

# SPORTS

## Promising start and high expectations for Boys' basketball

by Nick Keninitz

When the Richard Montgomery Boys' Varsity Basketball team stepped onto its home court on Friday December 4, it knew to expect the beginning of a season full of promise. Ranked second in the 4A Maryland division by the Washington Post in the local high school basketball preview, the team returns four starters from last year, three of whom have been in the starting lineup since they were sophomores. Overall, it is one of the most seasoned teams in the county with ten seniors on the roster.

"We should be a poised, experienced team, which should help us in close games," says Coach Scott Spear.

This has certainly been true so far, seeing as the Rockets have won two nail-biters, both of which easily could have been losses.

The season opener against Quince Orchard, also a highly ranked team, was nothing short of spectacular. Predicted to be one of the more difficult games for both teams, and perhaps the most exciting match-up of the week in the county, the Rockets knew a victory would get the season started in a positive direction.

Victory would be no easy task given the Quince Orchard team's reputation. The junior varsity team went undefeated two seasons ago and featured many of the same players that started against the Rockets on December 4.



BY JUSTIN CHANG

**Senior forward Dominique Hansberry extends for a layup over Quince Orchard's Mac Kennedy during the second quarter of the Rocket's six-point victory over the Cougars.**

Still, with senior point guard Nick Brown's 17 points, Richard Montgomery ended with a 50-44 victory in the final minutes. Brown and fellow senior Shawn Stephens were key players in the closing minute as they made clutch free throws to extend the Rocket lead.

"Our first game against QO was a battle of two teams who were ranked highly in preseason polls," says Spear. "When we attacked their trapping defense, we wanted to go inside and try to score. We did a decent job of that."

The Rockets have also added victories over Sherwood and Wheaton, improving their record to an impressive 3-0 after the first three games.

Similar to the game against Quince Orchard, the match-up against Wheaton was very close. Senior Jonathan Mensah hit the game-winning shot in the final seconds, propelling the Rockets to a 37-35 victory.

Against Sherwood the team was dominant, and ended up defeating the Warriors by 18 points. This time they were bolstered to victory by senior and three-year starter Dominique Hansberry's

18 points. Two Stephens, also seniors. These three seem to be the Rockets this year. TJ Fitzgerald and rounding out the

Not only do they have strong, experienced players, they also have contributed off the bench. College, Will and Ryan Luu and each has a and Glatz are provide relief to Fitzgerald, is a gives the Rocket arc. Finally, Luu known for his c He also is another outside threat.

Even with an excellent start, Both Spear and plenty to work to play smart ball lead [and] we all throw shooting

Spear notes that been focusing on work ethic, and lot in that area.

It is this hard will drive them year. "We see are to win a div regional title,"