

December 17, 2024

By Dennis Garcia
SportsTone.net

TRINITY - Staying together and believing in the process.

The Trinity High School girls basketball team has certainly had troubles staying together in recent years as a number of student-athletes who were set to help turn around a program bolted for other schools. But the ones who remained, combined with a talented group of underclassmen, are beginning to turn things around for the Bulldogs.

A basketball program that suffered through two winless seasons since 2018-19 and went 7-101 in a four-out-of-five-year period is benefiting from what coach Mike Sink said are the keys to building a program: Staying together and believing in the system.

"Eight of these girls have been together since they started as freshmen and they have bought into each other, they trust each other," Sink said of a team that is 6-3 heading into Tuesday night's Piedmont Athletic Conference game at Wheatmore. "We've added a couple of freshmen and everyone has bought into what we are trying to do. Their confidence has been their biggest advantage."

Beginning in the 2018-19 season, the Bulldogs were a combined 7-76 over the next four seasons, finishing 0-24, 1-22, 1-12 and 5-18. Things took a major upswing in 2022-23 when THS finished 12-14. The Bulldogs were 10-6 at one point that season before closing by falling in eight of their last 10 contests.

That led to a trio of players transferring out, including players who would have been their top two returning scorers and Sink and the Bulldogs were left to start over again.

"We had to put in a starting point guard and pretty much start all over," Sink said about inserting then-sophomore Ava Nance into the point guard slot. "It took about three-quarters of the year before she started trusting herself."

Her emergence is certainly one of the key reasons the Bulldogs, who finished 0-25 a season ago while being outscored 1,389-421, have won six games and have outscored opponents 353-342 this season.



*Trinity head coach Mike Sink.
Photo provided.*

"The juniors and seniors have been together for years now and we're understanding each other more," said Nance, who is averaging 9.1 points and 7.8 rebounds a game. "Last year was extremely difficult. Every game we knew we probably weren't going to win, but every defeat was a slap in the face. Coach Mike was like keep your heads up and it will get better. We kept working together and pushing and I think what we went through last year has helped us get the wins this year."

Other factors has been the progression of Mya Hooker, who is playing more inside this season and has done well, averaging 8.1 points per game after leading the team last year with a 5.4 scoring average,

Freshman Madison Hill has given the Bulldogs a strong inside presence by averaging a team-leading 14.6 points per game. Freshman Carolina Case is also seeing minutes.

"Madison has basketball knowledge, works hard and gives us a few more points on the board we were lacking last year," Sink said. "Carolina has stepped up and did real well. Within a season, she too can become an impact player."

Lillian Stratton, who returned this season after an injury, Bryn Holden, another player returning to the program after missing a season, senior Desiree Rondon and sophomore Kayla Neam have both played key roles as have others.

"What makes it good for me going to practice is they enjoy playing the game and they enjoy learning and that makes practice fun," Sink said. "We always thought, even when we were 0 and whatever, they were working hard and making it fun. These girls have come a long way, regardless of the outcome this year."

It's an outcome that certainly could be bright.