



New faces join familiar ones for talented Warriors

By Michael R. Lewis

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The Wayne Warriors will begin a new season with some new faces ready to make an impact.

The Warriors graduated two important pieces of their offense and defense in 2009. Jordan Bazile was second in the Greater Western Ohio Conference in points-per-game with an average of 17.5. Bazile was also fifth in the GWOC with 2.3 steals per game. Wayne also lost senior Lamar Mallory who led the team and was fourth in the GWOC with 8.8 rebounds-per-game while finishing second in the conference with a 67.4 field goal percentage. Bazile and Mallory were two of eight seniors to graduate from the varsity team.

"It's always going to effect your season when you lose guys who are some of the better athletes in the state not just on the team," Wayne head coach Travis Trice said.

"Lemar was obviously one of the best athletes in the state at 6'7" who could rebound and do all those things, but I think we will find different ways to score with this years team with guys who know how to play and score with the ball."

Wayne will be looking to Travis Trice to step up to help lead the team after a very impressive sophomore season. Trice was first in the conference with 5.9 assists-per-game while finishing second on the team and seventh in the conference with 15.1 points-per-game. Trice is also the team's leading returning perimeter shooter, connecting on 35 three-pointers.

"He's a Division I basketball player and I expect a lot more out of him," Trice said. "I think he's going to continue to get six or seven assists-per-game."

The Warriors will also be looking to fellow junior Markus Crider. Crider finished third on the team in points with 9.9 per game and rebounds with 6.1.

Joining Trice and Crider in a strong returning junior class will be Justin Hollins, Ad White, and Jason Bitsko, while they add Trotwood transfer Isiah Boddie.

Wayne's seniors will be new faces this year. Xavier Jones is a transfer from West Side High School in Indiana. Jones was the Post-Tribune Player of the Year as he averaged 21.3 points, 5.4 assists, 4.3 rebounds, and 2.3 steals last season.

The Warriors other transfer is Aaron Montgomery from Northmont. The senior averaged 5.2 points and 4.1 rebounds for the Thunderbolts last year. Joining Jones and Montgomery in the senior class is Rodney Peters.

Sophomores Keith Clements and Malcolm Pittman will round out Coach Trice's squad.

The Warriors will play a big schedule this season playing tough teams from around the country and even a team from the other side of the world. Wayne will play URSpring from Germany, Montverde (Florida), Massilon Jackson and Franklin-Simpson (Kentucky).

"We're trying to be in a situation where we play against the top competition we can play against to get us ready for the tournament," Trice said. "The URSpring Germany team is a team we don't know much about, but they have been here and played some of the top teams in the country when they have gotten here. Montverde Academy is ranked 12th pre-season in the country.

"We're looking forward to playing Massilon Jackson at the Schottenstein Center this year. They are a very good team as well out of the Canton region. We don't duck anybody and play some of the top competition. We could play weaker competition and have a better record, but I don't think we'd be quite prepared for the tournament and that is what our ultimate goal is."

The Warriors season gets underway Tuesday, December 8, as the Warriors travel to Lebanon in a game scheduled for a 7:30 p.m. tip off.