

Tanner Percifield:

He'll go down in history as a leader in Mavs' progression to success

By Bruce Smith
Matchup

By the end of his freshmen season, it was pretty obvious that Tanner Percifield was going to hold a special place within the Mountain View boys basketball program.

It wasn't just because his older brother, Tyson, had also fared well. Tanner had the skills and motivation and only needed time to become one of the school's all-time greats.

"He was great at crunch time from the free-throw line ... probably made or shot the majority of his free throws during the last four minutes of the games as the ball was always in his hands," said coach Jon Nettleton.

During the 2012-13 season, Nettleton consistently praised Tanner after games. Sure, Mountain View may have only had a 2-3 record in games decided by five points or less, but many times his timely charity shots extended leads to larger margins.

"Tanner was our best player," said teammate Randall Robinson. "He was a great shooter and opened things up for the rest of us."

What made him so special? His free-throw shooting.

"After my freshman year, Nettleton wanted me to work on free throws," he recalled. "I shot about 15 (that year), but I didn't shoot them as well. It just takes practice. Definitely, you've got to catch your wind. I learned to always take a step back and take a breath when I was tired."

Tanner was always active in sports. He played football, baseball and basketball until focusing on the latter in high school. He ended up scoring 986 points in his four-year varsity career, finishing just



Tanner Percifield was Mountain View's offensive leader and the guy you wanted with the ball in the final seconds.

Percifield's highlights

- * - **SECOND OF THREE** children in his family. His father worked in a mine near Elko, Nev., and returned home every weekend to go to games.
- * - **STARTED PLAYING BASKETBALL** at age 6 and eventually broke four MV school records.
- * - **HIGH GAME** was 34 points at Capital, but there were several others when he dominated play.



behind his brother in Mountain View's career scoring list. He had a high game of 34 points his senior season at Capital.

He graduated holding four school records, including free-throw accuracy (80.9 percent). Tanner was also an all-state selection as a senior, and

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MOUNTAIN VIEW BASKETBALL: Senior profile



TOP LEFT: Tanner Percifield dribbles past a Centennial defender.

TOP RIGHT: Percifield with his parents on "Senior Night."

LOWER LEFT: Percifield moves toward the basket vs. Post Falls.

LOWER MIDDLE: Percifield celebrates the 5A state title during his sophomore season.

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an easy choice for all-SIC.

As a three-year starter, Mountain View won 57 games, including a 5A state championship. And don't forget the Mavs' run through the tournament occurred after Tyson got hurt and Tanner was promoted to the starting lineup.

There has never been a more successful era of basketball – so far – in school history. But that's not what Tanner remembered most.

"My highlight was being able to play basketball with my brother and win a state championship with him," Tanner said. "Then making it back to state and playing there with a group of guys I grew up with. I was really good friends with all of them."

Tanner said he remembered making several buzzer-beating shots, but none that decided a game. His proudest memory came during sophomore season at Timberline.

Down 50-49 with 0.5 seconds remaining, Tanner was asked to inbound the ball near midcourt. The play call was for him to throw an alley-oop pass to Tyson near the basket.

"Tyson took off and was already at the rim before I threw it," Tanner said. "So, I threw it to Zach

(Cooper) and he hit it at the buzzer."

Mountain View players and fans spilled onto the court. What made the play even more ironic was that Tyson had made a half-court shot just before, but it was disallowed because the Mavs had called a timeout at the same time.

"It was wild," Tanner said. "The Timberline players couldn't believe it. We actually did it twice."

Tanner also recalled special times this season, like when the Mavs secured a spot in the state tournament after losing their district opener to Eagle. There was also that amazing second quarter in the 5A semifinal game against Borah when Mountain View made all six of its three-point shots. Tanner, in fact, had four as the Mavs took a halftime lead.

"That was the low point this season, after being that close to the state championship," Tanner said. "We played our hardest. We did well against them and gave it our all. It was all that we could do."

Once basketball ended, so did Tanner's sports career. Despite attracting attention from a few small colleges, he said he didn't want to devote all the time necessary on a college career. He planned to attend the College of Western Idaho and major in business marketing.