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Marvelous

Marvin Bagley III

Prep Profile

Bagley continues to dazzle even in a losing EYBL season

Scott Phillips

All eyes are on Marvin Bagley III as he begins the final stretch of his accomplished high school basketball career.

It seems like the 6-foot-11 Bagley has been in the spotlight for the better part of the decade thanks to the scholarship offers he started to receive as young as 13 years old.

Those offers for free college tuition before Bagley even finished seventh grade might have seemed presumptuous at the time, but as the consensus No. 1 player in the Class of 2018, Bagley has more than lived up to the hype.

The most dominant player in the Nike EYBL this spring, Bagley put up some absurd numbers, as he averaged 25.8 points, 14.9 rebounds and 3.1 blocks per game.

With a rare combination that includes the size of a center to go along with the athleticism and skill of a wing, it's easy to see why Bagley is considered to be the heavy favorite as the potential No. 1 pick in the 2019 NBA draft.

"I want to be able to do it all," Bagley said. "Rebounding, scoring the ball, passing the ball, defense. I want to be able to affect the game if I'm not scoring. To be able to (dominate) in a different way. That's what I try to control and try to work on as part of my game."

Bagley has been doing just fine when it comes to the controllable aspects of his game. Finishing second in scoring, first in rebounding and third in blocks in the EYBL this spring, Bagley's production is nearly unmatched among his peers.

Some elite players have a tendency to try and do too much and it can hurt things like field-goal percentage. That is no such issue for Bagley. Although the lefty struggled to find his consistency shooting the 3-ball this spring (13-for-56 for 23 percent overall), Bagley still shot 54 percent from the field, overall, while constantly facing double and triple teams.

There aren't a lot of holes in Bagley's individual game, but there has been a strange development brewing this spring with regards to his Nike Phamily EYBL team. Even though Bagley is one of the most dominant players the EYBL has ever seen, his team only finished 2-14 during the spring.

When it came time for invitations to come for the prestigious Nike Peach Jam that is held every July, Bagley and the Nike Phamily were a controversial at-large selection despite being one of the worst teams in the league during the spring. Nike didn't want to leave the top player in the class out of its top event of the summer. The move was plausible, but it also didn't help Bagley's reputation.

Coached by his father, Marvin Bagley Jr., with



Marvin Bagley III averaged 25.8 points but went just 2-14 in EYBL play.

the Nike Phamily, the younger Bagley has had to deal with the affects of losing nearly all of his games this spring. The Nike Phamily went the first three sessions of EYBL play without a win, starting 0-12, until they finally broke through during the final session with a 2-2 finish.

Coming off of a scholastic season in which

Bagley's high school, Sierra Canyon, was nationally-ranked and finished 27-3, the losing during the spring was especially tough to swallow. For the first time in his decorated preps career, Bagley wasn't consistently winning. The lack of success has been a learning experience for Bagley as he has kept up his productivity and high-motor play even during the team's struggles.

Fortunately for Bagley, people don't harp too much on AAU results, as even the most hardcore grassroots basketball follower likely can't name the past five champions at Peach Jam without having to look it up. The lack of wins this spring has undoubtedly fueled Bagley in a unique way that not a lot of five-star prospects have to deal with during their high school careers.

"Just keep fighting, no matter what happens," Bagley said. You know, we can't control that now. It's over with. We can't get it back. So we have to keep looking forward to the next game and trying to win the next game. If you don't win that one, you try to win the next one.

I think I'm learning a lot from this. You know, you want to win, but at the same time it's a learning experience. I'm learning a lot."

This spring will likely be the last time Bagley has to deal with extensive losing until he moves on to the NBA. Recruiting information is tough to come by with the tight-lipped Bagley family, but CBS Sports and 247 Sports reported during the Peach Jam that Bagley was considering reclassifying in order to play in college next season.

Duke, Arizona and USC were reportedly the leaders if he plays in college this season, though UCLA, Kansas and Kentucky were also among his final six.

Wherever and whenever Bagley leaves for his lone season of college, there is a very real possibility that he competes for national player-of-the-year honors.

At the very least, Bagley is already considered to be one of the best incoming freshmen the college game has seen over the last decade.