



February 27, 2017

Mr. Ron Pompeo, Director of Athletics
Providence School of Jacksonville
2701 Hodges Blvd.
Jacksonville, FL 32224

Mr. Barfield and Mr. Pompeo:

I wanted to reach out and share a little something special with you! Tonight your girls basketball team brought tears to my eyes and joy to my heart!

The 4A Championship matchup between your girls basketball team and Miami Country Day was clearly a tough one. During the game, I felt like your team played with more heart than any other team I've seen thus far. And, trust me, I've seen a lot of teams play their hearts out, but there was just something different about this group of girls. When they were down, it never showed. They never stopped giving it their all. Although they may have been tired and frustrated on the inside, we never saw it on the outside. Typically, given the circumstances of the game, when the stakes are that high, you rarely see that type of composure amongst high school athletes. Your girls' will to succeed and determination to never give up, all while keeping cool, calm and collected simply astonished me. You just don't see that today!

The on-court presence wasn't all that warmed my heart though, so here's the second part... As you likely know, following every State Semifinal and State Championship game, we hold a press conference with the Head Coach and select players of each team (chosen by the media). At your team's press conference tonight, I witnessed once again, something I'm not sure I've ever seen before! Your girls, although I'm sure fairly upset over their loss, represented themselves and Providence with utmost graciousness and poise. They did so to the point that had you not seen the game, you may question whether they had won or lost. As each of them spoke, I was brought to tears with joy wishing I had recorded them myself. They were wearing smiles on their faces and when asked about the game, they praised Miami Country Day for their athleticism and when asked about the outcome, they expressed their happiness and gratitude for the opportunity and experience to simply play the game! To me, it was something of amazement. Again, you just don't see that!

Like much of society today, high school sports have changed so much. Often times, there's so much focus on the wins and losses that I wonder if we've lost sight of the big picture. Tonight though, after watching your girls and hearing them talk, I have a new found confidence that we do have some really special programs out there and yours is clearly one of them. So, congratulations to your girls basketball team and coaching staff for their success this year, but more importantly, congratulations to all of you at Providence for so positively shaping the lives of today's youth and for teaching what matters most! Your program is second to none in my book!

Congratulations again and have a great night!

Sincerely,

Jamie C. Rohrer
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