

New York City Chinatown Basketball Teams-Pre 1970 Era

"Name at least 5 Chinatown basketball teams from the Pre 1970 era". This was a great question for the Chinatown 2016 Reunion Booklet. Being a sports advocate, it got my attention to give it a shot..

I was able to add another 14 team names to the booklet's listing of 8 team names based upon a perusal of the sports articles written by Donald Seetoo, James (Yee Gan) Moy, and Newton Chin coupled with Newton's collection of photos on basketball in Chinatown during the 40's--50's. Many thanks to Jimmy Yuen who has all these articles and photos on the **"NYC Chinatown Memories"** web site for all of us to read and remember how sports played a major role on the Chinatown scene and was another determining factor in our developing competitiveness and sportsmanship attributes when we were growing up.

The 8 teams named in the 2016 Chinatown Reunion Booklet:

Chinese Community Club (CCC)	The Royals
Crusades	Beavers
Shavey Lee All Stars	Hawks
Warriors	Chinese Athletic Club (CAC)--Chinatown Midgets

The 14 additional teams found in the sports articles & conversations with friends:

Chinatown Midgets	Dragons
Clowns	Pandas
Cathays	Uptowners
Mohawks	Chinatown Basketball Club (CBC)
Bengals	Pirates
PACS	Daughters of China (DOCs)
Wildcats	Dragonettes

Considering our small Chinese American population size in the New York metropolitan area during the 40's-mid 60's, just having 22 teams is a significant number and it illustrates our intense interest in sports via basketball. A impressive accomplishment which is still remembered 70 years later is the **"Chinatown Midgets"**, representing the local Police 5th Precinct, who won 25 straight games to win the PAL NYC Midget Championship. The Chinatown Midgets even played a exhibition game in Madison Square Garden on March 17, 1945 during the NIT College Tournament before a sellout crowd.

Basketball courts were scarce and were on a 1st come--1st play with the outdoor courts at Columbus Park, Forsyth Park, and the Chinese School (Wah Kue) court yard during recess. Before the True Light Church gym became available in 1949, basketball was played at the Church of All Nation's gym, Mariners Temple gym and the outdoor park basketball courts when they were available.

There was also a period when groups would travel to Newark NJ to the 1st Presbyterian Church on Broad St. & Market St., adjacent to Newark's Chinatown, to practice and play in their modern gym facility with the Newark Chinese American crowd on Thursday evenings. Now that is commitment!

We are indebted to Donald, James, and Newton for their sports articles and photos which provided a history of our basketball development and evolution in Chinatown in the 40's--mid 60's. Least, it would have been forgotten and lost forever over time.

A whole generation of young players learned the fundamentals of basketball, teamwork, leadership, and winning on a competitive basis which extended into their adult lives since many went on to become successful professionals and business people.

Case in point: Donald Seetoo, a CPA; James Moy, a Ph.D in the Ministry; and Newton Chin, a Medical Doctor in Ophthalmology.

Enjoy & which team were you on?

Daniel (Danny) Lee, April 2016