

Coach Storm's Pre-Season EMass Top 25

Written by Tom Hellen

Games as of February 6, 2010

Somerville, MA – I start to think at this time of the year about that famous Kentucky Derby race call as the horses approach the finish line and the announcer on TV belts out..."And down the stretch they come..." That is where we are at folks...heading to the finish line. Is your club hot heading into the state tourney??...playing mediocre ball??...or...staggering to the end and saying "get this over with please??" Nobody should ever give up on a season especially one like this. As mentioned previously, depth is a problem this year on just about every team. Thus one injury or one key player getting the flu can alter everything on a state title run. Keep in mind also that though your club may be struggling, you never know when that perfect storm of a hot streak can carry you a long way into the tourney and create memories that last forever. You don't need to go back that far to a Cambridge team led by a terrific point guard named Stephanie Darden who entered the state's with a 13 and 7 record and surprised everyone by winning the D1 title...yep...7 losses and won it all. Just last year Millis won the D4 state title with 6 losses...so hang in there all you players, coaches and fans as you never know when that run will come that sets your city or town crazy with basketball fever.

"Random Rim Ramblings"....Oops...screwed up last week as there are 5 clubs still undefeated...Fontbonne gets a good test tonight hosting the Archies...New Bedford gets Brockton on Tuesday...Wellesley heads to the Newton North Tourney in a week or so and they will meet again but this time on the Tigers turf...Pentucket and Cohasset have 2 regular season games left and will be favored to win both but then there will be the state tourney games where all will be tested...Interesting how some teams not playing in a February tourney could have long layoffs before the playoffs start...will that hurt them??.scrimmages are fine but never the same as a game....Though they play it different, I love the defenses of Pentucket, Wellesley, and Andover. Pentucket does kind of a "run and jump" where they double the ball with the key being the rotation from the backside which their kids do incredibly well...then Wellesley just plays man up in the half court and then they hedge to help and then get back to their person when the original defender fights over the screen...Andover just gets in your face anywhere and the Warriors don't worry if you score...it only gets their fast break off the make started faster and many times they score before your defense is even set...great "D" takes you far in the playoffs....Last thing...in this age of cell phones, facebook, twitter, e-mails...how can scores not make it to the media outlets??...inquiring minds want to know...

I want to again thank Doug Lindland for his help with our website this year. Doug does great work and can be reached at doug@easternhoopleague.com or check out his site at www.easternbasketball.org

I hope you enjoy the rankings shown below and again always feel to e-mail me at coachstorm5@comcast.net with any comments.

Top 25 Rankings with their Last Record

Now Last Year

#1.	#1.	New Bedford (D1 S) – 17 – 0 Team continues to “search and destroy” but time for some tough tests hosting Brockton then on the road to W-H and Durfee...win these 3 and the regular season top ranking in D1 South is yours!!
#2.	#4.	Wellesley (D1 S) – 16 – 0 Winning 2 “power” games when they went back-to-back over L-S and Newton North (their “D” was darn right devastating here) was the true sign I was looking for as they dominated the Tigers almost from the start...now off to Norwood, a club that only lost to them by 2 in Wellesley...hmmm...then the Newton North Tourney where they could meet the Tigers again. 4
#3.	#7.	Andover (D1 N) – 15 – 3 – The streak over Central Catholic in their home gym rolls on with dynamite win by 6 before an SRO crowd and played with state tourney intensity...followed up with a “W” over NDA (though much closer than I would have thought) and Lowell by 28 at home...club now hits the road to North Andover, Billerica and then Peabody to start the St. Mary’s Tourney...they look like they are peaking at just the right time.
#4.	#2.	Central Catholic (D1 N) – 14 – 2 Okay...only losses to Andover and no more tilts in Dunn gym this year so my sense here is that Coach Downer gets the troops totally focused on the difficult remaining schedule (at Methuen...Comcast...at St. Mary’s) which should get them nicely ready for another state tourney run...
#5.	#5.	Pentucket (D3 N) – 20 – 0 Hot Wilmington had won 8 straight and yet Sachems go on the road and beat them by 30...whoa doctor...I keep thinking about the theme song from the movie “Jaws” when I picture their defense... on the road to Amesbury then hosting Triton on senior night and they will be heavily favored to win both so should end up the regular season without a blemish and get the top seed in D3 North...
#6.	#6.	Oliver Ames (D2 S) – 15 – 1 Club building some solid momentum for the states and need to continue it as they host Mansfield, at Franklin then in the Walpole tourney...winning streak now at 15...Franklin actually scored the most points (52) against OA in 1 game this year...so this road tilt could be interesting...
#7.	#8.	Fontbonne (D2 S) – 15 – 0 Duck damsels deliver more defeats to downtrodden foes...and the Archies are on the board next in what should be a good one again...should get past Ursuline and then road trip to NDA could be interesting as NDA beat Andover at home...can they end the Ducks winning streak if the Archies don’t??...hmmm.
#8.	#3.	Brockton (D1 S) – 15 – 2 Boxers home loss to rugged Mansfield drops them down a bit but gave them a nice wake-up call as they blasted Durfee by 22 and now visit dreaded New Bedford on Tuesday where a win would really get them in gear for the state’s.
#9.	#9.	Arlington Catholic (D2 N) – 13 – 3 Started to establish themselves as a club you don’t want to face come state tourney time with nice “power” wins over Spellman, Somerville, and the Archies but then St. Mary’s came to town and walked away with a nice road win to end winning streak at 9 straight...should win next 2 and then a D2 North state tourney preview when they hit the tourney at St. Mary’s...though St. Mary’s is not in their bracket.
#10.	#10.	Westford (D1 N) 14 – 1 – Ghosts continue to haunt DCL opponents as they bop AB by 20 on the road but need to travel to Newton South Tuesday then host Waltham before facing the Archies in the Comcast...nice tough way to get ready for your 1 st venture into the D1 state tourney competition...
#11.	#11.	Newton South (D1 S) 14 – 2 – Team is rolling with 17 point win over L-S and now gets huge DCL game hosting Westford on Tuesday then off to AB on Friday in last regular season game...long layoff (from 2/11 ‘til 1 st state tourney game) could cost some momentum if they win these last 2.

#12.	#17.	Cohasset (D4 S) -- 18 – 0 Club goes on the road to Hingham (won by 31 earlier) and then host Abington (won by 15 in their gym) so could finish the regular season without a blemish...but the season ends on 2/10 so they'll have a long break before the tourney starts so will need some scrimmages to stay in sync.
#13.	#12.	Newton North (D1 S) 14 – 2 – Winning streak stopped at 9 as they all must be disappointed with road loss to Wellesley by 17 in a game they had targeted for quite a while...now off to Brookline (trap game??) and Needham before their own February Tourney where they could get the rematch with Wellesley in their own house...hmmm...telltale stretch now.
#14.	#13.	Durfee (D1 S) -- 13 – 3 – Hilltoppers find ways to win all so far outside the Big 3...all 3 losses to Brockton or New Bedford...and now end with some true tests at Carver, the Comcast Tourney and hosting New Bedford...will this be good?...bad?...or medium?
#15.	#14.	Archbishop Williams (D3 S) – 12 – 5 – Okay so they can't beat AC...but can they beat Fontbonne??...they didn't last time but tonight they hope ends differently...talk about ending with a tough schedule...they still have St. Mary's, Spellman, Westford in the Comcast and either Central Catholic or Durfee before the playoffs...hmmm.
#16.	#15.	St. Mary's of Lynn (D3 N) – 13 – 4 Air was seeping slowly out of the tires here in Conigliaro Gym land but then super road win over high quality AC team is the patch they needed to hit the road to the Archies and then host Fenwick plus Ipswich and 1 other in their own tourney before the state's...is "little 'mo" back on their side with huge AC win??...we'll see shortly.
#17.	#16.	Lynn English (D1 N) – 15 – 2 Somerville stops the sizzle here in a great high school game beating LE in the 'ville by 1...nice win at Revere by 12 sets up good one when Peabody comes to town Tuesday...hmmm...should be a fun one.
#18.	#19.	Peabody (D1 N) – 14 – 1 Winning streak at 12 and Heil's Heroes have been hurting in the head since only loss to LE before Xmas...is now the time the Tanners ease their headache from their only loss with a nice payback win at LE on Tuesday??...hmmm.
#19.	#20.	Cardinal Spellman (D3 S) – 13 - 5 Club plays well but loses at AC when they don't score the last 4 minutes or so...then get real nice road win at St. Mary's...team has terrific "D" but spotty "O" may be their legacy in the long run...
#20.	#21.	Coyle Cassidy (D3 S) – 16 – 2 – Got back in the Top 25 but got wake-up call with road loss to Feehan giving coach some ammo to work them hard in practice...on the road to Abington and make-up game with tough ORR at home as they fight for top seed in D3 South.
#21.	#23.	Foxborough (D2 S) – 13 – 3 – Nice road win at Sharon but then got smoked at OA and knocked off at home by 11 to Mansfield...but whupped Franklin on the road by 10 so things back in gear.
#22.	#12.	Mansfield (D1 S) – 13 – 5 Beating Brockton on the road by 12 as part of 7 game win streak got me thinking they were as good as I thought in pre-season but then tough Sharon comes into their gym and beats them by 2...then back on track with home squeaker over Franklin by 1...at OA on Tuesday in a doozie.
#23.	#25.	Somerville (D1 N) – 12 – 5 Highlanders up 2 at AC with like 5 minutes left and big Keisha fouls out and they lose by 13...they get smoked by LE when she doesn't play yet beat them when she does play and gets 26 rebounds...me thinks there is some connection between Keisha playing and them getting "W's"...hmmm.
#24. Tie Cusp		Whitman Hanson (D2 S) – 15 – 2 Missed these folks all season but now winning streak continues and has hit 10...but this team called New Bedford is awaiting again....
#24. Tie Cusp		Ipswich (D3 N) – 15 – 1 Snuck one out at North Reading by 2 but should be good until the St. Mary's tourney and then some tests to see if the Pentucket fizzle was the real deal or an aberration...

#24. Tie Cusp	Reading – (D2 N) -- 14 – 2 League title hopes still alive with great home win over Melrose and now get a chance for more revenge when stubborn Woburn comes to town Tuesday and then end on the road at Stoneham for possible league title clash. Then some battles in the St. Mary's tourney...Rockets could be skyrocketing into the state's or come sputtering back to earth after this tough stretch.
#25. Tie #24.	Stoneham (D3 N) -- 15 – 3 – Winchester pulls a minor upset by 3 and then Melrose beats them by 5 so it all may come down to the final game at home against Reading...senior night for Stoneham...big crowd...could be a real fun atmosphere...
#25 Tie #24.	Melrose (D2 N) – 15 - 3 Rough visit to Reading again this year losing by 9 but then nice payback win over Stoneham to keep league title hopes alive and then another road loss this time at Winchester but still alive for possible top seed in D2 North though league title needs some others to lose now.

“On the Cusp”

Plymouth South (D1 S) – 15 – 3 Just when I think maybe they should be ranked they go and lose...1 st to Quincy and now to a hot and tough Carver crew on the road...as Bill Parcells used to say...“you are what you are”...in this case a team still “on the cusp.”...and now off to Marshfield who will be out for some big revenge...
Sharon (D2 S) – 11 – 5 Like what they have done this year in the very tough Hock as they've been close in every game...should bode well come state tourney time...nice road win at Mansfield should help the mindset as they go on the road to Franklin and Foxboro this week and then hosting their own tourney...who's in that one by the way?
Marshfield (D1 S) 14 – 4 – Team wins the games they should but has had trouble in losses...all to good teams...2 to Fontbonne and 1 each to Somerville and Plymouth South but none of the losses really that close with 9 point spread the closest...don't know what that means in the big picture but it is what it is....
Old Rochester (D3 S) – 14 – 2 – Stang loss on the road hard to swallow but they get a chance for payback in last game at home and also get make-up game with Coyle so wins in these 2 will give them some state tourney momentum...
Franklin (D1 S) – 12 – 6 Panthers loss at home to Foxboro in a big one had to be disappointing and team seems to be fading as they are only playing .500 ball over the last 8 games and now get to host tough Sharon and powerful OA this week....
Hull (D4 S) -- 13 – 3 Club loses to hot Carver after beating them on the road earlier by 14 so may have been looking ahead to rematch with Cohasset which also ended up in the loss column...team needs to get back on track and soon...
Lincoln-Sudbury (D1 N) – 10 – 6 I'm guessing they are frustrated a little bit as they lose 3 straight to highly ranked clubs...on the road to Westford and Newton South (by 17) and at home to Wellesley by only 3...growing pains is my thought.
Acton Boxborough (D1 N) -- 12 – 6 Club has slumped much of the 2 nd half of the season going 3 and 5 the last 8 tilts and ends with games at L-S and Newton South...not a good recipe for curing a slump.
Lowell (D1 N) – 9 – 6 Crowley's crew quietly having solid season and will be a tough out in the state's...that is if they can stay away from Andover and Central Catholic who have provided them with 4 of their losses.
Needham (D1 S) – 11 – 5 Never saw the score of their Milton or Billerica games so sorry if the record is not accurate...Thursday game hosting Newton North with Rizzo playing could be very interesting...hmmm.
Bishop Fenwick (D3 N) – 10 – 7 Crusaders confuse Coach Storm especially on the “D” giving up way too many points at this time of year...but then holding Nauset to 42, AP to 49 and AC to 53 are small signs that the defensive end of the court may be improving...then they beat Methuen by 23 but gave up 66 points...obviously the offense is fine scoring 89...whoa.
New Mission (D4 N) – 13 – 3 Team continues to win in its “Hub” games and also ventured out to Wayland to win a tough road game by 5...
Methuen (D1 N) – 10 – 8 Okay...can't figure this group out...thought they'd be closer in their “power” games but lost to Fenwick by 23 BOTH times, to Andover by 23 and by 6, and Central Catholic by 26...allowing over 70 points in just about all those games...think they need to work on their “D??”

Revere (D1 N) – 13 – 4 Best season in many a moon going on here as they crushed Danvers but the upset dream over LE didn't materialize as they lose by 12 but effort so far must have this town rockin'....
Silver Lake (D2 S) – 12 – 5 – “Streaky” is the only way to describe this club...win 6...lose 3...win 6...lose 2...beating No. Quincy has them back on the good streak side and maybe this leads them into a nice state tourney run.
North Andover (D2 N) 11 – 5 – Lose to Ipswich by 14, Pentucket by 28 and at home then to Wilmington by 12...offense has become a problem scoring only 36 a game the last 5.
Bishop Feehan (D2 S) – 10 – 6 Club reaching its water level which is about right where I have them now...good year so far and the Bridgewater State tourney will be another chance for them to climb a bit...real nice win over Coyle had to be a good confidence builder....
Masconomet (D1 N) – 12 – 5 Got beaten pretty good by the good teams they've played but then beat the teams they should by good margins...hard to figure but record gets them back in print.
Danvers (D2 N) – 11 – 4 Team was playing okay then ran into buzzsaw at Revere getting clocked by 23...back on track now though.
Woburn (D1 N) – 13 – 4 Been missing this crew all year but time for some props as the record is solid and they did give Reading one of their 2 losses and they happen to travel to Reading on Tuesday...hmmm.
Winchester (D2 N) – 13 – 5 Team back in business with great home win over talented Melrose to get win streak to 5...also beat Stoneham to start the streak...
Carver (D3 S) – 11 – 6 – Quietly won 9 of 10 with only loss to unbeaten Cohasset and nice “power” wins over Hull by 10 and Plymouth South by 15 so this club gets back in print...and back in the minds of the D3 South coaches who may have given them up for dead.
Weston (D3 N) – 12 – 6 They have won 9 of 10 and got nice win over AB at home so they get back in print.
Hanover – (D3 S) -- 12 – 5 Team started 8 and 0 and only playing fair since but maybe some props on this site gets them consistent.
Hopkinton (D1 S) – 11 – 5 Had this crew on the way out after loss to Holliston but came back to win 5 straight including wins over Ashland, Westwood, and Millis...the TVL iron...if someone can figure this league out please tell me...doesn't seem like anyone wants to win it.
Westwood (D3 S) – 12 – 4 – Ashland, Medfield, and Hopkinton all put “L's” on the wrong side of the ledger for this group...they now need to end strong and head into the state's on a good note....
Medfield (D2 S) – 13 – 4 Nice streak winning 8 of 10...but another club in the TVL that is streaky...they beat Westwood and Ashland but lose to Millis Friday night.
Ashland (D3 S) – 13 – 5 – Club was in the drivers' seat in TVL with win over Westwood...then the wheels fell off with losses to Millis & Hop-town...maybe AAA can help?
Millis (D4 S) 11 – 6 – Club loses to Westwood then later to Hop-town so I think they are done...now won 3 straight including Ashland and Medfield...this league is cuckoo.

Class of 2009 – Where are they now??

People mentioned to me that they enjoyed seeing where last year's kids went and how they are doing playing college ball. Some transition well to the college game but many struggle as they transition to the higher levels of competition...particularly at the D1 level. We continue down the list. Enjoy...

Erica Batchelder – Stoughton – Salem State – She plays about 21 minutes a game and is scoring about 7 PPG and recently scored 25 against UMass Dartmouth hitting 7 three's.

Lauren Kelleher – Dartmouth – Eastern Conn. – Took a while for her to get used to the college game but has started the last 7 and is scoring 8 PPG while shooting lights out at 52% from the field and 80% from the free throw line.

Taryn O'Connell – Georgetown – Bates – She has played in 13 of their 15 games getting 6 minutes per contest and scoring a point a game for this D1 Ivy League club.

Rena Mallios – Winthrop – Babson – Rena has been hampered by a nagging foot injury limiting her to 12 games so far playing 8 minutes a contest and scoring over 1 PPG.

Kara Rogers – Lowell – Worcester State – Started 3 of their 21 games and is scoring at 4 PPG getting 17 minutes a night for this D3 club.

Jen Normandie – Westford – Elms – Played in 20 games starting 12 and getting 24 minutes a night and scoring 9.6 PPG and has been named Rookie of the week in her league a few times as well.

Michaela Cosby – Walpole – Bridgewater State – Has started 19 of 20 games playing almost 27 minutes a night for this D3 club scoring 7.5 PPG and is 2nd in re bounding on the team.

Sydni Salvatore – Walpole – William Smith (NY) – She has played in 15 games for this D3 club getting 16 minutes a night with 4 point per game.

Bianca Flores – New Mission – Regis – Has played in 12 games playing about 18 minutes a night and is scoring about 9 PPG.

Jesse Miller – Wellesley – Middlebury – Has played in all 21 games getting 15 minutes of action a night and is scoring a little over 2 PPG.

Gotta' run folks...Remember...**“No ability without eligibility!”...and...“The ball stops bouncing for everyone at some point but a college degree lasts forever!”**