



Sometimes, it was hard to tell if Mr. Z was laughing or crying as the game progressed.

HOPE ACADEMY

EDUCATE | ENCOURAGE | EQUIP

A private, non-denominational, Christ-centered school for at-risk youth in grades 5-8 in the Glenwood neighborhood of Greensboro.

What do you call a basketball team that loses 34-9?

They'd never played an actual basketball game before--only pick up games in the neighborhood.

They'd never played a game with two goals--only one goal with a bent rim at the back of the school.

They'd never been up against a tough defense so they didn't score one point until just before halftime.

However, history was made that rainy Friday night in the gym at St. James Home of the Fresh Start. After only one year in existence, Hope Academy had its first athletic event. No fancy uniforms--just shorts from Wal-mart, donated t-shirts and shoes worn everyday at school. Heck, there wasn't even a mascot.

But, the place was packed--standing room only. Moms, aunts and uncles sat beside Hope staff, students, teachers and supporters with a common purpose. When those nine points were scored, the crowd rose in unison and cheered like it was a state championship. The players looked over and smiled as they struggled to get back down the court. For one night, students who'd never had anyone cheer for them before learned what it was like to feel special and to feel like they mattered--win or lose.

So, what do you call a basketball team that lost 34-9? We call it a miracle.



"You guys move like you just ate a bunch of Twinkie's!" Mr. Z admonished at half time.

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