

SPORTS



CHAMPS — Dudley Seide, left, and his Reach Out Saints came away victorious in the junior (under 15) and senior (under 19) divisions of the 10th Annual Eagles Invitational Basketball Classic last weekend in Bimini. Here the team is pictured sporting their medals. (PHOTO: SHAYNE STUBBS)

Reach Out Saints capture junior, senior divisions of Gateway event

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It was supposed to be a retirement year for Coach Dudley Seide, but he decided on another venture with his Reach Out Ministry Saints basketball teams.

The Saints entered two teams (junior and senior) and performed at the 10th annual Eagles Invitational Basketball Classic last weekend (April 19-22).

The teams played their way into the championship matches of the Gateway Christian Academy Classic and escaped with narrow victories over the host teams.

The junior Saints out-lasted the Gateway Christian Academy Eagles in a thrilling 49-45 finish.

Tramaine Ferguson and Jaden Atkinson powered the Saints with 14 and 13 points respectively. Ferguson and teammate Leron Smith were named the co-Most Valuable Players for the juniors.

The senior Saints defeated the senior Eagles 65-58, behind a monstrous performance from Bahamas National High School Basketball championship MVP, Howard Hinzey. The St. George's Jaguar player was also named the MVP of the tournament and poured in 29 points, while Clevon Clark chipped in with 15 points.

Seide and the players rejoiced over their hard-fought victories this past Wednesday. Smith said it was tough having to play in both divisions. Nonetheless he

was grateful for the win and for what he learned while having to play on both teams.

"I wasn't really used to it because I'm just starting to blow up in basketball, going to a couple practices and stuff like that. But I think the team did good overall," he stated.

Ferguson said: "It was nice. The two of us (Smith) played our hearts out. We both played under 19 (seniors) too so we just had to manage it out and get some rest."

The senior boys trailed at one point during their championship tilt. It took a collective effort for the senior squad to rally and come away with the win. Hinzey was proud of the team's resolve down the stretch.

"We rebounded very well. We had Shyrone Kemp from Taber-

nacle (Baptist Christian Academy) one of the best small/power forwards in our game. You had me also and I feel as if we played very well with good execution.

"We had two or three of the juniors helping us out and they played very well actually. Some of them played about four games a day. I don't know how they rested their bodies and made it out on the floor, but they held up well."

Seide made was proud of the effort the first time in the tournament. Seide was especially happy with the way the boys responded to having played so many games in one day.

"The guys had to be disciplined because you had to rest your body to play in the tournament.

But, it was real intense and I want to say I really appreciate these young men because we went against all odds. We didn't know how the competition would have been."

Seide also mentors young players to coach the game. Clarke is one of those protégés and he helped to coach the juniors to their championship win.

"All I did was try my best to steer him along the way. So what I'm doing now is mentoring younger coaches to help me along with the program.

"To watch Clevon coach the Under-15s I'll give him a B-plus because he didn't crack under pressure and that's impressive. I left him. He did all the duties and I was more like a fan while he was coaching. Because he called

the timeouts, he did the subbing (substitutions), and he changed the defense. But I knew by watching him that he was a coach."

It was the players' enthusiasm and desire to play in the tournament that Seide considered his "break from retirement." He furthered that while it was good to win, he learned something valuable from his defeat in the Night League championships.

"But what I've learned from losing Night League is trying to win the game of life. Winning is good but if we could change lives, it means more to me. So I think it was an eye opener for me. If I could win the game of life and change these young men's lives, that's the real win there for me," Seide concluded.

A "SPORTS PARADISE" EVOLVES

When Dr. Daniel Johnson speaks of "Team Bahamas," reference is to the architects of the nation's sports product, which has become the most expansive and image-boosting commodity in the country.

It is indeed the Minister of Youth, Sports and Culture Dr. Johnson who is the chief architect. Governance is ongoing. Therefore, even though the House of Assembly has been prorogued and a full general elections campaign mood is evident, the Cabinet of The Bahamas must still operate.

Accordingly, the nation still has Dr. Johnson in his role as minister, to guide the sports product for several more weeks. You never miss the water until the well goes dry. In the case of Dr. Johnson, who is removing himself from front line politics, he will be history (for the time being at least) after May 10.

It is understandable that he is keeping his foot on the gas and pushing on to the very last moment in the interest of solidifying his "Sports In Paradise" concept. Dr. Johnson is proud of what has happened in sports development in the land at all levels, national and international, under his watch.

"This administration is to be congratulated for the launch of our major brand 'Sports In Paradise.' This brand has seen the launch of our National Sports Academy, and the launch of our new management concept for Bahamians. But, the biggest part

is that it has seen us create three new stadiums, at the same time, designed by young Bahamian architects, engineers and contractors. At the base of the iconic Sidney Poitier Bridge is the fabulous one-of-a-kind FIFA certified National Beach Soccer Arena. The next stadium that

two (main) things, access and opportunity," said Dr. Johnson recently.

He speaks as though he is not going anywhere.

Indeed, it is quite possible that, a Progressive Liberal Party victory on May 10 will see Dr. Johnson, perhaps not in Cabinet,

Johnson has been an excellent national sports leader these past five years. With or without any contributions from him after May 10, we must function in a

manner that allows the sports product to go from strength to strength.

Dr. Johnson, thank you for your five years of ultra sports

leadership!

(To respond to this column, kindly contact Fred Sturupp at sturupp1504@gmail.com or on WhatsApp at 727-6363).

Sports Scope

By Fred Sturupp



you will see is the Andre Rodgers National Baseball Stadium. Then, in September, you will see the first National Sports Academy (building) ever created in The Bahamas. It is another one-of-a-kind experience on Moore's Island, a first class facility, to be unveiled, September 2017.

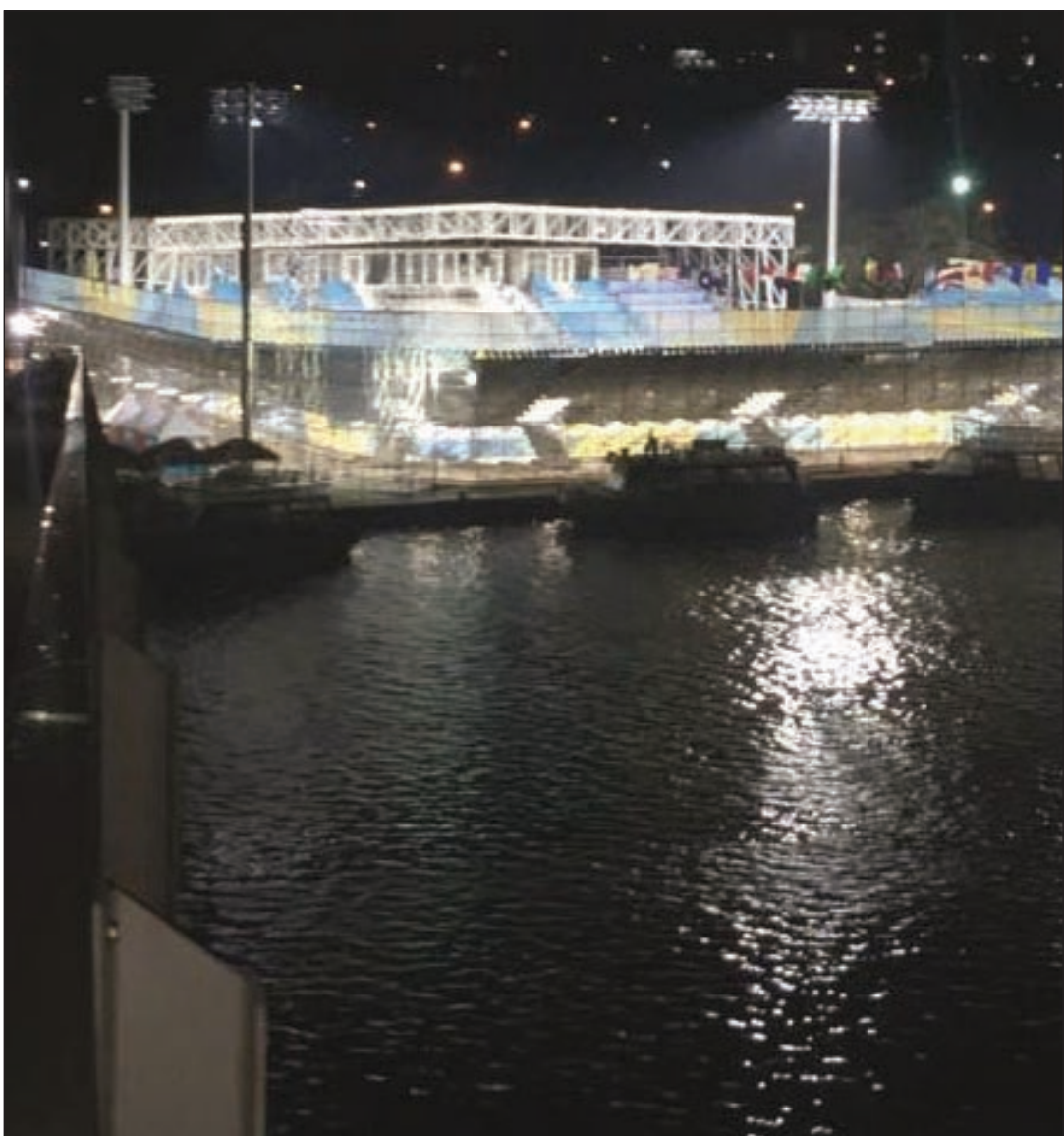
"In the years to come within the 21st century, sports will play an integral role in the national development of The Bahamas. First, the facilities have to be world class for what we do because we are a world-class product. Secondly, it will push our sports brand out there to the world. Thirdly, it will develop a strong, vibrant, rich, potential of its people. My ministry sells

but playing a vital role in the continuance of what started under him.

The Ministry of Tourism, the Ministry of Education and the University of Bahamas should, going forward, continue to figure prominently in the further expansion of the nation's sports product.

The view here is that the structure put in place by Dr. Johnson as the Minister of Youth, Sports and Culture, should remain, only to be embellished as time goes on, no matter what happens on May 10.

Our sports product is too important to be politicized. Bahamians of all persuasions have a high level of appreciation for the nation's sports family. Dr.



FIFA CERTIFIED – The FIFA certified National Beach Soccer Arena, in night view, is one of the world-class facilities established on Dr. Daniel Johnson's sports watch.