

## **John Kulesza-16U, Head Coach**

John Kulesza begins his fifth season as a head coach with the Wilmington Tigers AAU basketball organization. Coach Kulesza's has had 3 consecutive 20 win seasons with his Lady Tigers. Overall, Kulesza has 20 years of high school basketball coaching experience with previous stops at McKean high school, St. Mark's, Bohemia Manor, and Wilmington Friends.

In 2008, Coach Kulesza led McKean High School to a 20-4 record and a #4 seed in the 2008 Delaware Boys' Basketball State Tournament. Coach Kulesza knows how to build a competitive basketball program. He did it at Wilmington Friends and Bohemia Manor with players that were often overmatched physically by opponents. In each case, Coach Kulesza's disciplined and fundamentally sound brand of basketball proved to be the key to player development and his team was viewed as a formidable opponent. While at Wilmington Friends, Coach Kulesza guided the Quakers to three consecutive state tournament bids. At Bohemia Manor, Coach Kulesza took a team that had only won 2 games the previous season and built the program into very competitive team that battled for the Cecil County Conference title in his second year at the helm. His teams also received the "Sportsmanship Award" in 2000 and 2001 that is presented annually by the Delaware-Maryland basketball officials.

Coach Kulesza's teams are mirror images of the head coach: disciplined, tough, smart, focused, and tenacious. One would be hard pressed to find a team coached by Kulesza that beats itself. His teams are well schooled. He teaches his players fundamental skills and how to execute on the court, but he also spends a lot of time teaching his players about the game itself and instills an understanding and knowledge of the game of basketball.

Coach Kulesza played in high school and college. Kulesza played high school basketball at Delaware basketball powerhouse the Sanford School. At Sanford, he played for Gil Jackson (current Head Men's Basketball coach at Howard University in Washington, D.C.). As a player at Sanford, Kulesza was a starting forward on teams that compiled a record of 62-9 over his three-year (1983-86) high school career. His teams at Sanford won three Independent Conference Championships as well as the Delaware State Championship in 1986. En route to winning the Delaware State Championship, Sanford faced and met the unique challenge of competing against teams that included two future professional athletes: former NBA player A.J. English of Howard High School and former major league baseball player Delino DeShields of Seaford.