



Junior Basketball Player A.J. Smith Is iCan Clinic Male Athlete Of The Month At Metro-East Lutheran High School

by Colin Feeney, Contributing Sports Writer
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EDWARDSVILLE - Junior forward A.J. Smith is among the top players on the boy's basketball team at Metro-East Lutheran High School and is among the leading scorers in the St. Louis metro area.

For that, Smith has been named the Knights' Riverbender.com's male Athlete of the Month for January 2020.

Smith, who plays for head coach Anthony Smith, averaged 18.4 points-per-game early in the season and has played a key role as a leader on the Knights.

Smith thanked his parents and family for their help and support, both athletically and academically.

"I would like to thank both my parents and my siblings because they do so much for me with helping me academically," Smith said, "and helping me with all my sports, especially my dad, because he takes time out of his day to help me train every day."

Smith has been playing basketball since second grade, and enjoys the competitiveness of the sport and knows about the value of hard work on the court.

"Since about the second grade, and I love the competitiveness of the sport," Smith said, "and I love how you have to put in countless hours to get what you want out of the sport."

In fact, Smith credits the training process of basketball with helping him enjoy the accolades he's receiving.

"I would have to say just the training process I have been doing my whole life," Smith said, "and the accolades come with the continuous effort on and off the court."

His involvement in basketball, and sports in general, has helped him develop into the kind of person he's become today.

"They have helped me a lot, due to the fact that I try to play many sports," Smith said, "but since going to college in basketball is my number one, I have so I can be the best me on the court."

Smith is planning on going to college to play basketball but hasn't yet made a decision on where he'll go to school, as he still has one more season to go, and also hasn't yet decided on a major. And he also credits his summer league team with helping him to develop his game.

"Without my AAU program, and all the people who have helped me in life," Smith said, "I don't think I would be the person I am today."

Riverbender.com's Athlete of the Month program is made possible by the generosity of our sponsors and the cooperation of our area high schools. This is a great accomplishment and one to be very proud of. Please join us in congratulating this young athlete. We at Riverbender.com wish you continued success in your future!