

COMPETING



N THE COURT

Plummer by the numbers

steals per game **13**

assists per game **14**

rebounds per game **21**

points per game **10.3**

20 points against Lake Belton

20 points against Crockett

Source: Hudl.com.
Graphic by Francie Wilhelm.

Chen by the numbers

22 points against Crockett

21 points against Eastside

31 steals per game

19 assists per game

26 rebounds per game

12.2 points per game

Source: MaxPreps.com.
Graphic by Francie Wilhelm.

Lone freshman on varsity, Ethan Plummer, finds success on team, hopes to pursue basketball in the future

ISLEY CAMERON
staff reporter

At 3, Ethan Plummer held a basketball in his hands for the first time. At 14, he became the only freshman on the varsity basketball team.

Some of his earliest memories are his parents holding their arms out, forming a hoop for him to throw the ball into.

According to Plummer, his lifelong commitment to the game and support from his family is what pushed him to go the extra mile.

"My dad was the one who first taught me basketball," Plummer said.

"He has always supported my career. I have memories of him helping me master my jump shot and perfect my form at a young age."

Despite playing since he was a toddler and later joining the Lamar basketball team in middle school, Plummer still felt like he could do more to ensure he would make an impression during this year's tryouts. Over the summer, he spent hours a day shooting free throws. He was determined to make varsity so

that he could play alongside older, experienced teammates who are just as serious about basketball.

By the time tryouts rolled around, however, Plummer still had his doubts.

"I didn't expect to make the team," Plummer said. "When we first started, the freshman would practice separately, so I didn't think I would have a chance to play in front of the coaches."

But when finally given the opportunity to show what he could do, Plummer rose to the occasion.

"One practice, freshman scrimmaged JV and won," Plummer said. "I think that's when the coaches knew I stood out."

When Plummer made the varsity roster among a sea of upperclassmen, his new teammates welcomed their newest player with open arms. The team's captain, junior Finn Corrigan, was the only freshman on varsity two years ago when he first made the team. This year, he has taken Plummer under his wing.

"I see a little bit of myself in him," Corrigan said, "He's a point guard, so I try to teach him how to run the offense and be a leader even

though he's just a freshman."

The team environment reminds Plummer why he grew to love basketball.

"I've played with a lot of different teammates," Plummer said, "The ones that really stand out are my friends I would play with during elementary school recess."

It was during these pickup games on the blacktop of Highland Park Elementary that Plummer realized his passion for the game.

"I think it's a really special sport in terms of how high energy games are and how fast they are paced," Plummer said.

Plummer's childhood friend, freshman Luke Bell, played alongside him at recess, and has watched Plummer become the player he is today.

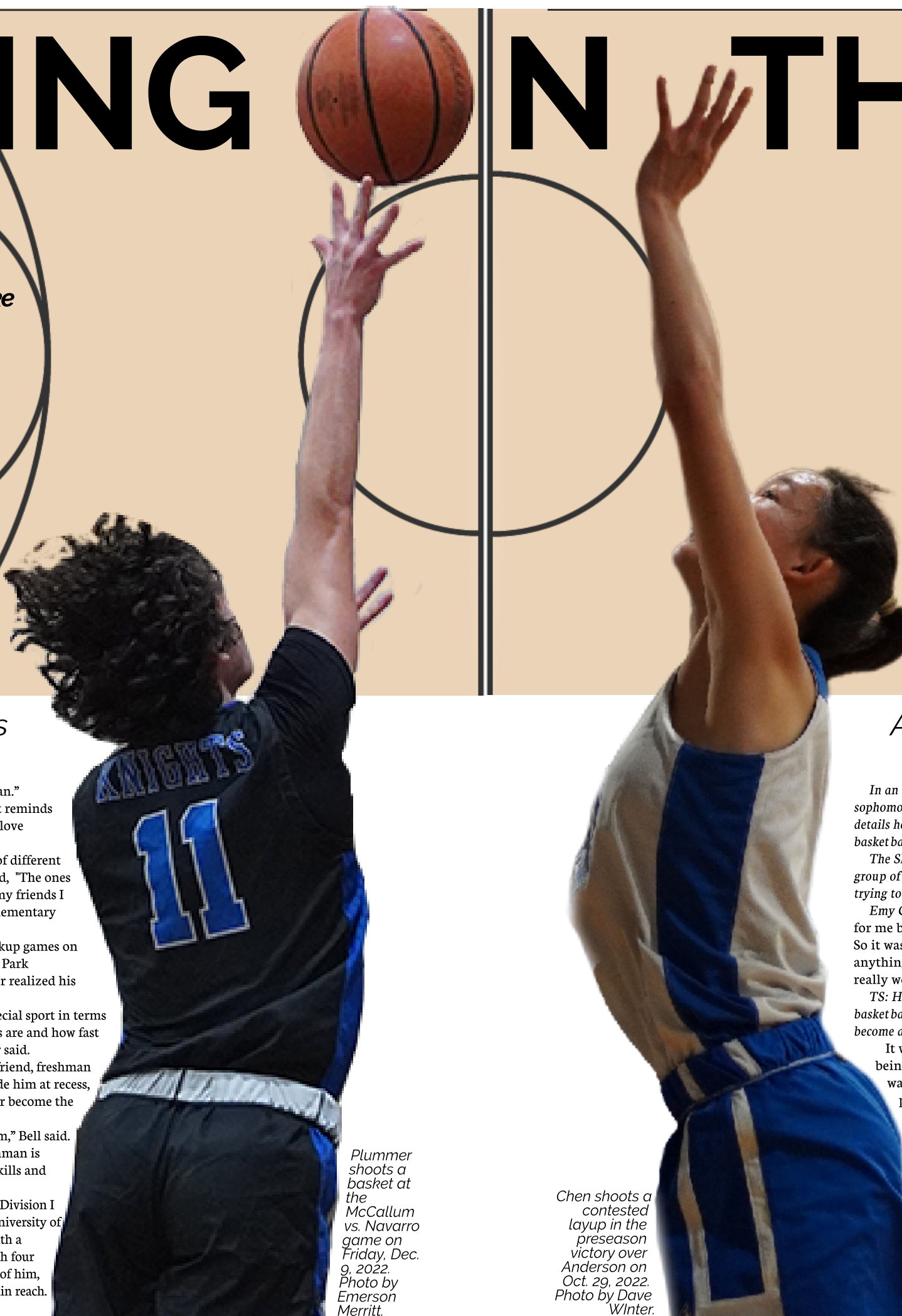
"I'm really proud of him," Bell said.

"Making varsity as a freshman is amazing, and shows his skills and ability to compete."

Plummer hopes to play Division I college basketball at the University of Texas. After growing up with a basketball in hand and with four years of varsity ball ahead of him, he knows his dream is within reach.

I try to teach him how to run the offense and be a leader even though he's just a freshman.

— varsity captain Finn Corrigan



Plummer shoots a basket at the McCallum vs. Navarro game on Friday, Dec. 9, 2022. Photo by Emerson Merritt.

Chen shoots a contested layup in the preseason victory over Anderson on Oct. 29, 2022. Photo by Dave Winter.

After moving from Los Alamitos, CA, sophomore starting point guard finds perfect fit on varsity basketball team

In an exclusive interview with *The Shield*, sophomore starting point guard Emy Chen details her experience joining the varsity girls basketball team at a new school.

The Shield: What was it like to walk into a group of upperclassmen as an underclassman trying to fit in with the team?

Emy Chen: To be honest, it was really easy for me because everyone's really welcoming. So it wasn't like a struggle trying to fit in or anything. They made it really easy, and I felt really welcomed right off the start.

TS: How has your experience joining the basketball team at a new school helped you become accustomed to a new state?

It was really helpful coming in [and] being on a team to begin with because I wasn't just coming in brand new, I had people I knew and people I knew I could rely on. And because we are on a team, I know they always have my back.

TS: Do you think that the team has good chemistry in comparison to basketball teams that you've been on in the past?

That's something I actually really really love about the McCallum basketball team. We have amazing chemistry. We all

get along really well. Everyone's really nice.

TS: What would you say was the highlight game of your season so far?

I think we played recently really well at Cedar Creek, and we also had pretty good performance to the Crockett tournament.

TS: How would you describe yourself as a player?

On the court, I try to be really aggressive and my goal is to help the team in any way possible. I want to get on the floor. I want to get rebounds. I want to be as much of a contribution to the team as I can by trying to do that in whatever way that is possible.

TS: Have you had any major moments that made you feel like you were really part of the team and you were really contributing in a big way?

I feel like it's kind of hard to say because I feel like I was really welcomed from the start. There wasn't any moment of like, "OK, so now I belong." It was like, I came on from the start, and I really felt like I belonged

even though I didn't know anyone beforehand.

TS: What do you think were the main differences between California to Texas?

The people. I feel like, I didn't know what this was actually about but, Southern charm is really a thing.

To be honest, it was really easy for me because everyone's really welcoming. So it wasn't like a struggle trying to fit in

— sophomore Emy Chen

TS: How has Coach Kehn helped welcome you into the program?

I love her. Right before I moved, as soon as I knew I was going to McCallum, I emailed her. Right off of our first email, I felt really at ease and more comfortable with moving to McCallum. I feel like she really, really helped with the whole process, and I'm really grateful for her.

TS: What do you think your goals are for the future of the season, as a team and on your own?

I know as a team, I think we should be able to win district. That's our goal this year. Personally, I think I just like to do my best to really make sure that I'm always having a good showing and having a good attitude. I just want to be a positive force on the team that's helpful.

—interview by Caroline Owen