

This is the golden age of Metro basketball

Written by Bob Brooks

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Note to Cedar Rapids Metro basketball fans: Make no mistake about it, you are living in the golden age of outstanding basketball in the Metro area.

With numerous teams rated in the top 10, with Division I scholarship athletes playing all over the place, this should be your time to enjoy the high school game, whichever school you like to follow. Or just go to a game that you don't have an interest in, just to see the caliber of basketball that's being played in the Metro area these days.

It is certainly worth an evening of your time to take a look at these players and the programs that have been developed. The other side of the story is this: The players who are getting Division I scholarships are not only top players, but excellent people to go along with it.

And even though some of them are going out-of-state, it brings up the question that was posed years ago by one of my all-time favorites, the late Tait Cummins over at WMT, who ran a campaign of "Keep Iowa Athletes in Iowa."

In the last 15 years, that certainly has not been the case. And you might ask why. My reasoning is that the exposure Iowa players have been getting is light years ahead of what it was years ago, for both boys and girls.

And while we're talking about this golden age, let's not forget the girls teams in the Metro area that are equally adept at getting Division I scholarships. It's for the same reason, namely more exposure through AAU ball, summer showcases and all-star games that are giving them a chance nationwide to display their talent to college scouts all over the country.

Yes, it's a big, wide, wonderful world out there and the choices are also worldwide in the players' ability to move to wherever they want. However, I do think the state legislature ought to ban Roy Williams from coming back in the state! He has gotten more than his share of Iowa basketball stars at Kansas and North Carolina. Somebody else ought to have a chance.

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To sum this rambling session up, the main thrust is this: Don't say the Metro area has never developed boys and girls who can become stars across the country. They have hitched their star to teams they think can carry them to the Final Four, and we certainly wish them the best.

P.S. A football note: With the NFL playoffs this weekend, Paul James, the athletic director at Washington, and some friends are going to attend the Atlanta-Green Bay playoff game in Atlanta, courtesy of Washington grad Rob Bruggeman, who is on Atlanta's practice squad. The Washington people are going to use some of his six tickets that he's allotted for the game.