

# **A Basketball Story**

**By Cross Meehan**



Recently **Cross Meehan** (Class of 2017) who participates on Coach Polli's top 7<sup>th</sup> grade AAU team wrote a telling piece on his experience as a participant in the Mass Elite Basketball program. Cross tells of his experience as a 5<sup>th</sup> grader who had been recently cut from his local town travel team in Wakefield. Instead of quitting the sport as many players would have, Cross took the hard approach to not being selected for his winter team and decided to spend the entire offseason on improving his skills in the Mass Elite program.

***Cross's story speaks of not only his heart and resiliency but also of the dedication and knowledge of the coaches in the Mass Elite program.***

## ***A Basketball Story – Cross Meehan (Class of 2017)***

In the fall of 2009, when I was in the fifth grade, I tried out for my town Travel Basketball Team. I was very disappointed when I was not picked to play on either of the town teams. Basketball was the only sport that I had an interest in playing so I really wanted to play for my town. I played in the town WBA team for my brother but really wanted to play in an organized high level program like Travel.

My parents found Mass Elite and signed me up for the tryouts in Reading. I was placed on the B Team and we really needed a lot of work. Looking back, I don't think I was a very good player on this team. However, I continued to practice on and off the court. During this season, I began to see improvements in my game.

I then signed up for the summer program and played for Coach Polli on another B level team. By this time, my skills really began to improve. I also got invited to play with my town's summer team that was coached by two of the Travel Coaches. They invited me because they had heard about my improvements.

I then played in the Mass Elite Fall program for another B team. That season, I was the team high scorer and began to play with a lot of confidence. I then tried out for my town's sixth grade Travel program. After a year of Mass Elite basketball, I was then picked to play on one of the 6<sup>th</sup> grade travel teams. I then learned a lot from my Travel coaches, Gus Dettore and Rich Stevens. I had a lot of success on the 6<sup>th</sup> grade Travel Team but I wanted to get better.

After the Travel season, my Travel coach, Gus Dettore joined Mass Elite and set up a team that consisted of some of my teammates from Wakefield and a few other players from other towns. I played for my Travel coach in the Mass Elite program for the Spring season. I was now a year round basketball player. The Mass Elite practices, games, and skills and drills sessions continued to improve my game.

Last summer, Coach Polli invited me to play in the Nationals in Virginia Beach with his Mass Elite A Team. On my birthday, June 18<sup>th</sup>, 2011, I played in my first game with the Mass Elite A Team. I continued to play with the A team and went to the Nationals to compete. The competition at the Nationals was incredible and improved my game. I played with the Mass Elite A Team again in the Fall and did very well. The program has prepared me for my current Travel season and I am excited to play. What a difference two years in Mass Elite and playing Travel has made for me and my game.

I want to thank my mother, my father, my brother Spencer, Coach Dettore, Coach Stevens, Coach Veguilla, Coach Polli and all of the other Mass Elite coaches and skills instructors for helping me improve my game.