



Coach Stites took over a Highland Christian program that was winless the year before. A program that never had a winning record.

The transition was beyond difficult. They practiced outdoors in the parking lot since they had no gymnasium. Stites worked to find gym availability all around the county. With the help of Maureen Gunsolus they were able to start playing in the old Pinevale gym, after renovating it themselves. Wins were few at first and losses were severe. The first three years garnered 15 victories. Slowly and surely the program improved. The young men started learning the game and learned how much work it took to build a program. Fast forward 7 years (10th season for Stites). Highland Christian Academy, now located off Bemiss Road (old Pinegrove elementary) is playing in its own gym. The Eagles have accomplished a lot in those years! They have had 21 All Region players. They have had 5 All State players. They have made the Sweet 16 five times. They are the current back to back Region Champs. They are most proud of their State Championship this year. Stites has garnered 143 wins and has seen several of his players move on to the next level playing in College.

This year's Senior All American, Xavier Rose will be looking to follow that path! Jamari Brown, also a Senior, carries a 3.95 GPA and will be attending Augusta University majoring in Pre-Med. DW Lewis, a graduate last year, is currently in Wisconsin playing College basketball. Jordan Coffee, a recent graduate, came to Highland with the goal of getting a better education and earning a basketball scholarship. He is currently playing at South Georgia State. Valdosta has always had a storied tradition of winning titles. This may be the best story of them all!