



GIRLS' BASKETBALL



CAL-HI SPORTS STATE ATHLETE OF THE WEEK

Harold Abend
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CA Athlete of the Week: Berkeley buzz centers on Boyd

Flashy point guard has team up to No. 4 in the state

The flash and pizzazz Berkeley (Berkeley, Calif.) guard **Brittany Boyd** showed as a freshman has only gotten better and better each year.

Now, after filling the stat sheet for the umpteenth time this season, the Cal-bound senior who is unquestionably the top point guard in Northern California, has been named this week's **ESPN RISE Cal-Hi Sports State Athlete of the Week**.

Last week, in an intersectional matchup between the top Division I schools from the CIF North Coast and Sac-Joaquin sections, Boyd had a near triple-double with 23 points, 11 rebounds and eight steals with three assists in a 71-58 home win for the Yellowjackets over St. Francis (Sacramento, Calif.).

With Berkeley leading 48-43 after three quarters, Boyd took over in the final stanza, scoring 11 points and getting to the charity stripe where she converted 9-of-10 shots.

Two weeks ago, in a 65-44 victory over Bishop O'Dowd (Oakland, Calif.) at the Campolindo Shootout, Boyd had 13 points, nine rebounds, nine steals, and seven assists.

Covering both of the games, the Cal-Hi Sports caravan almost needed an abacus to keep track of the numbers and how fast Boyd piles them up.

On the season, the solidly-built 5-foot-8 Boyd's per game averages are 17.4 points, 8.7 assists, 7.4 rebounds and 6.2 steals. No wonder Cal jumped on this girl from just down the hill.

"The Cal coaches did a good job of recruiting me," said Boyd before a Wednesday practice. "They told me what they wanted from me, a point guard, and I told them I was ready to do whatever they wanted me to do."

But college is few months away. For the time being, something is missing for Brittany that Berkeley already has won twice over the years: a Division I state championship.

After missing the first 20 games of her sophomore season due to eligibility issues after Boyd transferred to Berkeley from Hercules, the Yellowjackets lost in the NorCal semifinals.

Last year, the heavily favored Berkeley team lost in the Northern California title game to Oak Ridge (El Dorado Hills, Calif.). Then, the team had to suffer more when Oak Ridge upset favored Long Beach Poly (Long Beach, Calif.). Of the seven times Berkeley has lost the state title game, three have been to the Jackrabbits and there's no team Boyd and her teammates have dreamed more about beating in a state final.

"I remember I was working out at the gym before going to the Cal game and my mom called me and



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told me Oak Ridge won, and I thought 'That could have been us,' but Oak Ridge deserved it. It really hurt to see them win but I don't take anything away from them. They played hard."

This year at the West Coast Jamboree, the Yellowjackets lost their only game so far this season in the Platinum Division semifinals. That cost them another opportunity to face Poly, a winner in the title game over the Carondelet (Concord, Calif.) team that beat them.

Now, with San Diego State-bound senior post **Chairese Culberson** fully recovered from a knee injury that knocked her out last season, and with Boyd's best friend, junior guard **Elisha Davis** and her flashy game, the 19-1 Yellowjackets seem to be on a path to Arco Arena after avenging the Carondelet loss, although they may see the Cougars twice more if both reach the NCS and NorCal finals.

"I know my role on this team and if I have to take over I will, but I have excellent teammates. For us to get to state and win, I know I can't get it done by myself."

Boyd hasn't been able to overcome adversity without strong support from her family.

"My sophomore year was really hard having my eligibility taken away from me, but I've always had a lot of support from my family, plus they're my biggest fans," said the oldest of four children, and the only real top-notch athlete in the family.

Brittany's father, **DeShawn Boyd**, a web designer with Kaiser, played some football and basketball in high school. Her mother, **Lakisha Beverly**, is currently studying law and doing internships.

There's also a 14-year-old brother **DeShawn Jr.** and two little guys, **Bryce** and **Machi**.

Coach's comments

"Having Brittany out there is like having a clone." said four-year Berkeley head coach **Cheryl Draper**, a middle school P.E. teacher in Berkeley that has coached in the area for over 20 years. "Just when I'm about to say something, she beats me to it. Having her is sweet and very relaxing because we're on the same page."

Filling the stat sheet with Brittany

Immediate and long-term goals: "To lead my team to the state championship. Make the McDonald's game and the USA National team. Long term I want to play professionally in the WNBA or overseas."

Her favorite athlete: "Cappie Poindexter. I love the way she plays. I've been watching her and her game since I was young. She's a true point that can pass and distribute the ball. She can take over a game."

Why the 3.3 GPA student-athlete chose Cal and three things she looks forward to in college:

"I definitely want to play professionally, but if that doesn't work out I'll have my degree from Cal to rely on. I'm going to study criminology and possibly go into public service, but I'm also interested in communications. The things I'm looking forward to are helping the team and playing my role, and bonding with the team. I can hardly wait to get up there."

Her tips for up and comers: "I help out and mentor the young girls on my Cal Ballaz club team. I tell them to keep working hard and play the game. Don't let anybody bring you down or tell you that you can't do something. Don't get sidetracked. Know your goals and what you want – and stay focused in class from your freshman year to the end of your senior year. Study, study, study."

Comments, corrections or want to nominate the next State Athlete of the Week? Email mark@studentsports.com. Next week's honoree will be a boy, switching back to girls in two weeks.

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