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Campo Basketball's David Ahazie

By Jon Kingdon



David Ahazie in March at the CIF Championship game Photo Gint Federas

Playing basketball was a step-by-step process for David Ahazie, which culminated in a state championship for Campolindo High School and his being named second team all-state. Ahazie, who also played one year of football for Campolindo as a freshman before becoming focused exclusively on basketball, said the love of basketball came early: "I played in the small leagues around Moraga and on the ASA club team."

It was not until Ahazie was a junior that he made the varsity squad. "David was a late developer," said head coach Steven Dyer. "He always had the talent but he was not a standout when I arrived his sophomore year. I thought that it would be best for him to play on the JV team to get the playing experience rather than sit on the bench with the varsity."

It was a simple formula for Ahazie: "When I started playing, I saw that I could get better if I put the work in. I was close to making the varsity as a sophomore but I had a good time on the JV team and it boosted my confidence."

Dyer saw the difference in Ahazie the next year: "David developed a lot over the summer. He played club basketball and I was pleased at how well he had developed. He really improved his shooting and became more consistent, playing with more confidence."

For Ahazie, it was "the competitiveness of the game and how I saw you could get better if you worked hard. That is what appealed to me the most."

That attitude was soon made clear to Dyer: "I never had to tell him to play harder - not once - something I could not say about any other player on the team. It was David's intensity and how hard he played that made him special. He really understood how to be a good defender. He was our best defender as a junior and really stood out as a senior."

Ahazie's record speaks for itself. The two years he was on the varsity, the team had a combined record of 48-18, and as a senior was named the league's Most Valuable Player, and was named second team all-state, averaging 16.5 points and 5.2 rebounds and, not to be overlooked, leading the team to a state championship.

The Cougars started slowly with a 4-3 record, but once again, it was a process that culminated in a championship, said Ahazie: "Early on, we had a number of injuries and we were always short of personnel. When we got healthy, it all came together as we got used to playing with each other. I knew we had a lot of talent and we just had to get organized. After playing together in a summer league, I knew that we could do a lot of big things. We were a family. No one tried to outscore anyone and we all pulled for each other."

Dyer echoed that sentiment: "David set the tone with his effort. He was a great leader by example with his effort and intensity. Even though he led the team in scoring, he was not a selfish player and never looked for his own shot."

Ahazie appreciated what the coaches brought to the team: "Coach Dyer was a great coach and won a lot of games for us along with his assistants Drew McDonald and Chris Dyer. As a group they all helped us put it together."

Ahazie, who has lived in Moraga and now lives in Lafayette, takes away a lot from Campolindo: "It was always a safe place and in a great location. I made a lot of friends there. My favorite classes were in chemistry and contemporary issues. I'm going to miss my friends, my teammates and my coaches."

Campolindo's loss is Loyola Marymount's gain: "When I visited the campus, I could just picture myself there. Plus, my sister goes to USC and I'll be nearer to her. I am going to try and walk on to their basketball team, but if that doesn't work out I'll just play intramurals."

Dyer feels that Ahazie may be able to play at that level: "David still has room to improve and he has a shot

to get a lot better in college."

If it's a question of effort, don't ever sell David Ahazie short.

Reach the reporter at: sportsdesk@lamorindaweekly.com

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