

Junior Slam-Dunk Artist DaMarcus Bean Is Metro East Lutheran Male Athlete of the Month

by Colin Feeney, Contributing Sports Writer
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EDWARDSVILLE - It has been some time since the area has had a slam-dunk artist like 6-foot-8 DaMarcus Bean of Metro East Lutheran High School.

Bean slammed two thunderous back-to-back dunks through the nets against East Alton-Wood River High School this past Friday night.

Bean combines with teammate A.J. Smith, also with the incredible dunking skills /leaping ability, to provide a combination spark for the Knights' boys basketball team, one of the best in the region.

Bean, a multi-sport athlete, has helped the boys basketball team at Metro-East Lutheran High School to a 3-0 start, averaging 13 points and four rebounds-per-game in the Knights' first two games, following up with a 15-point performance this past Friday night as Metro-East went on to a 79-62 win over East Alton-Wood River at Thomas Hooks Gym.

For his efforts in helping the Knights go off to a tremendous start, Bean has been named the school's male Athlete of the Month for February, 2021.

Bean, who plays for head coach Anthony Smith, did feel that the Knights played very well in the win over the Oilers.

"I think we really played well," Bean said in a postgame interview, "like rebounding the ball, passing and just like getting it in transition. That's what really thrived tonight."

The back-to-back dunks in the first quarter put a spark into the Knights, and helped them to play well.

"That's what really got us going in the first half," Bean said, "and got us, like, the energy flowing, and really let us get on the little run that let us win the game."

As with everybody on the team and throughout the state, Bean was very happy to receive the news that basketball got the green light to resume playing recently from both the IHSA and Illinois Department of Public Health.

"I was so excited to get out there and start playing again," Bean said. "I was waiting for the news to start back playing and everything. I was so happy."

While awaiting the news to start playing again, the Knights' players were still able to practice, but only on conditioning drills and running.

"It was a lot of running in practice," Bean said, "a lot of fine tuning things up in long two-hour practices every day, and everything like that."

As far as both team and individual goals for the shortened season, Bean is keeping things simple and in perspective.

"For me, it's just getting better," Bean said. "It's just like fine-tuning everything that has do do with ball-handling, dribbling, shooting, post moves. It's just like fixing everything, and not losing a game this year."

The Knights are off to a very good start, and Bean is very happy with how things are standing at this time.

"Yeah, I'm really happy to be 3-0 right now," Bean said.

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[Dan Brannan also contributed to this story.](#)