

Hoops

Elementary girls get a chance to learn from their sports heroes

BY TIM SMITH
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Professional basketball no longer is just a man's game and little boys aren't the only ones learning how to dribble, pass and shoot.

Further proof took place recently at Hillside Elementary School. Detroit Shock guard Korie Hlede and the Women's National Basketball Association team's youth coordinator, Eve Claar, conducted a clinic attended by 43 third-, fourth- and fifth-graders from six elementary schools.

It not only was a great chance for the young girls to meet a sports hero up close and personal. They also were able to get some tips to improve their game and — perhaps most importantly — find out that getting interested in basketball is something that could eventually pay dividends.

The clinic was organized by Hillside parent Janet Kelmigian, whose 8-year-old daughter, Jayme, participated. Claar said the Shock does regular youth clinics in Oakland County.

"We want to give them a reason to go out in the driveway and play, a reason to turn on the TV and catch a game," said Claar, a 1991 graduate of North High School in Farmington Hills and a college player at Central Michigan University. "Give them something to dream for and shoot for."

But, added Claar, being active in sports can help a person grow, learn how to work with others and find out that setting goals and achieving them is worthwhile, whether on the basketball court or in the classroom.

Sports builds a mind-set that "it's OK to compete and really try to win," Claar said, following the hour-long after-

"I remember being their age and I had no clue and had nobody to tell me that these things were possible."

Korie Hlede
—Shock guard

school clinic. "And that sports really translates into your school work, trying to achieve in school."

According to Hlede, who helped the girls work on their basic skills, there is another key message that she and Claar want girls to receive in youth clinics such as the one at Hillside.

"It's very important to get the message out at this age about how times have changed and that there are opportunities out there in front of them," Hlede said. "To let them know they can do whatever they want to do, and not just basketball."

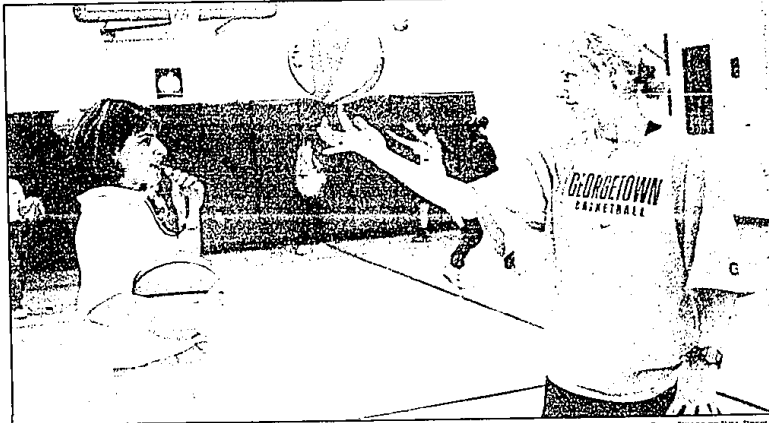
Hlede, 23, who also signed autographed Detroit Shock caps, programs and photos for the girls, said such a message didn't get delivered very often to females when she was younger.

"I remember being that age and I had no clue and had nobody to tell me that these things were possible," Hlede said.

Several youngsters and their moms were thrilled about the chance to spend time with Hlede and Claar.

"I think it's a great opportunity," said Longacre parent Kathy Chavers, who watched her 9-year-old daughter, Kelli, take part in the clinic. "She likes basketball and we thought we'd give her a chance to see what her skills are. And seeing the Shock was a real experience."

Emily Maki, 9, a student at Hillside, described the clinic as "cool. I've never



Heroes: Detroit Shock youth coordinator Eve Claar and Shock guard Korie Hlede ran a girls' basketball clinic recently at Hillside Elementary. Claar is a North Farmington High School graduate.

met a sports person before. I learned some moves."

Hillside mom Sherry Bock, whose daughter Emily, 8, participated, said the afternoon was "amazing, to see where they can go in basketball."

Meanwhile, the girls made a good impression on Hlede, too. "Kids are great at this age. Very natural, no apprehension. They ask a lot of questions. I wish they could stay that way."

Kelmigian said the Shock might conduct another clinic in the Farmington district in January or February, and Claar didn't sound as though it were an unreasonable request.

"We very well may be back," Claar said. "This is a really nice group. Of course, I grew up here and so I have a certain fondness for coming back here."



Try it: Student Kate Roberts and Detroit Shock player Korie Hlede work together on some plays during the clinic that drew more than 40 girls from six elementary schools in the Farmington district.



Practice: Student Jayme Kelmigian learns how to spin a basketball on her index finger.

Bullard returns to state Senate

BY JENNIFER PLACINTO
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Willis Bullard Jr.'s prediction that he had the background and support to win election to the 15th State Senate seat was overwhelmingly confirmed.

The senator took 62,826 votes compared to his Democratic opponent S. Ruth Fuller's 39,401 ballots for a six-year term.

Bullard, who was elected to the state Senate two years ago, previously served as a state representative for 14 years. He introduced 64 bills which were signed into law and campaigned on lowering state income taxes and improving roads.

"I'm pleased to be selected by



Will Bullard, Republican

voters to represent them for the next four years," Bullard said. "I'm excited to continue the work I've started in Lansing on behalf of this community."

Challenger Fuller, of West Bloomfield, is a newcomer to the political arena and said she believed getting the word out about herself would make the difference despite the lack of campaign dollars.

She campaigned on improving roads, stabilizing public education funding and improving mental health care.

But Fuller said the governor's race and Proposal B, which would have legalized assisted suicide had it passed, had a negative effect on Democrats throughout the state.

"The higher voter turnout is great normally for the Democrats, but I think this one was due to Proposal B," Fuller



said.

Fuller said she's not disappointed in election results, but would run her campaign differently if she had it to do over again, starting fund-raisers much earlier. The Democrat said she ran her campaign on \$4,800 and much of her support came late in the campaign, which was not enough to get her name out.

"In the beginning they didn't take me seriously," Fuller said. "Once I opened my mouth, they looked at me differently."

Fuller said she plans to have her name on the state ballot again in years to come and plans to become more involved in mental health care issues.

"I didn't know how much preparation was involved," she said. "I'd do it again."

S. Ruth Fuller
—Democrat



S. Ruth Fuller, Democrat

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