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CHISM PLEASED WITH LONGHORNS' PROGRESS IN HIS DEBUT SEASON

(Cedar Hill, TX) Corey Chism was 18 years old when he graduated from Cedar Hill High School in 2001. Eighteen years later, he returned to his alma mater as the head boys basketball coach. "I'm a Cedar Hill Guy," Chism said. "It felt like a responsibility to come back. It's surreal to come to work and walk the hallways that you used to walk."

Nostalgia aside, Chism returned to Longhorn Nation with a mission in mind – to restore the program to the glory days of the late, great coach David Milson, for whom he played point guard.

Chism said one of the best accomplishments for the 2019-20 team was the fact that five Longhorns earned All-District 7-6A Academic Honors – seniors Caleb Cato, ZaCorey Easley, Ashton Howard and Maurice Walker and sophomore Abdul Beyah.

In order to earn Academic All-District Honors, scholar-athletes must maintain an "A" average during the basketball season.

"That says a lot," Chism said. "I was proud to inherit a great group of kids of high character. They take the scholar part of scholar-athlete very seriously."

On the court, the Longhorns more than doubled their win total from the previous season, going from 6-25 in 2018-19 to 13-20 this season.

They debuted with a resounding 61-32 victory over eventual 30-6A Champion McAllen Rowe on November 15. On December 20, the Longhorns edged 6A Longview, 48-47. The Lobos went on to finish 24-10 and reach the playoffs.

In District 7-6A Competition, Cedar Hill was competitive against some of the top teams, with losses within four points to both Grand Prairie and Desoto. They tied for fifth in 7-6A, which Chism called one of the toughest 6A Districts in Texas.

"Our program is headed in the right direction," Chism said.

One reason for the improvement was the contributions of the program's nine seniors. Two of those seniors – forwards Cody Bell and Kenneth Henley earned Second Team All-District honors. Howard, a center, and Beyah, a point guard, received Honorable Mention All-District honors.

"Bell, Henley and Howard are high character kids who worked hard and brought a lot of intangibles to the program," Chism said. "They were the heartbeat of our team. They did the little things to make the big things happen. Beyah has a lot of potential. He will be one of the better guards in the State of Texas next season, and he has the same work ethic in the classroom that he does on the court."

Bell averaged 7.5 points, 4.5 rebounds and 1.2 steals per game, while Henley averaged 8.6 points and four rebounds per game. He also took three charges per game. Beyah average 8.6 points and 2.7 assists per game, and Howard contributed 7.3 points and 4.1 rebounds per game.



Chism said several of the seniors may have the opportunity to play college basketball. The closures due to COVID-19 are creating some logistical issues for that goal, but Chism is committed to reaching college coaches to ensure his players have an opportunity to play at the next level.

Chism has lived in the Dallas area his entire life, aside from earning a Master's Degree and a Bachelor's Degree from Prairie View A&M University, near Houston.

He made his head coaching debut at Dallas Life and later served as the head coach at Duncanville for four seasons.