

Highland CC Men's Basketball Roster

NAME	YEAR	HEIGHT	HOMETOWN
Duro Bjegovic	Soph.	6-7 1/2	Croatia
Eric Chesser	Soph.	6-6 1/2	Naperville, IL
Eric Frederick	Frosh.	6-6	Oklahoma City, OK
Heath Hoffman	Frosh.	6-3	Rockford, IL
Lamar Lee	Soph.	6-0	Chicago, IL
Jeremy Leonard	Frosh.	5-10	South Holland, IL
Anthony Mitchell	Soph.	6-4	East St. Louis, IL
Justin Richmond	Soph.	6-6	Waukegan, IL
Wardell Satterwhite	Frosh.	6-2	Racine, WI
Tim Steed	Soph.	6-3	New Castle, DE
Damjan Toljan	Soph.	6-3	Croatia
Alex Tuluca-Mfumupembe	Frosh.	6-4	Belgium
Parrish West	Soph.	6-3	Chicago, IL
Torrieo Williams	Frosh.	6-7	Minneapolis, MN
Mike Willis	Frosh.	6-5	Nashville, TN
Justin Witt	Frosh.	6-5	Lanark, IL
Brandon Wood	Frosh.	6-3	Kokomo, IN

COUGAR CORNER

New kids on the block

HCC hoops welcomes three D-I transfers, D-I assistant coach

By Scott McNeish
Focus Sports Editor

FREEPORT — The Highland Community College men's basketball team sent seven players to NCAA Division I programs last year. This year, the Cougars have flipped the script.



Photo submitted

Guard Lamar Lee transferred to Highland from Indiana State University.



Photo submitted

Forward Anthony Mitchell comes to HCC from St. Louis University.



Photo submitted

Guard Brandon Wood, a transfer from Southern Illinois University.

HCC has three D-I players coming in, instead of heading out, to help fill the void left by 11 Cougars that either graduated or changed schools. Guard Brandon Wood (Southern Illinois), guard Lamar Lee (Indiana State) and forward Anthony Mitchell (St. Louis University) will suit up for Highland this season.

"We have a very established program now," Norman said. "We've been able to attract very good players. For players that want to go the JUCO route, I think we offer a great situation for them."

Wood, a highly-recruited, 6-foot-3 guard out of Kokomo, Ind., played six games for the Salukis last season before suffering a stress fracture in his leg that ended his freshman season.

"The timing of the injury was unfortunate for Brandon because it set him back," Southern Illinois head coach Chris Lowery told *siusalukis.com* in April. "He is clearly a very gifted offensive player, and I am confident he has a bright basketball future ahead of him."

Lee suffered an ankle injury in mid-Jan., and never re-established himself in the Sycamores' rotation. He decided after the season to explore other opportunities.

"I just don't think this is the right fit for me. I'm just seeking something different," Lee told *The Terre Haute Tribune-Star* at the time of his transfer. "It's nothing against the coaching staff here, but things just didn't click here like I wanted to."

Wood and Lee give Highland, what Norman calls, "the best talent at the guard position we've had."

The key to Highland's success lies in the post, and once Mitchell recovers from his

March reconstructive knee surgery, he will give the Cougars a much-needed boost in the paint.

"He hasn't been released yet, and we anticipated him being released in the next two weeks," Norman said. "He'll be a little behind at first, but we feel once he gets going and progresses, he can be a force for us."

Speaking of Division I

To help coach the new prospects, Highland brought in former Southeast Missouri State assistant coach Ronnie Dean to fill the shoes of departed assistant Condric Sanders, who left after last season to take an assistant coach position at NAIA Robert Morris College.

Dean also has experience at Jacksonville, Montana, Long Beach State and Cal State Fullerton during his 18-year coaching career.

He coached the past five seasons at Southeast Missouri.

"I'm just going to try to do my part," Dean said in a phone interview in August. "I think I can bring in more talent as time goes on. This is a program that does not need any tweaking. It's running on all cylinders."

Last year, The Basketball Times named Dean the fourth-best JUCO recruiter in the nation behind West Virginia head coach Bob Huggins, UNLV assistant coach Greg Gensing and former Indiana head coach Kelvin Sampson.

"He's a wonderful addition for us," Norman said. "He gives us another dimension that we haven't had. He gives the guys a taste of how hard they have to work to accomplish what they want to accomplish. His experience is very valuable."

COLLEGE BASKETBALL | HIGHLAND CC MEN'S PREVIEW

EYES ON THE PRIZE

Highland determined to return to national tournament

By Scott McNeish
Focus Sports Editor

FREEPORT — The Highland Community College men's basketball team didn't earn a ticket to the Big Dance last year. The Cougars want to make sure that streak halts right there.

Highland spoiled fans by advancing to the NJCAA Division I National Tournament four straight years from 2004-2007, finishing as high as third in 2006. It fell one victory short last season with a loss to perennial power Three Rivers in the District IV championship game.

But Highland, which holds its first practice this afternoon, has its radar locked on a return trip.

"It's always our goal," Highland head coach Pete Norman said. "That's how our program has steadily progressed; that's how our program is measured."

Highland's 28-5 record last season gave it a 355-77 mark over the past 13 seasons.

That includes 10 straight Arrowhead Conference championships, five consecutive Region IV titles, 13 straight 20-win seasons and the emergence of 12 NJCAA All-Americans.

A pedigree like that has the Cougars believing anything less ranks as a disappointment.

"Getting back there is definitely our goal, but there's a lot of good teams that also have the talent to get there," Norman said. "It takes a lot of breaks, a

lot of breaks going your way. We're hopeful that we have the ability to be in the hunt."

Reloading

Highland will go hunting with an almost entirely new roster. The Cougars had 11 players leave after last season due to graduation or transfer to an NCAA Division I or II program.

Only one player, Parrish West, returns. Parrish averaged eight points and four rebounds as the team's sixth man last season. The Cougars also return Tim Sneed, who redshirted a year ago. That leaves plenty of holes to fill.

However, Norman believes he recruited worthy replacements that will keep his program running at a high level.

"We feel good about what we have," he said. "Looking at our team right now, since we haven't even played a game yet, I like what I see. If all the pieces that we like fit come together it yet to be determined."

He especially likes his options at guard. The 2004 Illinois Basketball Coaches Association Junior College Co-Coach of the Year gave them quite a compliment.

"On the perimeter, our guys there are as talented as any team we've ever had," Norman said.

Puzzle in the post

But, as Norman highlighted, the Cougars cannot rely on their guards to carry the team the entire season.

They still need to develop an inside presence, because



Photo submitted

HCC's lone returning player, Parrish West.

at the moment, the post-game presents a worrisome question mark.

Norman used the word "concerned" when addressing the inside.

"We don't know who will step up at this point. But we need someone to down there," Norman said. "It's a bit of an unknown for us. We need to develop. We need the big guys to hold their own, score some points and rebound."

Rebounding hurt Highland last season. Three Rivers, which hosts Highland on Feb. 9, outrebounded the Cougars, 44-39, in last year's district title game.

Norman said his team's ability to rebound will play a major factor in its final destination.

"Everyone needs to hit the boards," he said. "The guards need to help out a lot in that department. They have to be involved if we're going to hang with teams on the glass. If we can hold our own on the boards, that should go a long way toward getting us to where we want to go."

2008-2009 Highland Cougars Men's Basketball Schedule

DAY	DATE	OPPONENT	LOCATION	TIME
Sat	Oct 11	MBB Jamboree @ BHE	Kewanee, IL	TBA
Sat	Oct 18	MBB Jamboree @ USI	Evansville, IN	TBA
Sat	Oct 25	MBB Jamboree @ St. Ambrose Univ.	Davenport, IA	TBA
Fri/Sat	Oct 31, Nov 1	Kennedy-King Tip-Off Tournament	Chicago, IL	TBA
Sat/Sun	Nov 8 & 9	Black Hawk East Tournament	Kewanee, IL	TBA
Tue	Nov 18	Southeastern Iowa	W. Burlington, IA	7:00
Thur	Nov 20	Augustana	HOME	7:00
Wed	Dec 3	Daley	Chicago, IL	TBA
Sat-Sun	Dec 6, 7	Prime Table Classic Tourn. Highland, Harper, Moraine Valley, Morton	HOME	3/5:00
Fri-Sat	Dec 12 & 13	William R Bear Classic Highland, Sauk Valley, DuPage, Oakton, Elgin, Lake County, Iowa Central, Monroe, NY	HOME	TBA
Tue	Jan 6	Illinois Valley	HOME	7:00
Thur	Jan 8	Black Hawk	HOME	7:00
Sat	Jan 10	Kankakee	HOME	3:00
Tue	Jan 13	Kishwaukee	Malta, IL	7:30
Sat	Jan 17	Kennedy-King	HOME	3:00
Tue	Jan 20	Sauk Valley	HOME	7:00
Thur	Jan 22	Black Hawk East	Kewanee, IL	7:30
Tue	Jan 27	Carl Sandburg	HOME	7:00
Tue	Jan 29	Illinois Valley	Ogelsby, IL	7:30
Tue	Feb 3	Black Hawk	Moline, IL	7:30
Thur	Feb 5	Kishwaukee	HOME	7:00
Sat	Feb 7	Daley	HOME	3:00
Mon	Feb 9	Three Rivers	Poplar Bluff, MO	TBA
Thur	Feb 12	Sauk Valley	Dixon, IL	7:30
Sat	Feb 14	Kankakee	Kankakee, IL	3:00
Tue	Feb 17	Black Hawk East	HOME	7:00
Thur	Feb 19	Carl Sandburg	Galesburg, IL	7:30
Sat	Feb 21	Kennedy-King	Chicago, IL	3:00
Sat	Feb 28	Region IV Quarter Finals @ HCC	Freeport, IL	TBA
Thur	Mar 5	Region IV Semi-Finals @ HCC	Freeport, IL	TBA
Sat	Mar 7	Region IV Championship @ HCC	Freeport, IL	TBA
Tue	Mar 10	District Play-Offs Region IV	Region IV	TBA
Tue-Sat	Mar 17-21	NJCAA National Tournament	Hutchinson, KS	TBA

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

YESTERDAY'S HEROES

Where are former Cougars hoopsters now?

2007-2008

Roy Baker	St. Ambrose University
Devan Bawinkel	University of Iowa
Anthony Boyle	University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee
Eli Brouhard	Rockford College
Nick Daniels	IUPUI- Ft. Wayne, IN
Robert Eppinger	University of Illinois-Chicago
Mario Gagulic	University of North Carolina at Pembroke
Anthony Simpson	Kent State University
Edward Tucker	University of Toledo

2006-2007

Gabby Cruz	Bethune-Cookman College
Laron Frazier	Ball State University
Tim Green	Texas A&M- Corpus Christi
Matija Poscic	DePaul University
Geryn Reese	Tiffin University