

BURSEY OFFICIALLY TAKES THE HELM OF THE CAVALIER BASKETBALL PROGRAM

By Ron Barry

Some moments are etched forever in a young basketball player's mind. And if that player follows his post-career dream pathway into the chaotic world of coaching... well, he'd love to etch a similar experience into the memories of his athletes.

For Spencer Bursey, that player moment came as a senior at Ripley High School, where the three-year letterman scored more than 1,000 career points and earned All-District and All-Region honors as his team reached the Region Tournament semifinals. The opponent would be Tennessee's top-ranked team, the Obion County Rebels.

Bursey describes that game - played in front of some 2,500 fans - as "unforgettable."

Now - named officially as the new head coach of the Crockett County High School Cavaliers - the optimistic former assistant wants his current roster of players to get that same adrenaline-pumping opportunity.

"Our goals are ambitious," a confident Bursey expressed Thursday night. "We aim to be District and Region champions and to make a State Tournament run. The last home Sectional game was in 2019, and the Cavs narrowly missed the State Tournament. In 2022 (when Bursey was an assistant), we fell short in a Sectional showdown with Fayette-Ware. This season, we aspire to overcome these challenges."

What exactly would that mean?

"Win the Sectional and advance to 'The Glass House' (Murphy Center in Murfreesboro)," Bursey says.

If your coach isn't confident, you can't expect your team to be, so Bursey expects to set that kind of tone for his new charges. And he's extremely grateful for the opportunity.



Left: Spencer Bursey offers encouragement to Cortland Reddick during last season's District Tournament. (Photo by Ron Barry)

"For the past four years, Crockett County has been my home," he said. "I am thrilled to step into the role of Head Coach for the Cavalier boys' basketball program. I aim to uphold the tradition of hard-nosed, winning basketball established here by Coach (now-Principal Jerrod) Shelton."

While Bursey has been an assistant at CCHS the last few seasons, the upcoming one won't be his first gig as the head man. He was previously in that position at Halls High School from 2018-2021, when he left to join the Crockett family. Prior to his Halls tenure, he was a volunteer assistant at Ripley for his former coach and mentor Clyde Wright before becoming an assistant coach at Ripley Middle School.

After his high school playing days at Ripley, Bursey served as team captain at Dyersburg State for two years before closing out his college career at Lane College.

"Basketball has always been my passion, and it was a natural progression to share this love with young players as a mentor and coach," Bursey said. "This summer (at Crockett), our journey began with the boys demonstrating that hard work pays off. Coach Jordan Mosier and I emphasize the team's motto - T-O-U-G-H - and the players have embraced our system. However, our work is just beginning."

Let the dream begin with it.

"I am deeply grateful and blessed to serve as the boys' head coach," Bursey said. "Let's go, CAV NATION!"



Right: Spencer Bursey is the new head coach of the Crockett County Cavaliers. (Photo by Ron Barry)