

# Mt. Tabor's Grace dribbles past inquiries

Mt. Tabor point guard Mike Grace is one of my favorite student-athletes in the city. He's been one of my guys ever since I met him two years ago.

I still remember interviewing him for the story, thinking, "This kid sounds like he does interviews all the time." And, he was only a ninth grader back then. I definitely know I can get a good interview out of Grace any time I need one. I thought it would be a good time to get his thoughts on the basketball season since things are starting to swing into gear right now.

He said he and his teammates are ready for the season. I have to believe him. Grace had a great summer. So did his teammate, C.J. Harris. And, the Spartans added some nice pieces to the puzzle during the off season.

He and I talked about the new additions, Chris Paul, other city athletes, Sean Taylor and a few other things. We also talked about his sister, Taylor Dewberry. Take a look at some of the other things CP5 and I talked about on Tuesday evening before the Spartans game against Reagan.

**Anthony:** What's good, Grace?

**Mike:** How are you doing, man?

**Anthony:** I'm holding it down. I can't really complain. But tell me what's up with you.

**Mike:** Nothing much. Just trying to get ready for this game tonight.

**Anthony:** Who do you play tonight?

**Mike:** We play Reagan tonight.

**Anthony:** Oh, OK: How did you all do in that tournament over the weekend?

**Mike:** We won our first game against East Chapel Hill. We came out a little flat against Trinity and lost that one in overtime.

**Anthony:** I know it's still football season at Mt. Tabor, but how excited is everyone about the basketball team?

**Mike:** Everybody is excited about this season. A lot of people feel like we can do some big things this year. Football is still king right now, though.

**Anthony:** I know you had a big summer, man. Kind of tell me what went on with you.

**Mike:** Whew. I had a great summer playing AAU. We started off winning the state championship in North Carolina. Then, we went down to Myrtle Beach and won the Big Tyme. Then, we went to Vegas and won the Main Event. So, we had a great summer on the AAU circuit.

**Anthony:** (Smiles.) No doubt about that. I know your name was circulating like crazy. But honestly tell me



Mt. Tabor point guard Mike Grace, who's a junior, has added new dimensions to his game.



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how good you feel heading into this season.

**Mike:** I mean, I'm coming in with a lot of confidence in myself and teammates. I'm really expecting real big things. Everybody has one thing in mind, and that's that (state championship) ring.

**Anthony:** How much easier does C.J. (Harris) make your job?

**Mike:** C.J. takes a lot of pressure off me. I mean, he's a guy that can go through and breakdown a defense by himself. He can handle the rock, and do all the things that he does with the ball. As a point guard, I don't have to do nearly as much.

**Anthony:** You're the point guard. But he's also listed as a point guard.

**Mike:** Right. I mean, we both do the same things to help our team win. We don't really look at it as a point guard and shooting guard. We just look at it as we're both guards. We can both handle and shoot the ball. We both can also score and distribute. I mean, we're both guards.

**Anthony:** What's the best

part of your game?

**Mike:** It would have to be the mid-range (jumper). My mid-range jump shot. I had to pick it up. I'm not growing any more. I can't take it up



against those trees. So, I got to pull up.

**Anthony:** What is the biggest difference between this team and the one from last year?

**Mike:** There's definitely more defensive pressure. We run full court now. We're running the whole game. We're guard heavy, so we have to run to beat teams.

**Anthony:** OK. What other sport would you be playing if you didn't play ball?

**Mike:** Uh, soccer. I was

better at soccer than I was at basketball. I played soccer from the time I was 5 or 6 until I was 13 years old. So it would probably be soccer.

**Anthony:** I know I woke

**Mike:** Yes sir. Track star.

**Anthony:** What's that household like?

**Mike:** It's crazy. But we don't really talk that much. But I got her whenever she needs anything, and she's got me. She supports me with basketball. I support her with track. We have a good relationship.

**Anthony:** (Smiles.) OK. What's your favorite thing to watch on television?

**Mike:** College basketball. I love college basketball. I'm not really into the NBA. It's a lot of one on one and bad shots right now.

**Anthony:** Who's your squad right now?

**Mike:** Carolina. I'm a Tarheel until I die. I love those Deacs too. If they play then I'm going to root for them, but I am definitely a Carolina fan, though.

**Anthony:** Give me a top three of teams in the city.

**Mike:** I have to go with Mt. Tabor at number one. Prep, with big Reggie, is a tough squad at two. Then, I got to say Calvary with Torez (Young) and Carter Cook.

They're a tough group too. That's my top three.

**Anthony:** Give me a top five list of individuals.

**Mike:** OK. I'd have to put C.J. (Harris) at number one. Big Reggie at number two. Marcus (Wright) and Carter (Cook) at three and four. I'd have to go with my man, Josh Hicks. No one really knows about him over at Tabor. But he just transferred from Greensboro Day. He can really play.

**Anthony:** No doubt. I heard he's a beast.

**Mike:** Yes sir.

**Anthony:** You guys are going to be really crazy (good) if you reach your potential.

**Mike:** That's right. On paper, we have a squad. We just have to put it together. We saw that any team can beat us if we don't come out to play. We're going to be tough to beat if we play together.

**Anthony:** I know you're still young, but have you taken the SAT yet?

**Mike:** Not yet. But I'm going to take it next spring, though.

**Anthony:** OK. Stay on top of that. If you could play anyone, one-on-one, who would it be?

**Mike:** Um, either CP or Michael Jordan. I look up to the both of them.

**Anthony:** Is CP going to make the NBA All-Star team this year?

**Mike:** Of course. If he don't then it's highway robbery. He's got to make it.

**Anthony:** Let's switch it up a little bit. Um, what's your favorite class at Mt. Tabor?

**Mike:** U.S. History. My favorite teacher teaches that class, Mr. Niesel.

**Anthony:** (Smiles) Coach Niesel. OK. That's cool. Let's finish with free association. Uh, Brian "Big Cuz" Watson.

**Mike:** (Laughs.) Hey, biggest fan in Winston.

**Anthony:** (Smiles.) I'm about to give you a history lesson with this one.

**Mike:** OK.

**Anthony:** Dr. Robert Cade.

**Mike:** (Long pause.)

**Anthony:** That was the inventor of Gatorade in 1965. He died today.

**Mike:** Ah man. I love Gatorade. That's all I drink, but I'm sorry to hear that he died.

**Anthony:** OK. Mt. Tabor. **Mike:** State champs in football and basketball.

**Anthony:** Hunter Furr.

**Mike:** A monster.

**Anthony:** Ed Gainey.

**Mike:** Most talented player in Winston.

**Anthony:** L.D. Williams. (Wake guard)

**Mike:** A freak of nature.

**Anthony:** Mike Grace.

**Mike:** A true point guard.

**Anthony:** Best point guard to play at Mt. Tabor.

**Mike:** It's got to be Chris Gaynor.

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