**Irish star travels to America**

Jenkins follows basketball opportunities overseas

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**F**rom the rolling hills of Ireland, to the light bulb lined streets of Sparkle city, junior Sean Jenkins has stunned sports fans with his gift for basketball.

Jenkins moved earlier this year from Cork, Ireland, a city that was notorious for its prowess in basketball in the 1980s.

Jenkins has been playing basketball since he was five years old, taking the game seriously from a very young age. Over the years, he has worked many hours to refine his talent as a player.

Jenkins was and continues to be inspired by his father’s success in the sport as a division one player for Clemson. He hopes to follow in his footsteps. Jenkins realized that if he wanted to play basketball past the high school level, he would need to venture overseas.

“A big dream of mine has always been to play division one college basketball, and I knew that if I wanted to do that I would have to leave Ireland and move to America,” Jenkins said.

His transition from Irish soil to American was eased by his familiarity with this area. His father is from the Spartanburg region and Jenkins has been visiting him for three years during the summer.

While back in Ireland, Jenkins was one of the leading scorers for the U18 and U20 team Neptune, competing with fellow players at multiple national and international level finals.

On this team, Jenkins has increased his point average per game from 8.6 in 2015 to 23.0 in 2017, according to basketball.realgm.com. Now, on the   
SHS team, he has averaged 19 points in the Upward Fall League.

Coach Fred Ford is currently coaching Jenkins and watched one of the games he played while in Ireland, noting his talents in the European league and how they have translated to his skills as a Viking.

“I had the pleasure of watching Sean play in the National game against Belgium over the summer and I knew he was a player that would do well at SHS,” Ford said. “We will definitely benefit from his ability to score by catching and shooting or attacking the rim.”

The varsity basketball team had their first game on Dec. 1 and their next game will take place on Tuesday, Dec. 12 at J.L. Mann.

To prepare for the season, the Vikings have been spending countless hours after school, running different drills and improving the team’s endurance.

Jenkins, as shown by his successes with the team so far, is quickly growing acclimated to his new surroundings. He usually plays as a shooting guard and his jersey number is 10.

Ford expands on the inclusiveness with which the team has treated Jenkins, and the goals he has for Jenkins and the rest of the Vikings as the season progresses.

“The team has accepted him with completely open arms,” Ford said. “Once Sean gets stronger, faster, and acclimated to our offensive system, he will definitely take a lot of scoring pressure off of Uzziah and a Region title is within our grasp.”