**Class of 2020**

The Class of 2020 is super-deep. It’s so “super deep” that from this area alone there is at least one super team, and nearly a dozen more good teams. This class has everything you need and more. Need a PG? You got guys like Isaiah Cathey, a big-bodied, smooth playing kid with a high IQ and newfound range from deep. Or you can go with Al Miles a lightning quick floor general that’s hard to guard that can score all over the floor and can absolutely shoot it from 3. Need a shooter? Rickey Shotwell can shoot it from half-court, Jesse Payne is a trained assassin who can now do a lot more than just shoot, Cat Moore is another kid who can shoot it from anywhere, and Jaylen Sanders is a long guard known for shooting the long ball. Need a slasher? Devon Miles might be your guy. He’s got nice size and can definitely be considered a big guard. He can attack the glass and finish with ease. Or Josh Stinson is another good candidate. Lockdown defender? We like Rod Jackson and Morgan Edwards. Need some excitement? You gotta add a high-flyer to the roster. Cameron Matthews, Matthew Murrell, Jordan Gipson, Lurch Marion, and Noodle Gross are all worthy of being dunk contest contestants. And of course the big guys need love too. Jailen Lucas, Caleb Spann, Devine Owens, Omari Thomas, Malik Moore, and Rodney Newsom Jr. are all capable of putting in work in the post.

There are dozens and dozens of kids in this class that can get the job done, but this article isn’t about individual talents. We’re giving you our take on the top 10 teams in the class.

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**HONORABLE MENTION:** TRUTH MEMPHIS, ARKANSAS GREYHOUNDS, TUPELO PAL ELITE, TCW, MEMPHIS DRAGONS, MEMPHIS MAGICIANS, LAKERS EXPRESS, MEMPHIS RISE, TENNESSEE GOLDEN WILDCATS, TEAM HAIRSPITAL, SHOWCASE THUNDER

**1. TEAM PENNY**

This may have been THE hardest list to ever comprise. Number 1 was obvious. Team Penny is clearly the front runner. They are about twelve kids deep with elite or near elite talent. They are stacked at every position. At the point guard they have 2021 stud Kennedy Chandler a cat quick point guard extraordinaire that handles the ball with best of them and can put the ball in the hole. Or they can go with Isaiah Cathey, a big guard that has a knack for finding the open man and has an obvious knowledge of the game. Cathey has also added a consistent outside shot to his game making him an even bigger threat on the offensive end. Wes Taylor is yet another kid that can give Penny consistent minutes at the 1. On the wing Penny separates itself even further from the competition because they are so long and athletic at the 2&3 positions. They have guys like Marcellous Brigham a 6’4 wing that’s long and strong enough to play in the post, and Matthew Murrell a kid that can do so much but it’s all overshadowed by the simple fact that he can take off just inside the free throw line and dunk on three kids. (I’ve seen him do it!) Debo Coleman, yet another 2021 kid, has stretched out into 6’3 or 6’4 frame. Add him to the list of long wing threats that this team can throw at you. These three plus Kylan Haywood who also stands well over 6 feet and you see what we mean by “deep”.

And then there are the bigs; they’ve got Big O and Cameron “Mook” Matthews. Big O is easily 6’3, 6’4 a big body with a high IQ and years of experience on the big stage.

Add a big from Bama and a wing from Nashville plus a young, experienced coaching staff led by Joe Washington and you have hands down the best team in the city.

**2. TEAM THAD**

At the beginning of last season Team Thad was the only game in town when it came to the class of 2020. Midway through the season there was a huge shakeup that left Thad scrambling.

But the program bounced back and seems to have put together an ultra competitive squad ready for the shoe circuit.

They return a few key pieces from the previous season in Rodney Mason, Isaac Smith, and Reggie Neely. These three are all nice sized kids with big time talent. Mason is a strong, athletic wing that can easily go into the post in bang. He has nice ball-handling skills and an intimidating stature. Isaac is another nice sized guard that can be considered one of the class’ best. Reggie completes the returning trio. He doesn’t posse the size of Mason or Smith but he definitely big time. He is a quick ball-handler that is hard to guard in man-to-man situations and is a pro at getting past his defender and getting to the basket.

Noteworthy newcomers; Bo Montgomery, Jordan Gipson, and Chris McKnight will all add height and hype to the Under Armour sponsored squad. All 3 stand around a few inches over 6 feet. Bo is a solid player with a clear knowledge for the game. He’s a proven scorer that has a consistent midrange range shot and is automatic from the charity stripe. Montgomery uses his length well on both ends of the floor and is definitely a great addition. Jordan Gipson comes over from M33M, another proven scorer that has been scoring post threat for years, Gipson has added high flying dunks and long range bombs to his arsenal of scoring options. He is also a shot blocking beast. Chris McKnight will add length at the wing outside shooting to the Thad roster.

**3. SHOWTIME**

Coach Shelvie Rose’s team is a definite contender. They are a well-oiled machine. They have together longer than either of the top ranked teams and run a disciplined system that lacks of rushed or bad shots.

Showtime is led by Jalin Anderson a proven guard with nice size and Jaylin Lucas. Anderson is a combo guard that can play the 1 or the 2. He can flat foot shoot the rock making him deadly on the wing. And his IQ for the game is high and he gets everyone involved around him making him an ideal PG.

Lucas stands well over 6 feet and has transformed from a big to a 3. This makes him a matchup nightmare as he has the size, strength, post skills, and rebounding ability of a post but the athleticism and guard skills of a guard. Add the fact that his midrange shot is lethal and his motor is higher than most and you have a beast in the making.

Catterious Moore is another key piece to Showtime’s success. Once just known as only a streak 3 point shooter, Moore has evolved into a solid PG that can lead a team, defend the opponents’ top guard, and still shoot it from anywhere.

**4. PHAROAH ELITE**

Pharoah Elite is another good team. Probably a piece or two from being able to compete with the best of the best but they are on to a good start. Their guard play is their claim to fame. First of all, none of them can be held one-on-one, which makes going man a disaster for opponents. It starts with Rickey Shotwell, better known as “Lil Rickey”. Rickey is an excellent ball-handler than can shoot from anywhere from inside the half-court, literally. In the backcourt with him is Jesse Payne, a sharpshooting wing that has emerged from just being a shooter into a kid that can do it all on the offensive end. He has a killer crossover that allows him to create space. He can shoot the three. He has a nice midrange game and floater, and he can finish at the rack. Add Scooter to the mix, a long and wiry guard that can play either of the guard positions and you have the makings of one of the best backcourts in the city. BUT their guard play doesn’t stop with those three. They have another shooter in Rickey Lofties and a big guard in Jonathan Duncan. Duncan is a big strong kid that has the size to go in the post and get it done and the stroke to handle his outside the three-point arc.

The addition of Devine Owens may have been the best thing that could’ve happened to the Pharoah. Owens is a hard-nosed, super athletic forward that is relentless on the boards and absolutely gets it done inside the lane.

**5. MEMPHIS ROYALS**

The Royals is another team that is very deep. And they ooze chemistry. Their guard play is solid. Morgan Edwards is a high-energy, lock-down defender at the point guard position who definitely a capable scorer. Vincent Williams is another great piece at the guard position. He’s a great ball-handler with cat quickness, and a knack for scoring at the rack. Add shooter Alex Marsh to the tandem and you have a solid trio.

The post is where the Royals are really made contenders. Caleb Spann and Malik Williams are probably the best front court duo of any team not on the shoe circuit. The two mesh well together with Spann being a shot blocking, rebounding machine, and just pure athlete that can jump out the gym. Team him with Malik, a smooth big with an arsenal of guards moves that allow him to score in the post at will.

**6. M33M (APPLEWHITE)**

Like Team Penny, M33M has a couple 2021 kids playing up. Aldon Applewhite and Willie Foreman both look good playing up with the Adidas 2020 team. Applewhite is a stud. He’s a long guard that takes care of the ball, plays focused, and gets it done. Foreman is a strong athletic kid that’s in the process of evolving from a big to a forward. Foreman is a physical, hard-nosed kid that makes things happen on both ends of the court.

Add to these underclassmen, some kids with nice size, and some shooters, not to mention good coaching, and a great system and it’s no wonder why M33M is considered to be one of the top teams in the class,

**7. TEAM MAGIC ELITE**

Not as strong as they started off this season but still a contender Team Magic Elite is still considered to be a top 10 team. The post is where they separate themselves from the rest. Rodney Newsom Jr. may be the most underrated player in the city. CBG! Do your research. The kid gets buckets plain and simple. He can shoot the three, he can shoot the midrange, he’s automatic from the free throw line, and he has all the big boy moves he needs in the post to get a bucket. Obviously not the most athletic kid in the class, he’s smart enough to do what it takes to get it done, whether it be defending or rebounding. In our opinion he is the reason why the Magic will still be successful this season. Then add more size to him, a kid from Mississippi that they call “Noodle”, he’s long kid capable of rebounding and blocking shots, and he can get up and throw it down! And we can’t leave out Big Ced Davis. Davis is a difference maker. He can rebound, block shots, and score. He is the definition of post presence.

The Magic have even more size at the forward position with kids like Hadden Burgess and Trace Box.

Where the Magic lack size is at the guard position. Jaylon Sanders is the only 6 foot guard the magic have. He is a solid outside shooter that can score all over the court. Other than Sanders the Magic will depend on smaller guards like TJ Brooks who seems to be thriving under the pressure of having to lead the team, and Christian Clark another kid that is no stranger to the big stage.

A newcomer to the area’s AAU scene is Tykel Owens, a defensive DOG, that can get buckets. He’s a high energy, high motor guy that makes things happen. Owens will be a great addition to this Adidas team.

Josh Stinson however, will be the lead scoring guard. He’s got decent size, he’s quick, and he’s a born scorer. Stinson is one of those kids that is hard to guard. He will put the ball on the floor in a heartbeat and get to the rack, and he finishes with the best of them. Stinson also won’t shy away from taking the outside shot.

In our opinion how far the Magic go will depend on the scoring consistency of Newsom and Stinson.

**8. TEAM DEVELOPMENT**

It was hard to rank Team Development so far down the Top 10 after watching how closely they played Team Penny in their last meeting, even leading most of the game. Ultimately a couple losses earlier in the season to Team Magic Elite was the deciding factor.

Development doesn’t have any of the big name kids or a shoe contract. Nor do they have any dominating 6 footers. But they have heart, grit, and confidence. Team Development is relentless on defense. On the offensive end they have couple kids capable of attacking the rim at ease, and a couple more that consistently shoot the three.

In the post they are undersized but they are strong, physical, and athletic, and those traits make them competitive. Be on the lookout for Team Development, they just may be climbing up our rankings as the season progresses.

**9. TNBC (WALDEN)**

TNBC (Walden) was another team that it was hard to rank so low. State Runner-Up Devon Miles is the key. He is a big guard with nice handles and a solid outside shot. He takes care of the ball, and can pretty much score it from anywhere. And he can defend.

Speaking of defending, Rod Jackson just may be the best defender in the class. He’s a high energy lockdown defender. But Jackson gets it done on both ends. He can attack the basket and finish. He can also shoot the three and has nice floater as well.

Terrence Robertson is another mainstay to the TNBC squad, he too is high energy, a vocal leader on and off the floor, and a great defender.

Guards Kyron Pleas and Zach Walden will be depended on by TNBC. Kyron Pleas was nice addition to the squad. He’s a solid guard that will be able to assist Miles in the ball handling responsibilities and Walden is a knock down three-point shooter capable of knocking them down in bunches.

Trayshun “Lurch” Marion is a 6’6 giant. He’s a proven shot blocker and rebounder with a nice touch from midrange. He is TNBC’s top post presence.

**10. TNBC (THOMPSON)**

TNBC (Walden) got the nod over Thompson with a win over them in a tournament in Atlanta. Thompson’s TNBC squad is a solid bunch with guards like Charlie Ealy and “Lil Sidney”. Two things stand out about this squad; first is coaching. Coach Keenan Thompson is a student of the game capable of making good look great. He teaches systematic basketball and puts kids in position to allow them to thrive. Second is Justin “J Bo” Borders, A BIG little man. Borders can get buckets in bunches. He’s lightning quick with prime ball-handling skills. He can shoot the three, he can blow past defenders a float it. He can do it all. Don’t be surprised if TNBC (Thompson) has climbed up the rankings by next month.