

PERSEVERING THROUGH DEFEAT

Senior Josh Daughtery has been cut from the basketball team three years in a row. His senior year, he tried out one last time

by **Claire Huss**

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Senior Josh Daughtery heads toward the door of his coach's office. He's nervous.

The basketball coaches are letting the players know if they have made the team or not and he's been cut the last three years.

With defeat in his mind, thinking he will get cut once again, Josh walks in the office, thanks the coaches for everything and prepares to leave.

"He was the second person brought in," Head Coach Darrell Davis said. "He comes in and says 'Coach Davis, I know I didn't make it and that I am going to get cut, but I appreciate you letting me try out these past four years.'"

Josh has always had a strong love for this sport. He has played basketball ever since he was little. He would play in little leagues and he played in a feeder team his sixth grade year.

When high school came around, he was looking forward to be a part of the basketball team from the start. However, when he found out that first year he didn't make the team, he knew he wasn't going to give up.

"Whenever I got cut my freshman year, I just told myself I would come back next year even better and even stronger," Daughtery said.

The time in between freshman and sophomore years, Josh practiced by himself everyday in hopes to finally prove to the coaches he deserved to be on the team.

But once again, he was cut from the team.

"After his sophomore year, you could tell he was still motivated and he was very polite about getting cut," Davis said. "He was close, but [with] the team we had, he just didn't quite fit in yet."

Josh knew he shouldn't give up. He spent the whole next year working hard and practicing every day he could leading up to junior year tryouts hoping the third time was a charm.

It wasn't.

"After we cut him his junior year, he just came up to us and said 'What do I have to do to get better?'" Davis said. "I told him that right now it is basketball season so go to the YMCA or somewhere and just play a lot of basketball."

Taking that advice, Josh continued to practice even more. June came around and the team started to have open gyms and Josh was there.

The coaches noticed too.

"He really didn't miss anything," Davis said. "Josh had

perfect attendance with every practice we had before tryouts."

The walk into the coach's office was a big one Nov. 2. It was his last chance.

So, it was with a sense of defeat in his mind when he thanked his coaches that day, only to be shocked moments later when the unexpected happened --

Davis told him he made the team.

A tear formed in Josh's eyes and a look of shock washed over his face.

The coaches usually try and keep around the top 12 players. According to coach Davis, he has always been the top 14 or 15 player, so he has always been close to making the team.

"I was nervous whenever I walked into the coaches office," Daughtery said. "But at tryouts this year, I just worked hard and played to my strengths and finally all of my hard work and perseverance paid off."

As he walked out of the coach's office, his teammates were waiting to hear the exciting news.

"I was happy for him," teammate and junior Ben Oster said. "I am happy he is a part of the squad this year. I think he puts in a lot of hard work and sometimes he didn't get a lot of recognition or credit for it the past few years, but he definitely got his recognition this year."

This year the coaches made eight cuts, but this time, Josh was one of the top best seven players. He improved on many skills such as his ball handling, his jump shots and his speed. According to Davis, Josh will be playing a lot this year.

"I just told myself that if I keep putting in that work then one day I would make it, and I did," Daughtery said.



(Photo by Francisco Jimenez)