

Experienced floor general Nick Brown leads Rockets to early season success

by Matt Carr

Down by three points with just over 30 seconds left, Quince Orchard desperately fouled the Rockets to stop the clock and try to get back in the game. Unwisely, the Quince Orchard Cougars fouled senior point guard Nick Brown. Brown, 6 of 7 from the foul line for the evening, calmly drained both free throws to lead the Rockets to an intense and entertaining 50-44 win over an experienced Quince Orchard team. The match up was one of the most anticipated opening games of the season.

After watching Brown's performance in the opening game, it became obvious why he wears the #1 jersey for the Rockets: Brown was one of the best players on the court against Quince Orchard, scoring 17 points for the team.

Varsity Boys' Basketball head coach Scott Spear, who has coached Brown at the Varsity level for the past 3 seasons, recognizes Brown as "a tall point guard who can handle the ball well and has excellent court vision." These strengths definitely came across to the students and family members who packed the bleachers for the first home game, as they enthusiastically lauded Brown's performance with deafening cheers throughout the event, and rewarded his clutch free throws against QO with applause.

Brown, who at 6'3" is an imposing figure on the court, had another great game four days later against a strong Sherwood squad. Brown had two 3-pointers and made all of his free throws in a game in which he scored 10 of the Rocket's 61 points.

In his first three games, Brown has proven that he is far from a static point guard; Coach Spear points out that thus far this season Brown has constantly "distributed the ball well and scored when needed without forcing things."



BY JUSTIN CHANG

Brown is introduced in the much-anticipated season opener against Quince Orchard. He went on to score 17 points as the Rockets prevailed over the Cougars.

In the Rockets' first away game against the Wheaton Knights, Nick Brown showed his ability to score when needed. Poor team performance allowed the Knights to stay dangerously close down to the final seconds until senior Jonathan Mensah hit a game winner. The Rockets scored 37 points; Brown contributed 13 and made all his free throws. To the *Gazette*, Coach Spear reflected, "we needed every point we could get in this game," and Brown's contributions were thus critical.

Brown's ability to perform under pressure is shown by the numbers: he shoots over 90% from the charity stripe and currently averages over 13 points per game.

Brown, along with fellow seniors Shawn

Stephens, TJ Fitzgerald, and Dominique Hansberry, will lead a team that comes into the season with high expectations.

The *Washington Post* pre-season county basketball rankings place Richard Montgomery in second, right below two-time defending 4A state champions Springbrook. The two county juggernauts will face off on February 12 in a game that will truly test Brown's skill and leadership on the court.

Coach Spear thinks that Brown will repeat, if not improve upon, his already brilliant performances during the remainder of the season. Spears expects Brown to "continue to grow as a point guard, and I want him to become more of a vocal leader on the court."