewels - Ooh la la

Mark Morgan 2:50

My name is Mark Morgan, I'm from South Bronx. I've been playing basketball since I was 12. That's been like my savior, my everything.

I won't forget the first time, first time I tried out for my first basketball team. I had asthma attack in like 6 grade, imagining that it's crazy. I will never forget that to where I am right now. That's a moment like, I'll never ever forget.

It's different for D3 because you finish, you got a D1 athlete, you got a person that's checking up on them three times a day, we got that too but it's three different people, it's one person checking

out your body, did you eat this, this and that? There's one person massaging, this this and that, is your body this this and that. And it's another different person asking about work this this and that, it's all three different things. And you feel me in D3 you might not get that, you might get one person who does all three or you might get- you might not get at all. It's really up to you, d3 is really, I feel like it's really up to you if you don't go to a high rank school it's up to you, it's up to your work it's up to your grind.

Coach Dan Bozzelli 4:04

Yeah, so it's unique in it because the student athletes are here, you know one because they enjoyed the school, they have their major and the second thing is that they have to figure out their own way through college where in division two and division one and some there's any NAIA schools that aren't NCAA, but they give out athletic scholarships. So you know realistically the true model of what college athletics was, how it started is what division three is. That's what makes it very challenging for the student athletes is because you're not allowed to miss classes for practices you're you know, you're a student first and foremost. And then you're an athlete second you know and that's so you're going to class you're doing your schoolwork and and then it's a privilege to be a part of a team. So that's the fun thing about why I love working with students, division three student athletes is because of their for the love of the game. And, they love competing. They love playing on a team. And being a part of a team is something that they really identify with. So that's the exciting thing about working with student athletes at Division Three level. And that's what I think makes division three really special.

Mike Kitts 5:23

It's funny you ask when I got started, you know when you get to playing in college and playing those adult rec league games you know adult games, and I was a pain in the butt to referees. And a guy got mad at me said if you think you knows how much once why don't you take the test, that's how I got involved in officiating when I was 24 years old.

Tobias Havard 5:42

Really? Yeah. That's so funny. Like at that trash talk became a profession?

Mike Kitts 5:50

It sure did. It sure did. I mean, I refereed division one basketball for 31 years. I've dealt with division three basketball for nine years. And also when I started refereeing, I did Division Three. The athlete is completely different, Division One is a bigger, stronger guy. You got the mid majors, schools like Youngstown State and Cleveland State and Bowling Green and you got the high profile teams like Kansas, Kentucky, and it's a whole different athlete you're dealing with, then you go down to division two and Division Three level. And Division Three, the kids want to play, they go school. You know, at one time I hit the Empire eight, I hit the CUNYAC. And they were good. They were good games to watch and good games for me to put officials in. But

you're dealing with a whole different type of athlete from division one to Division three. It's not they don't play as hard. They're just not as big and as good and as strong as the division one players.

Maxwell Pearce 6:49

Division three programs almost never have the funding that high major division one programs have. And if the school does have the funding, then you also have to, you have to tackle the hurdle of like, is it a sports school, so Purchase this is not a sports it's an art school. So whatever the majority of their funding they have is going to go to the arts rightfully so. Being a division three athlete requires a different type of discipline. Because you have to find ways to get the same kind of training, the same quality of training. And the same, like advantage that a lot of division one and two players have when they have the facilities that are like state of the art that can provide the easiest way to do that. So prime example of that, and it's a really simple thing. But you've ever seen like they call it the gun, it's like you put it onto the basket and it shoots the basketballs back. So we, at my time at Purchase, we didn't have a gun. I don't even know if we have a gun now. But either way, most schools have a gun. And just that alone allows you to get exponentially more shots. Like you can go into the gym by yourself, get on the gun for two hours and get up to 1000 shots. But if you don't have a gun, you would probably take four to five, maybe six hours to get up to 1000 shots. And you'd have to have rebounders which means you'd have to get other people to come. Like the process is just so much more complex and you have to get a lot more incident nitty gritty when you know a lot of the tech and the resources that some of these other schools have alleviate that for you. So it definitely requires a different kind of discipline. Which ultimately, you know, like that's that has to do with like, how much do you want it because a lot of that is going to be created by what you decide to do for yourself.

Tobias Havard (Narration) 9:06

After a strong start to the season Purchase constantly held around or above a .500 record, meaning they were winning just as much as they were losing. All in all they had a five and seven record closing out 2022 following a loss in an exhibition game against Long Island University, a division one basketball program. Purchase was one and four against conference competition but still showed a lot of signs of being a competitive team by the end of the season and going into the playoffs. A lot of this changed however when Mark's injury changed the trajectory of his season as well as the team's. After having played with a fractured toe since mid October Mark sprained his quad in early February leaving purchase was out there leading scorer and quickly they fell in the standings. Along with consistent tension between him and the coach which led to a suspension, he only managed to suit up again for the last three games of the season.

Mark Morgan 9:54

Yo, word too, this shit been going on bro. Yes bro and I put everything to the side bro.

Tobias Havard 10:19

If you tried to think about it as objectively as possible like, what you you think it even is?

Mark Morgan 10:29

I feel like it's just me like, just my confidence you feel me, he just don't like it bro.

Tobias Havard 10:36

I mean, this might be sort of a loaded question but like, what kind of lasting impression is this kind of experience left you with?

Mark Morgan 10:46

That things could flip in one second, like, and I already knew that, like, in my life specifically, I don't have a lot of trials and tribulations, lot of ups and downs, a lot of things going perfectly then flipped. But this right here is like something I never imagined, like, things I've been going through and things I endured, like, I never, I never thought. I've played basketball more than a decade of my life. Like I would have never thought things could really change in a minute.

Coach Dan Bozzelli 11:23

I think a lot of issues, I think there were a lot of things that were off the court stuff in people's personal lives played a factor in their confidence, which led to them being inconsistent, that led to some issues. And I think that that is a natural thing that happens in Division Three is like, you know, you know, there's things that are outside of control, like there might be stuff going on with family and stuff going on with a significant other there. You know, there's always things that can come up that, you know, we're only human, it's hard to, to walk in the gym and shut out everything else that's going on in their life, like struggling in a class, you know, things like that, that it's really difficult. And I know it's difficult because it happened to me when I was a player. You know, like I was struggling in a class academically in my first semester. And that affected how I played on the court because that was just something that was in my mind and I couldn't get it out of my head. And what is nice is because I've experienced that I can, I know how to talk to the players when they're struggling with it right

Brandon Burnett 12:44

This is Spain, Santfeliuenc, we got more in the back. Current ones., future ones, more to come. Because it's not over I'm telling you. This is the grindhouse, the House of Pain man. Ever since I started playing organized basketball, like officially, in junior college, I learned how much you have to really love basketball to play at this level. You know, when you're division one and Division Two things are taken care of.

Talent wise, it could just be that they're in Division Three because of the academics, doesn't mean that they cannot play division one. That is what I've definitely learned being on the court.

You know, having teammates having playing experiences. You know, I've seen talent throughout the years, there's people who in Division Three could play division one, Division Two, no problem. Just academically they didn't apply themselves. That's really, I think that's where a lot of division three players are. And then there's the guys who know that they're division three players. You know, that's absolutely fine too. They work hard. They play to the best of their ability and they know that, you know, life after college basketball might not be what they hope it to be you know, everyone dreams of playing professional basketball, but the likelihood of you doing that the numbers aren't really your favorite. It's about you putting in the work having a passion and finding a way to.

Tobias Havard (Narration) 14:29

Purchase limped to the end of the season losing the last four straight and without playoff hopes or even a fully healthy roster. The team unenthusiastically ended their heartbreaking 2022-2023 campaign. The Panthers record was eight and 17 when it was all said and done after battling in a tough loss on senior night, followed by a swift defeat from longtime rival Manhattanville College.

Mark Morgan 14:51

It depends, right now feeling like to move with the next step journey, finish school, graduate, focus on the stuff that's in front of me but at times, I do reflect on everything. Because it just happened so fast. It just was like that, I remember practicing. I remember first injuring my toe. I remember October like it was right there and now it's done. It happened so fast so I reflect on it sometimes.

It was a lot. The season was a lot of ups and downs. But we stood together. And we, we talked, we practiced, we worked hard. We had a lot of meetings, like a lot of things happen this year. But as I told my coaches, my teammates, I wouldn't regret it. I would have regret nothing. Same thing I told them them last year when I just got here with six games left, same thing I told them this year, I would not regret nothing. I thanked everybody for the experience, for allowing me to come here and just fall into a family like that. Turn into captain, turn into something I thought I would here And I know things didn't go the way I wanted it to or thought, imagined, worked for but, I don't know things happen injuries and things.

It really does, how much you love it, how much you love the sport, how much you love what you're doing. It really, really does. You have to wake up you have to say you have to make that meeting with that trainer, you have to make that meeting with that professor or that advisor you have to, you have to do all that. You have to do everything. You have to make sure you're ready for it. Make sure you're balancing what's going on inside of here and outside. Because a lot of people can't handle things more than, you feel me not just things coming from one angle. It's people handling things coming from inside of school outside of school. So you just have to learn

how to balance everything. Do do, do what's best for you. Do what's best for your happiness, your mental and, and work, grind. Keep doing what you're doing and being the person you are.

Tobias Havard (Narration) 17:34

This season was challenging for the team as well as myself, as I watched them work and communicate, win and fail, persist and stay motivated. I have to battle the perception of division three athletes as a whole. Yes, it's true. There is generally more talent at higher Division programs and better funded schools. Division three basketball players can also lack the size to compete at that level or the discipline forged in the fire of 10,000 reps. But the biggest difference? It wasn't skill or technique, those things can be taught. It was resilience, the determination, the vigor within each of these athletes to wake up every day and push knowing no one will be there to hold their hand or to cut them slack or to pick them up when they have fallen for they must learn to pick themselves up and stand strong. The will and focus to balance their education with the pursuit of the sport they love. The burden they take on knowing there is no financial assistance for them on this path. You really have to love it if you want to play at the Division Three level, there is little admiration or acknowledgement of the work that's put in and rarely comes with fame or glory. Despite this, many of these athletes continue to work hard for their chains to be recognized and prove their worth. Because respect isn't given in Division Three, it's earned. Until then, they remain...

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Link to Documentary:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vheXZSIBIW0&t=1s>