

# Head Basketball Coach Shoots for Success

## By Matthew Stephens

Going 23-3 in their last season Liberty's Girls Basketball Team is no joke, however behind all the 3 pointers, you'll see Coach Thomas Waterwash deeply focused on his craft. Most coaches are normally yelling instructions, plays, yet 90% of the time you'll see him calm, focused, and silent. But what does he do that other coaches do not?

Waterwash has been in the coaching position for 10 years 3 of which have been at Liberty. His overall coaching career started immediately after his final semester at Otterbein University, where he was offered a position as the Head Coach of the Liberty Middle School Girls Basketball team and he hasn't looked back since.

Coaching at Liberty since 2020 he's come to understand and appreciate Liberty's High expectations, but also appreciates the community for willing to invest into getting better and being the best.

"We are establishing a rule of excellence in this building, and I wouldn't want to be at place with lower expectations of success on or off the court." Waterwash said.

Players are a vital part of not only the game but coaching as well, Waterwash believes his players try harder than they get credit for due to people associating it with wealth and entitlement. While he does not deny that there are many entitled students and or adults present in the community, a large majority of people work really hard to do be their best. He's rarely seen having to ask players to work harder, which is in part thanks to his efforts.

"I think coach waterwash is a great coach and is very passionate about helping our team get better. My favorite trait about him is how much he cares about us and his confidence in our team even when we doubt ourselves." said Varisty Sophomore Maria Stack.

Ever since Waterwash joined the program their statistics have only been getting better, however as an individual he says coaching has done alot for him. He's learned skills in communication, empathy, respect, work, discipline, toughness; all skills which he says better him in terms of growing as an individual. Waterwash says the difference between coaching girls and boys basketball don't go very far and makes a big emphasis on building relationships with players.

"Varisty Senior Ryan Chapman pictured moving the ball up the court. This Photo was taken in the 2022-2023 Season"

Photo Courtesy of HR Images







“Coach Waterwash pictured showing a play in the 2021–2022 Girls Basketball Season. He had been coaching the players for 1 season at this point. “I have been around the game my entire life.” Waterwash said “My dad was a high school coach when I was growing up. I was always with him in the gym. I played at a very young age all the way through college and then moved into a coaching role.”

## Photo Courtesy of HR Images

This is because while it's not impossible for boys, he feels that girls value relationships and in developing strong ones you set them up for success. Knowing you care, being pushed and challenged to their best consistently, and being held accountable makes stronger individuals which makes the team a stronger unit as a whole

“Waterwash is very passionate about his craft and pushes me to do better every practice” Said Freshman Maddie Oldham

Overall Waterwash is a huge asset to Liberty, not because of the school's preconceived notions of excellence. But because of the time and effort he's put into becoming better to reach that standard that Liberty been known for, and no matter what happens his work will never be forgotten.

“Ultimately, success comes down to sacrifice and work. Those teams, companies, organizations, and individual's who are willing to work, willing to grind, who commit to a process of growth and improvement end up being the most successful. That is what we are trying to be about in the girls basketball program.”

“Photo of Waterwash going through a play. Taken during the 2022–2023 season.” “Kids are kids. They need to know you care, they want to be pushed and challenged to be their best. They want to be held accountable.”

## Photo Courtesy of HR Images

