

12th Annual Tamika Catchings Youth Holiday Basketball Camp

CAMP REVIEW

It is only fitting that the 2012 Tamika Catchings Youth Holiday Basketball Camp end as it began.

Upon traveling through a 13-hour time difference and reaching Indianapolis Dec. 26 after a canceled flight and a 7-hour drive from Chicago, Tamika Catchings again boarded a plane at 12:30 p.m. last Sunday (Dec. 30), just one night's sleep after concluding her camp's awards banquet and an evening dinner for volunteers.

This time she flew direct to Hong Kong where she arrived at 7:30 p.m. on Dec. 31. A driver picked her up to transfer to Schenzen, China where she boarded another flight at 7:00 a.m., arriving in Kuming, China at 10. A two-hour bus ride put her in Yunnan where she re-connected with her team. That night, Catchings' around-the-world travel saga ended with 24 points and 12 rebounds as the Guangdong Dolphins stayed alive in the hunt for the Chinese League's final playoff spot.

The night before her break for camp, Dec. 24, Catchings had scored 25 points in another Guangdong win.

Tamika's 7-day totals from Dec. 24 through Jan. 1:

- 61 hours traveling around the world (27 from China to Indy; 34 returning to China)
- 3 full days of camp (total of 24 hours; 9 to 5 each day)
- 49 points and two wins for Guangdong Dolphins

DAY 3 – December 29, 2012

Customary warm-ups and stretching ensued at 10:00 a.m. before the final day of camp its traditional turn for FUN!

By 10:30, campers were grouping into threes for a half-hour of 3-on-3, one-possession basketball! All 12 courts were in action with heated 3-on-3 battles as each trio took its opportunity to rule the court. A winner was declared in each game whenever the first basket was scored. That team stayed on the court to keep the ball and welcome a new opponent; each team with the unfortunate first bucket scored against them was sent to a new court to find another chance for victory. For 30 minutes, kids traveled from court to court trying to knock off a reigning champ; or they stayed on a particular court trying to stave off a constantly changing set of new challengers.

At 11:00, attention was turned once again to the scrimmage games that had dominated the two previous afternoons. This time, top teams from the Black, Blue and Red divisions hoped to win championships in their respective divisions, with all teams playing two more games over the next hour.

By the noon hour, parents had begun arriving for the final stage of camp – a Parents



Competition followed by the end-of-camp awards banquet. A timed obstacle course greeted dozens of parents who competed with their own children, followed by a final game of Knockout among parents who dared to play for their own pride and prestige.

Finally, as basketball activities came to a close, Catchings and her staff escorted the roughly 500 campers and parents into a dining room for pasta, chicken, some light humor and heaps of praise on all the campers for jobs well done.

Prizes were awarded to the top teams and top 3-on-3 teams in each of three divisions during the camp. Also in each division, Catchings and her staff bestowed their highest honors for individual campers with a Most Improved Award; the Best Attitude Award; and the Tamika Catchings Hustle Award. Capping the banquet were awards from the Parents Competition, a silent auction and a variety of raffle winners.

Capping the agenda was an opportunity for each youngster to receive a Catchings autograph as they said any final goodbyes.

THANK YOU

The Catch The Stars Foundation is thankful to so many great organizations who helped make the 2012 Tamika Catchings Youth Holiday Basketball Camp another huge success. Words cannot express the gratitude and sincerity with which they are spoken.

As the calendar now has moved to 2013, we thank the dozens of volunteers that have made this camp a growing success each year. For giving of their time and their skills and talents and efforts for so much of their holiday week, we thank them for their dedication and hope that they share in the pride of our success.

To the parents and participants themselves, thank you for your passion and dedication. We hope to remain a part of your future. CTSF hopes you had as good a time last week as we did in organizing our experience. Good luck in your academic and family and extracurricular activities throughout the rest of the new year!



12th Annual Tamika Catchings Youth Holiday Basketball Camp

DAY 1 – DEC. 27, 2012

Managing a 13-hour time difference and capping her trip with a 7-hour drive through snow from Chicago, Indiana Fever star Tamika Catchings arrived home in Indianapolis for her annual youth basketball camp after a 27-hour journey from China – where she played a game in the Chinese League on Dec. 24.

Catchings' itinerary began at Noon ET, Christmas Day, after a 25-point effort for the Guangdong Dolphins the night before. From Hong Kong to San Francisco to Chicago, the trip was on-schedule, albeit long. Once in Chicago though, after sprinting through the airport to her gate for a 6 a.m. flight to Indy, her flight was canceled due to Midwest weather, along with all remaining flights for that day. She turned to Plan B and rented a vehicle for what is normally a 3-hour drive ... which turned to seven through the holiday blizzard.

Finally, yes, she arrived in Indianapolis to continue the basketball camp that is for Catchings, her passion. For the 12th consecutive year, Catchings began her own basketball camp on Thursday at Warren Central High School. One of her lifelong dreams, she instituted the camp following her rookie season with the Fever in 2001. Now, with the backing of her Catch The Stars Foundation, the annual holiday camp draws over 200 participants regularly.

On Thursday, 220 youngsters aged 8 to 14 gathered despite the holiday snow that delayed the camp by two hours. This year's roster of campers is based heavily from registrations in Central Indiana, Chicago, and throughout the Midwest.

Following a half-hour warmup of calisthenics and motivation from Catchings, herself, the camp was largely turned over to the cast of nearly 50 volunteers that traveled from as far away as New York. The staff of coaches monitored a dozen different 10-minute stations related to specific skills, with Catchings roaming from one end of the three-court facility to the other, offering encouragement and advice.

Various stations included skills devoted to rebounding, shooting, dribbling, ballhandling, full-court drills, pick & roll, screening, speed-agility-quickness and even a classroom station dedicated to teaching teamwork and a positive attitude.

Campers broke for lunch at 3 p.m., followed by a guest appearance by Indiana Pacers star George Hill. The first day of camp ended with two hours of scrimmage games among teams.

Day 1 is in the books. Days 2 and 3 follow Friday and Saturday. Sunday, Catchings embarks on another trek through 13 time zones to return to China. She is due to arrive at roughly



noon on Tuesday, China Time, where she is scheduled to play another game Tuesday evening.

THREE RULES

Catchings' camp operates with three simple rules. In Tamika's words, "We all have rules in life. We have rules at work, rules at school and rules at home. We have rules here, too." Echoing Catchings' reputation for respect, persistence and hard work, her

three rules are:

1. When an orange-shirted volunteer tells a camper to be somewhere, those words are to be followed immediately.
2. The words "I can't" are not allowed at Catchings' camp! During warmups, Catchings implored the campers to repeat after her ... "I CAN'T!" She followed, "Good, that will be the last time you say those words while you're here!"
3. Hustle is paramount. You don't walk on the basketball floor. When you are instructed from one place to another, there is no walking.

CAMP STORE

Parents and campers have the opportunity to purchase a variety of souvenirs, from basketballs to t-shirts, reflecting Catchings and her favorite teams – Nike, the Indiana Fever and the Tennessee Lady Volunteers. A top item on display at this year's camp was a 10x12 Nike poster featuring a tearful Catchings while receiving the WNBA Finals MVP award, surrounded on both sides by her "24 Tips To Become A Champion."



SCHEDULE AND THEMES

Thursday's camp theme encouraged kids to dress in the attire of their favorite sports teams. Friday's theme calls for campers to wear their orange camp-t-shirts. Warm-up begins at 10:00 a.m., with the floor open for campers' arrival between 9:15 and 9:45. Activities conclude at 4:00 p.m. On Saturday, it's "Crazy Socks Day" and camp begins again at

10:00. The highlight of the final day is a "back-by-popular-demand" Parents Competition from Noon to 1, followed by an awards banquet from roughly 1 to 2:30 p.m.

THANK YOU

Today's lunch was provided by Panera Bread and Friday's lunch is courtesy of Chick-fil-A. Saturday's banquet is catered by Levy Restaurants and includes pasta, salad, breadsticks, punch and dessert. All parents are invited to participate in the final day of camp!

12th Annual Tamika Catchings Youth Holiday Basketball Camp

DAY 2 – DEC. 28, 2012

Emily and Kiree are a pair of 10-year-old girls with barely two things in common – they are both 5th graders who play basketball. Both have attended the Tamika Catchings Youth Holiday Basketball Camp the past two days and both have wonderful stories to share about how they got here.

Emily is from Colorado. Kiree is from Minnesota. They share distinction as the two campers who have traveled the furthest to participate in this week's camp. Both stories reflect the long-reaching impact of Tamika Catchings.

Catchings' 12th annual holiday camp concludes on Saturday with Emily and Kiree and more than 200 other campers looking forward to another season of the Indiana Fever, more basketball from Tamika Catchings and more opportunities to interact with their favorite player and citizen.



A DISTANT RELATION IN MINNESOTA



Tamika Catchings was born in New Jersey and lived in Philadelphia, Chicago and Texas during most of her youth. Most of her fans are familiar with her playing career in Tennessee and Indiana. But her family lineage also includes a young girl in Minnesota, Kiree, who was brought to Tamika's attention during the WNBA Finals last October.

Kiree Catchings-Murray is the daughter of Dawn Murray, a single mother of two in Apple Valley, Minn., roughly 20 minutes outside Minneapolis. She is linked to Tamika through a paternal great grandfather, Edward Catchings. Dawn was divorced early in Kiree's childhood due to her husband's legal issues and drug addiction. Dawn re-took her maiden name, Murray, in 2010. Kiree wished to do the same, but not at the risk of losing the name Catchings, which now she hyphenates.

Once Kiree had learned of the distant relation to Tamika, Catchings had become the young child's singular idol. Kiree had begun playing the game at age 4, acquiring her skills naturally and with no idea of another Catchings star elsewhere in her family tree. Upon learning of her distant relation to the Indiana Fever star, she began wearing No. 24.

Searching for a connection with Tamika and an answer to her child's dream, Dawn sent an unsolicited email to the Catch The Stars Foundation on the morning of Oct. 17, the same day as Game 2 of the WNBA Finals between the Fever and Lynx in Minneapolis.

Within two hours, Tamika sent a reply and provided tickets to the game that evening. She met the Murray family after the game and has kept in touch with Dawn and Kiree ever since.

Unknown to Kiree, Dawn registered her daughter for Catchings' camp in Indianapolis. Kiree first learned of her participation when she opened a gift on Christmas Eve. The pair embarked on an 11-hour drive to Indy just 24 hours later, arriving at midnight Wednesday, just hours before camp began.

CAMP VOLUNTEER WITH 12-YEAR OLD TRIPLET DAUGHTERS AND 10-YEAR OLD GRANDDAUGHTER FROM COLORADO

Perhaps more compelling than Emily Hughes' camp participation all the way from Colorado is the fact that her three 12-year old aunts are participating with her.

Yes, you read that right.

Emily's mother, Jennifer, is the oldest daughter of Jim Bryant, a semi-retired electrical contractor from Plainfield, whose seven children range in age from 12 to 37. The youngest are triplets Emelia, Olivia and Sophia, all 7th graders at Cascade Middle School who play competitively.



Emily lives in tiny, Peyton, Colo., where her mother is an Air Force Lieutenant based in Colorado Springs. Her father, also in the Air Force, is currently serving overseas. Her younger brother Colton was actually named in honor of the Indianapolis Colts, a favorite team of her mother who grew up in Indiana and played basketball at Danville High School.

Born in Texas where her parents were stationed before moving to Colorado, Emily usually visits her grandparents, Jim and Lorra, about twice a year including Christmas. With the triplets attending the Catchings camp and Emily often in search of playing opportunities in her rural town, her attendance at camp was a natural.

With three daughters and a granddaughter all participating in camp, Jim became a volunteer.

CATCHINGS USA PHOTOS

Catchings is a three-time Olympic gold medalist who has played on USA Basketball teams since 1996. On Friday, all campers had the opportunity to pose with Catchings and her 2012 gold medal from the London Olympics. Prints may be purchased for \$5 from the Camp Store on Saturday.

SCHEDULE AND THEMES

On Saturday, it's "Crazy Socks Day" with camp beginning again at 10:00 a.m. The highlight of the day will be a "back-by-popular-demand" Parents Competition from Noon to 1, followed by an awards banquet from roughly 1 to 2:30 p.m.

THANK YOU

Camp lunches have been provided by Panera Bread and Chick-fil-A. Saturday's banquet is catered by Levy Restaurants and includes pasta, salad, breadsticks, punch and dessert. All parents are invited to participate in the final day of camp!