

All-America

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BEING on a winning team is crucial for a player's All-America hopes. All 10 members of last year's consensus All-America played on teams that made it to the NCAA tournament. In this sense, basketball is a unique sport. When a pitcher wins 20 games for a last place team, he still is at least considered an all-star candidate. But when a player leads the nation in scoring for a losing team, it's assumed that the other four players just give him the ball.

"Otto Graham said it best," Quincy says. "He said you can't say this player is better than this other one because it's all in the supporting casts."

"Some players not deserving of honors are picked simply because of where they play," Sylvester says. "For Drake to promote Lloyd as a first team All-America, like we think he should be, we will have to go to the NCAA's to get the publicity."

Lloyd isn't the only one with this problem. Tony Murphy, Lawrence Butler, Marshall Rodgers and Bob McCurdy have all led the nation in scoring, all played on unpublished so-so teams and all were shutout from the All-America teams. Freeman Williams of Portland State did

make All-America after leading all scorers in 1978, but that came after he was ignored even though he topped the scoring statistics in 1977.

While these struggle for attention, others have it thrown at them. North Carolina has had six consensus All-America's in the past five years, and Al Wood is a good bet to be number seven.

"Most important is simply being a great player," UNC Sports Information Director Rick Brewer says. "Playing for Dean Smith is a built in advantage. Playing at North Carolina or UCLA is an advantage because people are going to be looking at certain places."

Some schools will send out brochures in order to publicize a player, but the schools with an established program usually don't need them. "We have a national mailing list," Seaman says, "But we don't use it all that much. We didn't do anything special for David Thompson."

Although being an All-America is usually a direct forerunner of becoming a first-round NBA pick and landing a large contract, pro scouts often warn against using All-America as an ultimate criteria for judging talent.

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