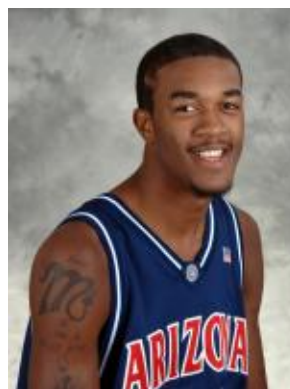


SMYRNA STARS TRYOUTS

YOU CAN BLOW UP WITH THE SMYRNA STARS



Kovotney Barber didn't even make All State his junior season but he went with the SMYRNA STARS the spring/summer and blew up! Korvotney made the McDonald's All American Game the NBA Camp ALL STAR TEAM and had an article done on him in an issue of SLAM MAGAZINE!



Lewis Clinch was a virtually unknown from South Georgia and the spring/summer that Lewis played with the SMYRNA STARS HE BLEW UP!!! Lewis was named one of the TOP 35 players in the country after that summer and had an article written on him in SLAM MAGAZINE. Jordan Hill didn't play high school basketball, but BLEW UP with the Smyrna Stars! Hill was a 1st Round draft pick in this year's NBA Draft.

TRYOUTS

March 7 17u 2:00PM-4:30pm Southern Poly Tech

March 14 17u 2:00-4:30pm Southern Poly Tech **

Contact: Gary Graham 770-335-6863 or Stewart Clark 678-362-7348 or visit www.smyrnastars.com

WHY YOU SHOULD GIVE THE SMYRNA STARS A LOOK?

- Coach Graham is one of the state's most senior Coaches, starting this program over 16 years ago. Before that he was a H.S. Referee. Making Coach Graham one of the most experienced Coaches in **National Travel Basketball!**
- Coach Graham is highly respected by college coaches and for the last 7 years, 90% of Smyrna Stars have gone to college.
- **A NATIONAL SCHEDULE** DESIGNED TO GIVE MAXIMUM EXPOSURE

April 3rd Jump-off at Southern Tech

April 23-25 KING JAMES CLASSIC in Akron Ohio

More than 500 amateur basketball teams will converge on Akron this weekend for the annual King James Shooting Stars Classic tournament, an event organized by Dru Joyce II, who coached [LeBron James](#) from age 10 through his high school career at Akron's St. Vincent St. Mary High School.

MAY 7TH-9TH Prater Memorial at Ga. Tech

May 28-30th Tournament of Champions (Duke, North Carolina and North Carolina State)

JUNE OFF Kids will be with High School Coaches

JULY First Week will be Basketball SHOE Camps

Late July Las Vegas or AAU NATIONALS in Orlando

Note: We will play in 1 or 2 AAU National Qualifiers and a Big Shots Tourney and in Augusta.

- This is not **DADDY BALL**, none of the Staff has a kid that plays on the team.
- Coach Graham and Staff are quality people. Coach has a young teen gospel recording group, **YOUNG-N-CHRIST** see www.younginchrist.info Coach Clonts is a Youth Praise Minister.
- **No One works harder to get your kid in college!**
- **Per Rivals,** "Coach Graham and his Smyrna Stars always has kid's under the radar who can play!"

College coaches are ready to scour Houston like a bunch of children on an Easter egg hunt for prospects.

Gary Graham is one of the best of finding intriguing players for the Kingwood Classic. His Smyrna Stars club will certainly bring out the mid-majors on Saturday. Graham's club has a roster dotted with a couple of unsigned seniors, including Tift Co. (Ga.) wing forward **Justin Brownlee** and Manny Adako, a 6-foot-7 forward from Winchendon Prep (Mass.) via Atlanta. The two will have a solid mid-major following this weekend.


Junior wing guard **Austin Kelly** banged home a trio of three-pointers to give the Stars a lead over the Houston Superstars. The 6-foot-3 junior guard is showing a little more pep in his step and was a force on the wing for Smyrna.

Justin Brownlee flying under the radar

Josh Gershon
GOAZCATS.com



It happened at the 2004 Houston Kingwood Classic and history repeated itself in 2005. **Gary Graham** brought his Smyrna Stars to the biggest weekend AAU tournament of the year and when he left, one of his big time sleepers had been discovered. This year, Graham has another player that should be heavily recruited but remains an unknown.

 [...More...](#) To continue reading this article you must be a member. [Sign Up Now for a FREE Trial](#)

- [Some popular teams ARE STACKED! Is that the best fit for you at this important time?](#)

[ajc.com](#) > [Sports](#) > [Hawks](#)

Jordan Hill overcomes tough road to reach NBA

By [SEKOU SMITH](#)

The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

Sunday, June 14, 2009

The circle of friends and family surrounding Jordan Hill in the green room at the NBA draft in a couple of weeks might be larger than usual.

When you travel the difficult road that Hill has from emotional heartbreak as a young child to the cusp of your biggest dreams at 21, those who helped you along that way must be acknowledged.

Hill, who blossomed into an All-American during his junior season at Arizona, is projected to be among the top 10 picks in the draft.

It's a quantum leap for a player who wasn't eligible to play on the team his junior year at North Springs High School. And an otherworldly jump when you consider that future NBA players are identified as early as middle school these days.

"It was a tough road," Hill said. "But I had people by my side every step of the way."

People such as Keith Ivy, who became Hill's legal guardian in high school and helped guide him off the court as well as into organized basketball, where he could take advantage of his size and obvious athleticism.

People such as Gary Graham, whose Smyrna Stars offered Hill an avenue outside of high school basketball to showcase his skills to college coaches who missed him because he bypassed the traditional high school/grassroots

circuit that future pros usually travel.

And people such as Memphis coach Josh Pastner, who was an assistant under Lute Olson at Arizona when the Hall

of Fame coach caught his first glimpse of Hill's raw talent and star potential in a summer-league game.

"Jordan's a great feel-good story for anyone willing to dream and anyone that believes in the power of love and prayer," Graham said.

The youngest of three siblings, Hill's mother, Carol, died from breast cancer when he was 3 years old. He had four

residences and six primary caregivers before finishing high school. And Hill still needed a year at the Patterson School, a North Carolina prep school, to become eligible to play at Arizona.

Jordan Hill overcomes tough road to reach NBA Page 1 of 3

If not for a breakout performance against now-Los Angeles Clippers center DeAndre Jordan at a tournament in Houston with the Smyrna Stars, Hill might not have been seen by Olson and Pastner, who played at Arizona alongside Hawks point guard Mike Bibby.

"He wasn't ranked, there was no ranking on him [at the time]," Pastner said, emphasizing just how rare it is for a player to come out of nowhere to the top of the NBA draft in three years. "It just shows the importance of evaluating. It's so much more important than you think. And Jordan gets a lot of credit. He worked so hard. You could always tell the ability was there."

“But who knows what would have happened if he hadn’t hooked up with Gary Graham? Who knows how things might have turned out if he didn’t get that chance or the chance to work with Chris Chaney at the Patterson School?”

Hill said he always loved the game, but with more important things on his daily priority list at 16, he simply didn’t

have the luxury of making basketball his primary focus. A top-10 draft pick, though?

“It was absolutely one of my goals,” Hill said. “For me to tell somebody ‘I’m going to be an NBA player’ wasn’t even realistic because nobody knew who I was. I just always had the heart for the game. I was going to work hard.

And I knew if the opportunity to play at the next level came my way I was going to do whatever I had to do to make it.”

Graham saw the tools when Ivy brought Hill to the gym in Smyrna years ago. And even though Hill came to him later than usual, Graham said he saw more than just a 6-foot-9 kid who was a dunker with loads of potential.

“I started calling college coaches and telling them I had this kid that was way under the radar because of his situation,” Graham said. “Jordan was a hard worker. He could really shoot the ball and could run the floor, too. You could tell then that once he developed and came into his own he had a chance.”

A chance to stand out in college. A chance to take advantage of a Division I scholarship. And now a chance to turn

his life around and take care of his family.

“When you’ve got a kid that’s 6-10 and can shoot the ball and can run and jump, the sky is the limit,” Graham said. “A lot of kids at that age haven’t really developed their skills yet. He had it. You could see that part of it. God

just worked it out.”

Hill eased into his role for the Wildcats, playing 14 minutes a game off the bench as a freshman. Hill averaged 18

points and 11 rebounds for an Arizona team ravaged by injuries and defections as a junior. Along with good friends Chase Budinger and Nic Wise, Hill led the Wildcats to a surprise Sweet 16 appearance.

Early draft forecasts had him projected to go as high as the third pick to Oklahoma City. He’s still mentioned prominently anywhere from fifth to tenth.

“Jordan’s just an unbelievable kid,” said Pastner, who recently replaced John Calipari at Memphis. “And he’s going to be a very good NBA player. He’s a good person. He’s grounded, and he tells it like is. Most important,

though, he has good family and good people around him.”

RIVAL ARTICLE

HI, MY NAME IS...

Every prospect, whether ranked or not, says the same thing heading into tournaments like the Kingwood. “I just want to make a name for myself,” they almost say in unison. These unknowns not only made a name for themselves, they earned several potential scholarships and the respect of high majors across the country.

AAU coaches are known for promoting their players. It’s almost expected. So when Gary Graham of the Smyrna Stars (Ga.) ran into coaches, he made sure they knew who **Kovotney Barber** was. The 6-foot-7, 210-pound forward from Manchester Co. High School had the look of a player but it wasn’t until the ball was tipped when he actually *played* like a high major. He’s a dunk machine, he can handle the ball and rebounds like his life depends on it.

We asked an ACC assistant coach how many offers he thought Barber would have in a week. He quickly said, “How many offers do you think he’ll have *tonight*?” The Georgia schools have all peeked into him, as have some SEC schools. There is more to come on Barber.

Las Vegas Summer Classic: Day Two

Justin Young

[Rivals.com Basketball Recruiting](#)

Talk about it in [Off the Record](#)

LAS VEGAS, NEV. -

Smyrna Stars have a Peachy day

With the big boys on the bench, guys like [Tay Waller](#) had a chance to shine from the backcourt. The 6-foot-3 guard had a team high 22 points against Team Florida and showed off some great range on his jumper, connecting on four three-pointers.

Playing with McDonald's All American Korvotney Barber last year at Manchester (Ga.) High, Waller was actually the team's leading scorer. Things should be picking up for the rising senior in the recruiting department when he returns home.

He may look like a young teenager but Smyrna Stars point guard [Ben Smith](#) has a mature game. The 5-foot-10 floor general from Dublin (Ga.) High School has hit some big shots in Vegas and he did it once again against Team Florida. That was the story with him back in the Peach State and he's always on a team that advances his squad in tournament play.

Despite his size, Smith has made coaches look longer and harder at him as a player that can succeed at the next level. Smith said he's holding an offer from Tennessee Tech with interest from UNC-Wilmington, Wofford, Tulsa, Georgia State and Mercer.

D? vu: [Skyler Williams](#) is one of the toughest players in the country. He's a quarterback with a bouncer's mentality and a body that looks like a 21-year-old. He's had a good time in Vegas and should see more mid-majors looking. The two-sport prospect said he'd like to play both hoops and football at the next level.

Class of 2007 prospect [Austin Kelly](#) hit some big shots and helped the Stars grab a victory away from Team Florida in the morning game. He's poised and is being groomed to be the go-to option next year for

Sabes Foundation/Pulley Tournament Day Two

This story originally published on CollegeBasketballNews.com



Valparaiso Signee
Kenneth Harris (Telep)

By [Chris Monter](#)

Posted May 4, 2002

| [More](#)

The Sabes Foundation/Pulley Invitational Basketball Tournament features some of the top Nike AAU programs. The field is now down to just eight teams as champions will be crowned in both the 17 and under and 16 and under divisions.

"I think it was a relief to his dad," said Keith Ivey, a pastor in the Atlanta area. "He could see things were getting a little loose and Jordan's grades had fallen tremendously."

Hill thrived in a structured environment and Ivey helped him regain focus after academic struggles prevented Hill from playing his junior season. When it became evident Hill's skills were improving despite just two years of organized basketball, Ivey encouraged him to try the AAU route so he could benefit from the same exposure of his better-known peers. In the spring of his junior year, Hill's AAU team, the Smyrna Stars, ended up at the highly regarded Kingwood Classic tournament in Houston.

Former Arizona coach Lute Olson was there as well as then-assistant Josh Pastner, whose father, Hal, ran the event. Hill's Stars coach, Gary Graham, told Pastner, "You've got to see this kid."

"How many times do you hear that and then the kid's not good enough?" said Pastner, now the head coach at Memphis. "But we had an open time slot and I told Coach Olson, 'There's one kid we need to watch and nobody knows about him.' "

Jordan happened to be squaring off against DeAndre Jordan, who was widely regarded as one of the top high school centers in the country and now plays for the Los Angeles Clippers.

"Everyone was like, who is that kid going against DeAndre?" Pastner said. "We hopped on it right away, got him to visit the next weekend and he committed on the next visit. It's something for a guy who wasn't even in the top 200 going into college."

Justin Brownlee

[Small forward](#)
[San Francisco, California](#)
[City College of San Francisco](#)

AAU: Smyrna Stars
Ht: 6'7" 210

College Choices

School	Interest	Offer	Visit	Recruited by
Arizona	Medium			
Auburn	Medium			
Colorado	Medium			
Florida State	Medium			
Georgia	Medium			
Kansas	Medium			
Memphis	Medium		None	
Minnesota	Medium		None	
Nebraska	Medium		None	
Tennessee	Medium		None	