



Georgetown Player's Ignominious Mark

By PETE THAMEL
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WASHINGTON, March 28 — For the first time since 1985, [Georgetown University](#) has reached the Final Four of the [N.C.A.A.](#) men's basketball tournament. Coach John Thompson III and his assistants have led a swift and stunning revival of the program in just three seasons, a timetable so short that even Thompson said it exceeded his expectations.



G. Fiume/Getty Images
Georgetown recruited Marc Egerson, who had a grade-point average of 1.33 in core courses.

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And while he has been showered with praise for restoring the program's glory, one of his assistant coaches, Kevin Broadus, is also reaping the rewards. He was named the head coach at Binghamton University on Monday.

What Binghamton officials did not know, and what few have talked about amid this feel-good week here, is that Thompson and Broadus recruited a player to Georgetown who in four years of public high school in Delaware compiled final grades of F in 12 courses.

That player was Marc Egerson, who had a grade-point average of 1.33 in core courses like math, science and English. He passed nine such courses without receiving a grade higher than a C. As a freshman, he even failed physical education.

After redeeming his academic standing at Lutheran Christian Academy, a prep school in Philadelphia, Egerson took his stellar on-court credentials as a two-time state basketball player of the year to Georgetown. There, he was part of Thompson's first full recruiting class of scholarship players who arrived in the fall of 2005 to help make the Hoyas a national power again. He played as a reserve during his freshman year.

Georgetown plucked Egerson from the underbelly of big-time college basketball, where some top players have boosted their academic standing at diploma mills that required little, if any, schoolwork. His admission demonstrates how even elite universities navigate the gray areas of recruiting to find talent.

The Hoyas will compete this weekend in Atlanta for a shot at the national championship. Broadus, meanwhile, will be on the Georgetown bench before heading to his \$205,000-a-year job at Binghamton.

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Kevin Broadus, an assistant coach, recruited a player, who has since transferred, from an unaccredited prep school.

Egerson left the Hoyas in January for personal reasons after playing in 13 games, including three as a starter. He has since transferred to the [University of Delaware](#). Before leaving, he averaged 24 minutes and 7.5 points a game. His departure opened up playing time for Patrick Ewing Jr., the son of the former Georgetown and [Knicks](#) star [Patrick Ewing](#).

"Marc was a big part of this team," said Ewing Jr., whose game blossomed after Egerson left.

The Delaware coach, Monté Ross, said Egerson became a father in February and had "absolutely positively not" failed out of Georgetown. Ross, who is familiar with Lutheran Christian from his time as an assistant at St. Joseph's in Philadelphia, said Egerson's time there did not

concern him.

"Georgetown is an unbelievably fine institution," Ross said. "If he could do what he had to do at Georgetown, we're confident he could do what he had to do at Delaware."

On Tuesday, Thompson avoided one question about Egerson, then brushed off a follow-up query by saying: "You move on. He's going to be extremely successful where he is right now." (Egerson was on spring break and could not be reached for comment.)

Binghamton Athletic Director Joel Thirer said in a telephone interview on Wednesday that Binghamton, which competes in Division I in the America East Conference, has high admissions standards for its student body and athletes. That, he said, is what attracted him to a coach from Georgetown.

Thirer said he worked hard to learn about Broadus, but had no idea of Broadus's recruitment of Egerson and other athletes from Lutheran.

"We legitimately did our homework," he said, adding that Broadus had received "glowing references."

But when told of the contents of Egerson's transcript, Thirer said: "Georgetown University accepted a kid like that? Wow.

"I guess I'm an idealist. There's just no place for that at Binghamton. Binghamton has never engaged in that type of behavior. If there's a history of that, it certainly won't be the case here. I can guarantee that. We just don't want to win that badly."

A group of senior Georgetown officials carefully reviewed the circumstances surrounding Egerson's admission last year, according to John J. DeGioia, the university's president. That came after a report by The New York Times about Lutheran Christian, in which Egerson's high school coach said he wondered how Egerson had made it to Georgetown given his low grade-point average and an SAT score in the 600s while in public school. DeGioia defended Egerson's admission and place on campus.

"Marc fit very well into the Georgetown community," he said in an interview in his office. "His decision really was very personal, and we respect that. But there was never a question of his being a part of this community."

The Times obtained a copy of Egerson's public school transcript. When a reporter offered to show him the record, DeGioia repeatedly declined, saying, "It wouldn't matter if I saw it now."

He also praised the Hoyas' basketball recruiting effort under Thompson.

"I think if you look at the whole picture, and you look at the folks that John has brought in, I think you will find a deep resonance with the tradition and the standards and the

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character of the program," DeGioia said.

DeGioia in 2006 was named a member of the Knight Commission, a watchdog group for college athletics.

After learning about situations like those involving Egerson, the N.C.A.A. overhauled its rules for unaccredited prep schools in 2006. The N.C.A.A. also no longer accepts transcripts from Lutheran Christian.

Few assistant coaches dealt with Lutheran Christian and its coach, Darryl Schofield, more than Broadus. He recruited Egerson to Georgetown and nearly landed another Lutheran player, Vernon Goodridge. Goodridge's mother reportedly wanted him to attend Georgetown, but he decided to go to Mississippi State.

Before arriving at Georgetown, Broadus recruited Maureece Rice from Lutheran to [George Washington University](#). He also helped George Washington recruit Omar Williams, who in his seven years of high school attended three other prep schools that Schofield was part of before Lutheran.

In a recent interview in Philadelphia, Schofield referred separately to both Broadus and Thompson as "a good friend." Georgetown does not allow its assistant coaches to speak to the news media. A request made through a Georgetown University spokesman to interview Broadus for this article was denied.

Academically, Georgetown is ranked No. 23 in the latest U.S. News and World Report rankings, and, according to the admissions office, its students have an average SAT score of about 1400 based on the traditional 1600-point format.

A number of faculty members declined to comment on Egerson's transcript and were hesitant to discuss the issue of an elite basketball team's place at a noted academic institution.

"Maybe it was a prayer?" said Tim Wickham-Crowley, an associate professor of sociology, which is listed in the basketball media guide as Egerson's intended major. "You know, a wish and a prayer that it would work."

A student, John Kaszuba, said he scored just a 1170 on the SAT but was admitted in part because he played football.

"It's real embarrassing to take a kid like that," said Kaszuba, a junior who no longer plays football. "I can't really see where they thought he was going to make it here."

But with tournament frenzy sweeping the Georgetown campus, some students questioned whether anyone really cared about the academic credentials of the basketball players.

Nick Murchison, a junior whose term as student body president ended two weeks ago, said, "To be honest with you, I think as long as they win, that's the most important thing for most people."

Adam Himmelsbach contributed reporting.

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