

As we do most Mondays when the gym is empty, we began our morning with a shooting workout. On this particular Monday, we stayed later than usual because more people started arriving. Seeing that we had enough players for a full game, we decided to end our workout early and play some basketball together.

For the first 15 to 20 minutes, everything was peaceful and enjoyable. We were playing friendly, competitive pick-up basketball. However, things changed once the “Twins” arrived. From the moment they walked in, they began making comments about how we should be playing, what the rules should be, and what score we should play to—none of which matched the facility’s posted rules. Their demeanor was immediately hostile and gave the impression they believed they had more authority because they frequented The Beast more often.

Throughout this, Paris kept reminding everyone to stay calm and focus on playing basketball, telling us to let them say what they wanted and not let it escalate. His efforts to neutralize the situation were constant and very comforting.

I am signed to play collegiate basketball at Lamar College this fall. I play defense aggressively, but I have never been a dirty player or someone with poor character. During the game, I played hard defense and did not want to lose. I made legal body contact a few times, but I believe one of the Twins was uncomfortable with a female player playing physical defense against him. Despite this, I stand by the fact that my actions were not malicious or outside the bounds of competitive play.

After the Twins began making disrespectful comments and calling me names, I stayed as level-headed as possible, supported by my teammates. There was a moment when I approached one of the Twins after being repeatedly called out of my name, but Paris and my teammates quickly separated us, and we returned to playing basketball.

While the game was competitive and physical—sometimes with hard screens and slight bumps—nothing we did was malicious or outside what happens in a real game.

At one point, after routine body contact, I was walking away when one of the Twins suddenly ran up behind me and pushed me forcefully. I was shocked by the shove but saw Paris rush to defend me immediately. The confrontation that followed lasted around 10 seconds before it began to resolve.

Afterward, we didn’t exchange insults or continue the conflict. Although we were frustrated and disappointed, we made no further attempts to escalate the situation. We tried to move on and keep playing, viewing it as something that got out of hand quickly despite our best efforts to de-escalate.

Paris especially worked hard to keep things calm throughout the morning, even allowing the Twins foul calls they didn’t deserve and giving them possession on questionable plays just to keep the peace. Unfortunately, it felt like they interpreted that kindness as weakness, which contributed to the situation spiraling out of control.

I take full accountability for my own actions and acknowledge that I could have shown more self-discipline instead of engaging verbally with them, even though they were being disrespectful to me from the start.

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