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On December 20th, the boys and girls of the 7th/8th grade basketball teams got to live a dream.

For about five minutes during half-time of the NBA game between the Golden State Warriors and the Houston Rockets, the junior high teams played against each other on a floor that is twice the size of the one they are used to. But forget the fact that the court itself is gigantic compared to the one in O'Donnell Gym, the seating capacity is the biggest change.

Oracle Arena, the home of the Warriors, houses 20,000 fans. O'Donnell gym holds a couple hundred.

"It was really cool," player Sergei DuBeau said of the experience.

"Getting so close to the players and the court was awesome," his father, Phil, who accompanied the teams to the court and served as coach of the boys team while the normal head coach, Jack Watson, refereed the game, added.

Dr. Jack Watson, the mastermind of the event and coach of the boys' team, said, "They're good kids. They're a good example for the younger kids at the school. It's a reward for them."

Coach Watson was the one who

spearheaded the event and called the Warriors and asked if such an event would be possible.

"I had gone to a game when I was young and had seen kids playing at half time," Watson said. "I thought that would be fun."

At least 400 hundred of the spectators were Rams fans. Sections 203 and 204 were jam-packed full of people rooting for not just the Warriors, but for the Good Shepherd Rams as well. Come halftime, though, the whole arena was rooting for the Rams.

Despite all the energy and excitement, the players still went out and played a good game of basketball.

The teams played a hockey-style sub game where players subbed in and out without play being stopped. The kids even got to hear a true NBA call of the action as the Warriors PA announcer announced the game.

Despite Nico Airoidi's six points, the girls prevailed over the boys by a score on 9-8 in the halftime game.

Shahnaz Ghahremani hit a true NBA three-pointer to give the girls the one-point lead that they held as time expired. She described her feeling as "ecstatic" when she made the game-winning shot.

"Both teams played well," Watson said.

"I'm delighted," girls coach Ria Byrne said of her team's victory. "It was great to see them have a good time."

The players will even get to see themselves on TV as the Warriors taped the game and will be providing DVDs to the players so they really will remember it forever.

Playing on the court wasn't the only thing the players got to do. From 6-6:30, the players and their families sat courtside and watched the Warriors and Rockets go through their warm-ups.

"It was really cool seeing all the players up close," player Jackie DiPedro said.

Watson also wanted to convey his thanks to the Warriors, particularly Maria Serrano, who helped organize the event.

If having your school play on an NBA floor once isn't enough, the Warriors have invited Watson and the Rams back next season. Watson hopes to turn the game into an annual event for the basketball teams. Perhaps the DVDs the Warriors are making for the players will turn into very valuable game tape for next year and improve the boys' chances of taking down the girls.

Many of the players truly had no word for the experience but nothing sums the evening up better than player Karla Guizar's statement, "it was once in a lifetime."