

Mass Bay gets an education
Top of the class

By Rich Thompson | Thursday, March 12, 2009 | <http://www.bostonherald.com> | [College Basketball](#)



Photo by Ted Fitzgerald

FRAMINGHAM - Billy Raynor learned the truth about strength in numbers at the point in his coaching career when he didn't have any.

Raynor starred at Catholic Memorial and compiled an extensive NCAA Division 1 resume before becoming athletic director and basketball coach at Mass Bay Community College four years ago. His mission was to turn an afterthought into a team, a team into a program and a program into a contender.

Raynor's creation will be on display tonight when the Buccaneers take on Richland College in the NJCAA Division 3 tournament at SUNY Delhi.

"I had to get a crash course on the landscape of the junior college scene," Raynor said before practice on Tuesday. "On my first day I had five guys on my team because so many had flunked off. The next year we had six players, but three of those flunked off at the end of the first semester so we had to declare ourselves a club team.

"The next year we started out 11-3, but at the midterm five of those guys flunked off. We went 7-7 the rest of the way."

Retaining players became Raynor's agenda. Scholastic guidance and counseling were emphasized and before every practice Raynor reiterates the academic ground rules for participation.

The team Raynor inherited had a grade point average of 1.7. The crew that will take the floor in Delhi, N.Y., has a GPA of 2.7; an improvement Raynor finds more encouraging than winning the state and New England JC titles for the first time in school history.

“I went to the president (Dr. Carol Berotte Joseph) and said we have a problem here,” said Raynor. “It had to do with us retaining guys and we worked rigorously on the academic side. The first 10 minutes of every practice we talk about academic performance. The biggest success from my standpoint is the GPA.

“That is a major jump because this year we started with 15 (players) and we’ve still got 15.”

The Bucs roster reads like a directory from Boston neighborhoods. Point guard Paul Rose hails from Mission Hill and earned Herald All-Scholastic honors at North Cambridge Catholic. Leading scorer Deshawn Gibbons (19.2 ppg.) played at Cathedral, Jamal Swanson (12) went to NCC and Tyrell Mosley (12.1) attended South Boston. Guard Mike Young (8.7) is a Boston kid who went to Minuteman Tech in Lexington while jump shooter Jakeen Cobb (8.2) played at Madison Park.

“When we got together on Oct. 1 we made a pact,” Rose said. “If you are not ready to work hard then you might as well go on home. But everybody was serious and everybody followed suit.”

And success followed.

Article URL: <http://www.bostonherald.com/sports/college/basketball/view.bg?articleid=1158032>

[Contact us](#) | [Print advertising](#) | [Online advertising](#) | [Herald history](#) | [News tips](#) | [Electronic edition](#) | [Browser upgrade](#) | [Home delivery](#) | [Herald wireless](#)

[Save on Boston Herald Home Delivery](#)

[Jobs with Herald Media](#)

For back copy information and more information on other collectible copies please call 617-426-3000 Ext. 7714. [Click here for Celtics, Patriots and Red Sox back copies](#)



© Copyright by the Boston Herald and Herald Media.

No portion of BostonHerald.com or its content may be reproduced without the owner's written permission. [Privacy Commitment](#)