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McKuin and Reynolds Sign to Play at Williams Baptist

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Dexter, Missouri - Seniors Melanie McKuin and Dakota Reynolds will have the opportunity to continue working on the basketball court next season. Both signed a letter of intent to play at Williams Baptist College in Walnut Ridge, Arkansas.

"It feels pretty good," commented Reynolds. "I know that I will know someone. We have been playing since the third grade together and we know how to play together on the court. We should be able to work well down there."

"When we were in the fifth grade, we were playing a high school in AAU ball," continued Reynolds. "She passed the ball to me and I shot it for the win, and we won by one point against a high school team as fifth graders!"

Melanie McKuin also recalled a memorable moment of her high school basketball career when she ran offensive sets in a clutch situation with Reynolds.

"There are always those big time games when Dakota and I work best," stated McKuin. "I dribble-penetrated and hit her for a three and it just goes in! That's one of the best things, us working together and getting points for the team. That's been my favorite thing!"

Melanie and Dakota were very impressed with the campus atmosphere at Williams Baptist College and head girls basketball coach Carol Halford was happy to sign the both of them.

"It certainly is a bonus to get two in one day," Halford said. "That's rare. I was thinking back and I think maybe one other time in my 33 years I have been at Williams Baptist I have had a double signing. I signed a couple of kids out of the Little Rock area one time, but that is the only other double signing I can recall."

When asked about the college atmosphere, Reynolds said, "When I went to visit it was a very pretty campus and the people were very welcoming. The coaches were great and there are some great people down there. It is not too far away and I just fell in love with it."

"I just wanted to continue to play basketball and develop my skills some more. It felt like a place where I was supposed to be. It just kind of clicked with me," McKuin added about their visit.

The girls have had quite a bit of success at Dexter High School. The Lady Cats won four District Titles, advanced to two CoMo Final Fours and compiled a varsity record of 93-25 in their four years at Dexter High School under Coach Chad Allen.

Melanie McKuin has had the opportunity to play all five positions for the Lady Cats. This year as a senior she experienced playing at center after a teammate suffered an injury and was out for the season.

"Playing the five spot this year was a really big challenge for me," McKuin said. "Now I have played every position in basketball, which has improved my game overall."

Dakota Reynolds has primarily played point guard most of her high school career.

Both ladies exhibit skills that made them attractive recruits Halford said of the two seniors. "I like McKuin's length. She will continue to get better and better at the next level," continued Halford. "She will probably develop more core body strength and add a little more weight possibly. I also like her athleticism, the way she runs the floor and her ability to defend several different positions.

"We like Dakota's speed, quickness, ball-handling, ability to shoot the three-ball and the way she can see the court and find people in the corner," stated Halford.

Both ladies have already had experience playing against elite talent in the United States. They have been members of the Hoopsters Basketball Academy for the last four years. The Hoopsters Basketball Academy is comprised of excellent and talented players from Missouri, Arkansas, and Tennessee who compete in tournaments throughout the Midwest over the summer months.

"In our traveling ball we play against college-level competition," commented Hoopsters Basketball Academy head coach Spencer Hoffman. "That's what the kids that do the traveling ball want to experience. When we do these exposure events, it gives our players a barometer of what they need to improve on and where they fit in against college-level talent."

"Both of these girls are extremely hard workers," Hoffman said. "Williams Baptist is getting two really good basketball players, but more importantly they are adding two quality kids and two quality families to their program. They are going to be an attribute to whatever they are involved with at Williams."

Williams Baptist College is a four-year Christian liberal arts college and is known for its academic excellence and personal attention. Student-to-teacher ratio is 13 to 1 with over 500 students attending the main campus. They compete in the American Midwest Conference in women's basketball.

"It is a small liberal arts college that is pretty family-oriented," Halford said. "We have small classrooms and people know you by name. I think both of these ladies felt comfortable with that situation. at the same time, it is academically challenging. We have got between 25 to 30 degree programs right now. it is also very competitive as far as athletics."

McKuin said she wanted to work towards becoming a pharmacist, while Reynolds said she wanted to work towards a degree in sports medicine.

"I want to go into pre-pharmacy and continue on to pharmacy school," stated McKuin. "I have always had an interest in medicine. When I was in middle school, my cousin was a pharmacist, and I was able to shadow her and I loved what she did and decided that is what I want to do when I grow up!"

"I love sports so much and want to stay involved with it," Reynolds said. "I know how injuries are and I want to help other people out with them."

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