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[Blacktop Bio: Clyde Weems feature](#) / Oct 7, 2009 / 11:00 am

By [Casey Lee](#)



Photo: commons.wikimedia.org

~~Straight outta Compton...~~ Richmond (CA) is no Compton...it's worse and not getting better anytime soon! According to CQ Press City Crime Rankings 2008-2009, *Richmond hones the sixth highest crime rate* (out of 215 cities in the US) for cities with populations of 100,000 to 499,000. **The competition on the blacktop must be tough!**

Through hard work, determination, and a focus that hails from the playgrounds, **Clyde Harvey Weems**,

has earned his stripes on the concrete. Although born in Akron (Ohio), he has been raised as a product of the tough city of Richmond (California).



Photo: Arron Andrews @ Sandlot Studios

At 32 years old, he shares his experiences from college to a coast-to-coast journey that puts the rags to riches success stories to shame.

Weems moved from Ohio at the age of six years old when his great-grandfather died in Richmond, CA, and his mother decided to help Clyde's grandmother. She also felt that it was time for a better opportunity for Clyde, noting that Ohio did not have much to offer.

When Weems arrived under the California sunshine, he had trouble adjusting to the people. In school, he was the center of jokes because of his accent and ended up fighting kids almost every day. After being suspended numerous times, he began to switch his focus from the frustration at school to the blacktop.



Photo: Arron Andrews @ Sandlot Studios

His escape from the teasing around the age of 13 years old led to spending much of his time at the park in his neighborhood. Something reminiscent of the Run DMC gold chains and the 1990s when everybody had a Benz showed Weems another lifestyle...the dope game.

Most people who Weems saw near the park were well-dressed. Although his mother made sure that he was well-dressed, Clyde always noticed “somebody that dressed better.” Clyde admitted to selling drugs for a short period of time. He never used them. Looking back, Weems noted that it was *the worst time I ever had in my life*.

“...for a lot of people in lower economic environments that’s all they know. It doesn’t mean you’re bad, it just means you made the wrong decision.”



Photo: Arron Andrews @ Sandlot Studios

Weems made the **right decision** and **choose basketball**. He signed with Division I Alabama State out of Richmond HS, where he was under the famous Coach Carter, but ended up staying local at the College of Marin due to low test scores.

After several stints, Weems played at the University of La Verne in California. Most teammates passed, played well together, and worked in a system unfamiliar to the street game. Clyde would slice through defenders and go to the rack. Things did not work out with the coach but luckily Weems, the first in his family to graduate from college among many siblings, received his bachelor's degree as reinforcement.

Since then, Weems has moved to New York City. He now works and resides in the Milbank section of Harlem, where he serves as a **Drug Prevention Specialist** for the **Children's Aid Society**. By designing programs to enable youth to stay drug-free, Clyde works with ease. He implemented a program for kids with Division I basketball talent but not Division I grades. The rule: kids must give their report cards at each marking period in exchange for the connection with a college coach as a mentor.



Photo: Arron Andrews @ Sandlot Studios

So, what's a basketball junkie, hoop head, or former player doing in the mecca of street basketball?

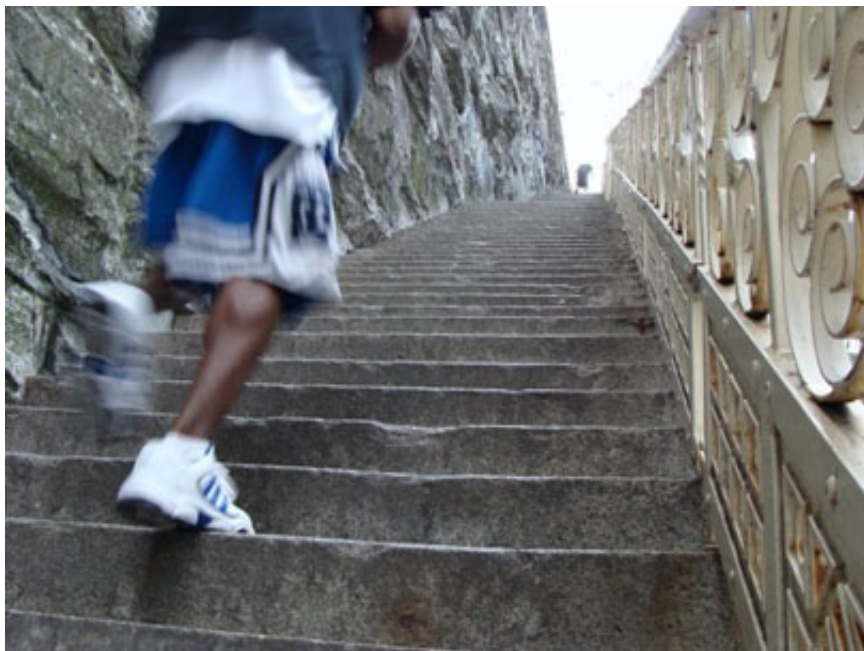
He still got game. *Period.* Think Malloy Nesmith (The Future) aka Forever Young. EBC Dream Team in 07...check! W's in only two games played at Rucker Park...check! An-almost-Scott Skiles with 22 assists on oops to Skywalker at Mt. Morris Park...check!

The guy has even played in Shammgod's tournament on 145th Street in Harlem, where he was dubbed "Sidney Deane" aka Wesley Snipes character on White Man Can't Jump. Several summers ago after the MC learned that he was from Cali, Weems became under constant eyes of the crowd. To prove the moniker, a tip-dunk through the lane or all 5 defenders basically put the fans on their feet with the MC thinking West Coast "California Love." (*Is it just me or do I hear Tupac in the background?*)

In addition to the street game, Weems more recently was a player/coach for the formerly New York City Internationalz (now the NYC Thunder). Despite only playing half a season in Denmark (team folded), C-Dub has earned his place in the U.S.

After college, Weems played in the **La Verne Pro Am**, where **his team won EIGHT CHAMPIONSHIPS IN A ROW!** Guys like Lamont Landers, Chancellor McCobb, Anthony Collins, and a former Oakland Raider gave the team its spark.

With consistent winning seasons, the team became so good and so cocky that they used to tell the commissioner what they wanted for the championship display. Team members would take turns dropping 30 or 40 points a night against former NBA players, former college standouts, and street talent. Word is Snoop's team did not even want to play in the tournament after they learned of the championships.



West Coast ball: how did Clyde get his start?

He started off playing AAU ball for Gary Payton's brother Greg. If that's not enough, then listen to his transition into the game...

At a local gym in Richmond, California, the legendary Coach Carter (yes! Like the movie!) had a 11-12 year old son who was playing by himself at the other end of the court. Weems, being a young teenager, came over and disrespected Carter's son. Immediately, the man found himself playing Weems one-on-one. After Weems made a basket, Carter replied, "You have a nice shot, sir." Thinking that was lame, Weems talked trash and continued to play hard. Then, Carter said, "If you shoot and miss the game is over." After witnessing the Coach drain NBA jumpers like nothing, Weems went up for the shot and clank. Game over. Final score: 15-4 in favor of Carter. Before he left, Coach gave Weems advice: "Before you talk trash, remember who you are." To this day, Weems refers to Coach Carter as KC – short for King Carter due to his talent both on and off the court.



2007 EBC Dream Team

“Three Mondays ago I went to meet photographer Alexander Richter in the gym at The Kennedy Center on W 135th Street to watch some aspiring NYC hoop stars tryout for the Entertainer’s Basketball Classic Dream Team.

...the EBC decided to let fans of the league try out to make a “Dream Team”, giving them the opportunity to compete against the best streetball players New York City has to offer. After a shoot around and a group photo, coaches J.R. and Norman Ostrin, both of whom have coached champion EBC teams in past years, told the hopefuls that they understood at least some of them were talented players overlooked by city coaches, an interesting tactic acknowledgment of the NYC basketball system that finds and develops young players into stars at the street, college and NBA levels.

After running layups, and at times unruly three-man weave with a straight hectic 3 on 2 to 2 on 1 drill that would have made my high school coach’s head pop, the would-be Dream Teamers divided into five or so teams and ran quarters.”

2007 Dream Team:

Clyde Weems

Akio Charles

Roman Hernandez

Yvon Dantes

Edgar Lugo

Christian Grant-Fields (Dime Magazine family)

Terrell Towns

Raul Natera

Mickell Vickers

Irving Moses

Jason Mercer

Mamadou Hanne (Bounce Magazine family aka 40 Cal)

Roger Kelly

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20 Responses to “Blacktop Bio: Clyde Weems”

1. [October 7th, 2009 at 11:38 am](#)

True balla says:

nice read, i never heard of this until 7 minutes ago and I follow NYC streetball

2. [October 7th, 2009 at 12:30 pm](#)

josh says:

isn't richmond the same place as the movie “coach carter”

3. [October 7th, 2009 at 3:26 pm](#)

[Ryan Biddulph](#) says:

Nice read. I've heard of Richmond and its toughness, but not Weems. Great story.

4. [October 7th, 2009 at 6:31 pm](#)

rashawn says:

yea i kno bout him he a great player leader n mentor...he like a big brither alway makin sure i stay on track n doin wat i hav 2 do on n off da court

5. [October 7th, 2009 at 8:28 pm](#)

Clyde Weems says:

Thank you I am humbled by the story, I play ball because I love it, I help kids because some one helped me and with out that help I could be dead or in jail. Much love and respect I am truly humbled.

6. [October 8th, 2009 at 1:09 am](#)

Young Rome says:

Whats good clyde its Roman from the EBC Dream team send me ur email so i can holla at u 1

7. [October 8th, 2009 at 1:25 am](#)

Ellison says:

He's a good man, brother and friend. He learned a lot of those skills from me jk. He's worked very hard to get where he is at. You better be at my wedding.

8. [October 8th, 2009 at 3:44 am](#)

Shabbie "Always Ready" Stanley says:

This brother right here knows his stuff he's seen it all & done it all.EXCELLENT READ.I pretty much knew his story cause I'm around him all the time,but for those of you that didn't know WELL NOW YOU MOST DEFINITELY DO.

9. [October 8th, 2009 at 11:44 am](#)

D-rell says:

Man Clyde is like super hero, he works hard at Milbank he told me that I can be anything I want even after my on family told other wise. Real dude man real dude

10. [October 9th, 2009 at 3:02 pm](#)

[Bobbito Garcia a.k.a. Kool Bob Love](#) says:

clyde has a great aura around him. met him at the ebc dream team try-out. i was in the stands watching with greg marius and stormin norman (rest in peace). clyde and christian were the two playing so hard that it made me want to suit up! that was a hack fest and they just played through it. i spoke at milbank two summers ago and clyde and his kids there showed me a lot of love. i'm still waiting for him to invite me to play 1 on 1 against him in that gym, though, haha! you reading this clyde? i live down the block, fams. i got almost 30 years experience of putting up jumpers at milbank (my first run there was in '81). let's do this!

11. [October 10th, 2009 at 9:20 pm](#)

Mrs. Weems says:

And above all...he's the best husband anyone could ask for. I'm so proud of you Clyde! From your number one fan.

12. [October 13th, 2009 at 10:55 am](#)

Livie says:

GREAT story cuz!!!! This was done beautifully!!!

13. [October 13th, 2009 at 2:43 pm](#)

[Smooth J](#) says:

Clyde is like a brother to me. He's come a long way and it's great to read this article. We haven't seen each other in quite some time. I hope to cross paths soon! Well done!

14. [October 13th, 2009 at 6:46 pm](#)

A.Rasshan from Cali says:

I've known Clyde from college & im so proud to say i know the man! I am happy to see that he is continuing to play such a positive role in our youth! Great article as well.

15. [October 21st, 2009 at 1:23 am](#)

Jus THA G5 Brandon says:

Clyde is my main man hes been lookin out for me since i was bout 15 im a sophmore in college now and when im home thats who im with everyday learning how to become a better man and businessman as well clyde deserves everything he gets and i kno its more to come so shoutout to the big homie CWI Management on the way!!!!

16. [November 4th, 2009 at 4:37 pm](#)

Perfect Burfict says:

Wow! This is a great story Clyde. I am so proud you!

17. [November 12th, 2009 at 12:52 am](#)

[T. Gladney](#) says:

I know that God puts people in our lives for a reason, and when Clyde and I met in high school, we gravitated to each other, and motivated each other not only to be better players, but young men, as well.

Clyde is truly my brother, and even though he's all the way on the other side of the country now, we can go months without seeing or talking to each other, but when we do, it's like '94 all over again, talkin' trash and ministering to each other all in the same conversation.

Clyde has always been blessed with the ability to find the best in everything. Even when living in the daily grind of Richmond, he was able to seek out and find positive experiences and role models – whether it was us going to KC's sports shop after school every day to hear old stories and help clean silkscreens for a little extra money or hoop gear, or working as umpires in the Richmond Little League and learning first hand from Willie McGee what giving back to your community really means.

Above all, Clyde has always been able to find the best in himself. The doubters have always been many, but Clyde's actions and accomplishments have always spoken loudly and drowned out the negative noise.

I'm blessed, and honored to know this great man.

Love, your boy, your brother,

T

18. [January 17th, 2010 at 12:43 am](#)

DeVernie Winston says:

The article couldn't have been written about a more deserving individual. I have worked with Clyde on a few different levels and continue to be inspired by the work he does day in and day out. This story touches on the work that he does within the community but doesn't convey the impact that he has with the young people he mentors. I have seen young men in the neighborhood straighten themselves and their friends up when approaching and speaking with Clyde in the street. I have seen females stop what they were doing just to approach him to let him know they've been doing well at home and in school. He is a well respected down to earth guy who continues to empower our youth. Whether it's getting someone placed in college, helping someone get a job or mentoring someone in an unhealthy family situation he puts his heart into all that he does. This type of recognition is great for him and I'm glad he is able to tell his story in this magnitude.

MENTORING THE YOUTH, USING BASKETBALL AS A TOOL... He can teach it because he has done it. I've coached Clyde in streetball tournaments and watched him dish out 20 assists. He's a stand up guy and I pray for his continued success.

Clyde Weems, if you read this post, keep up the great work. Continue putting the young individuals you work with in a position to succeed in life because we live in an environment where heros like that come few and far between. God bless.

19. [January 19th, 2010 at 2:52 pm](#)

Clyde Weems says:

Once again, thank you to everyone who left a comment. It really humbles me. And to Dj Cucumber Slice you have an open invitation to see me 1 on 1 brother. I do not discriminate cause of age LOL!.

20. [January 27th, 2010 at 2:45 pm](#)

Keanan.W says:

I knew Clyde Weems back in high school he could really play he was tough on D scored some buckets and talked lot of trash. It's been some years since I last seen him it is great he his helping out the youth, where we grew up you see a lot things some people would only see in a movie. Keep pushing Clyde you are a Hero!

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





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
















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