Tennessee team set to break Free Throw shooting record

If the Green Wave are at home, the players will meet early before the game in the auxiliary gym. That's where they will take turns with Noah to get their shot just right before the lights go on.

Team Stats Before Noah
53% free throw

Team Stats After Noah
74% free throw

It was the last day of 2009 and in the background bouncing balls could be heard springing off the gym floor.

The Gallatin High School boys varsity basketball team had returned to town the night before around 9 p.m.

Now here it was, the next morning, and the boys were hard at work.

"We just finished a three-day holiday tournament yesterday," said Coach Bobby Luna during the phone interview. Luna has led the Gallatin boys team for the past 15 years. "Early this morning, we had nine kids show up to work on Noah. I'm standing in the gym now, can you hear them?"

Yes coach, loud and clear.

Since Gallatin High School received its first Noah System last May, one of the truly positive effects Coach Luna has noticed is the players' increased desire to practice. Gallatin is located 30 or so miles northeast of Nashville, Tenn.

"Noah makes our players want to come to the gym and to spend time on it," Luna said. "And getting the kids in the gym during off times allows us to work with them on other skills while they wait their turn on Noah. This has helped our program tremendously."

Anthony Woodard, a 6-foot-6 junior forward, confesses that he does show up to work on Noah, even though he might work a lot on ballhandling, rebounding or defense.

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"I come for the Noah," Woodard said. "It's really cool to see the improvement on my shooting."
Woodard likes to spend most of his time in the paint during games and is aggressive while occupying that space. That means he is fouled a lot. Last year, he left a lot of points on the floor as he averaged just 5 per game. But after 10 games this season, his scoring is up to 15 per game because his foul shooting percentage is above 75 percent.
Coach Luna said that his team has made 165 of 222 free throws over the first 10 games of the season. That is good for 74 percent and if the mark holds up, it will establish a new school record.
"Last year, we were a team that won 20 games," Luna said. "But we shot just 53 percent from the line. I can only imagine how good we would have been if we had Noah during the season."
Perhaps Daronte Clark has benefitted most from Noah. Clark, who is a heck of a perimeter shooter, had a sub-70 percent free throw stroke last year. But after countless sessions on Noah since May, the 6-foot-2 guard has made 30 of 31 free throws after 10 games. He leads the team in scoring with 16 points per game.
"I had a really flat shot, which was okay when I shot jumpers or shots on the move," Clark said. "But having a flat shot really hurts your consistency from the line. Now I'm shooting it 44 or 45 degrees every time and I can feel it as it leaves my hand."
The senior is on a hot streak. In Games 9 and 10, he scored 26 and 30 points, respectively. He's now getting some interest from Southeast Missouri State.
"Noah gives me the confidence to feel that I can make every shot I take," Clark said.
Coach Luna has incorporated Noah in his pre-game routine. If the Green Wave are at home, the players will meet early before the game in the auxiliary gym. That's where they will take turns with Noah to get their shot just right before the lights go on.
"It really gets us ready for the game," Luna said.
Luna wants Noah to become part of the culture of the basketball program. Over the summer, he pulled Noah out for elementary school kids to use during a camp.
"The kids loved it," Luna said. "They got to shoot a 10-shot session and then have a print out of their arc. They were so excited. I believe over the years, Noah will show kids that they can become outstanding shooters if they become a part of our program."
Luna is a regional director of the Tennessee Basketball Coaches Association. He said that the partnership between the association and Noah has been outstanding.
"Noah has come in and picked us up by being a generous sponsor," Luna said. "But our relationship is two-sided. Noah helps us financially that allows us to do a few things. We help open the doors to high school basketball programs in our state for Noah to come in and do shooting clinics."
Luna added that "Noah is dedicated to making basketball better. That is never a bad thing. We didn't just select Noah to be a sponsor without doing our homework. Everybody we talked to in other states spoke highly of Noah. For us, this relationship is a win-win."