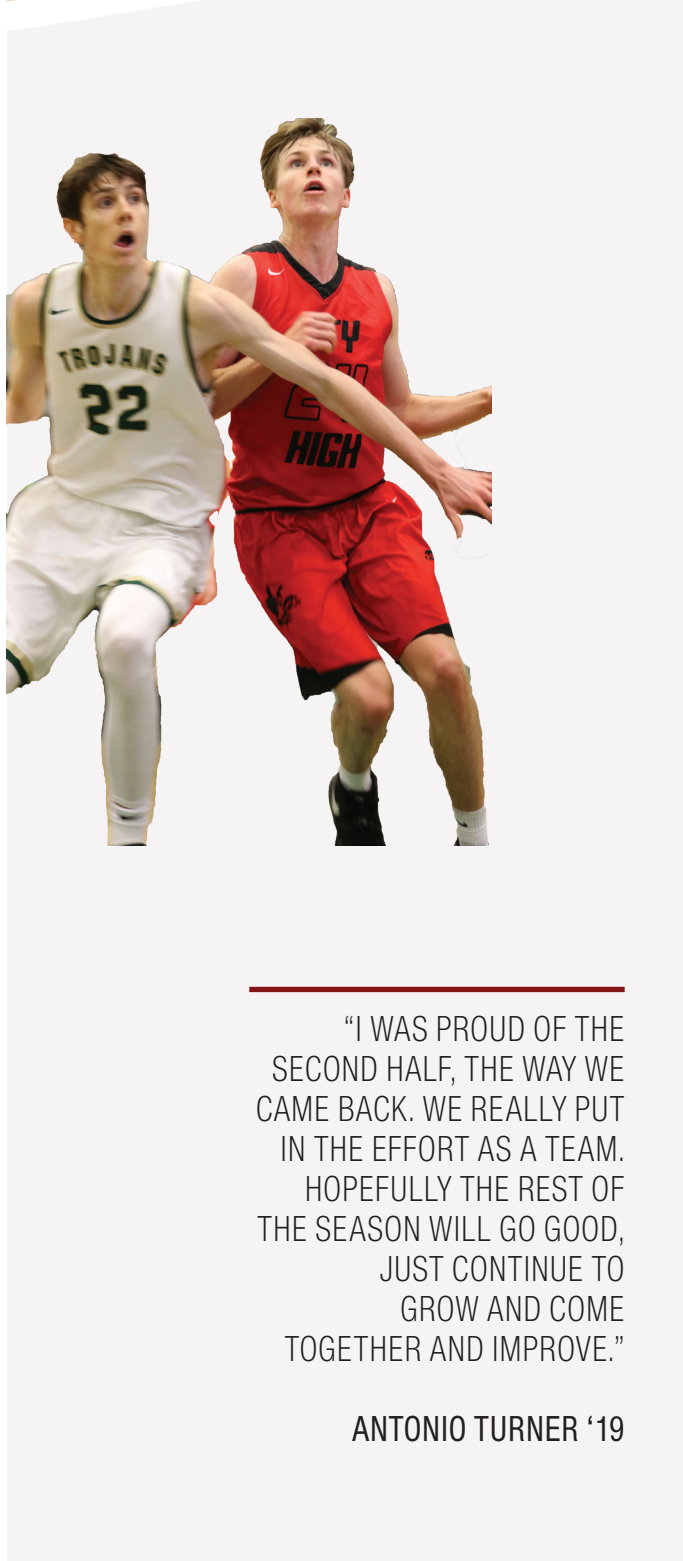


CITY HIGH BASKETBALL

City v. West Breakdown



"I WAS PROUD OF THE SECOND HALF, THE WAY WE CAME BACK. WE REALLY PUT IN THE EFFORT AS A TEAM. HOPEFULLY THE REST OF THE SEASON WILL GO GOOD, JUST CONTINUE TO GROW AND COME TOGETHER AND IMPROVE."

ANTONIO TURNER '19

City drops the Ball

In a surprising upset, the girls and boys teams fall to West, but learn what it will take to make this week's playoffs a success

By Lottie Gidal

In what is normally the most anticipated game of the basketball season, barely a hundred supporters were in the stands Thursday night to cheer on their teams as City prepared to take on West for the second time. Low turnout and a slew of missed practices due to weather set the stage for a night of disappointment for East Side fans.

"The West High game was our worst game of the year, shooting-wise," girls coach Bill McTaggart said. "I think we got frustrated when we got behind and it just snowballed. Plus, we were missing practices and that didn't help us any. I think it was a wake-up call that we can't play 80 percent in practice and expect to show up and play great on game day."

After starting the game on relatively even footing (the score was tied up until the end of the second quarter, with the Little Hawks starting halftime down by only two points, 29-27), Trojans started connecting on shots they had been missing in the first half, upping their shot percentage dramatically.

With six minutes left, City was down by 10, and the margin just kept getting bigger. McTaggart says their biggest challenge came from poor shot selection and defense.

"We didn't take good shots, and we didn't move the ball," McTaggart said. "We're hoping that we improve on the defensive end and are more crisp on our passing."

However McTaggart is proud of the team for fighting it out. There's no question West High is a formidable

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team, just two days after City v. West, the “team across the river” defeated Marion, who was ranked #1 in 4A and hadn’t lost in 41 straight games.

“We didn’t give up. We were still battling till the end,” McTaggart said. “Four of the next five games are against rated teams, it doesn’t get any easier. That will help us down the road because West is a good team.”

The boys team, on the other hand, despite a loss, walked away having improved from their last game with West earlier this season. In December they finished 66-36, but on Thursday managed to close that gap by 10 points. Though they lagged behind during the first half, the boys made a big comeback in the third and fourth quarters.

“I was proud of the second half, the way we came back. We really put in the effort as a team,” Antonio Turner ‘19 said.

Coach Derek Roberts attributes this to strong defense and increased turnovers in the last parts of the game. “I thought in parts of the late third quarter and parts of the fourth quarter, the five guys that were on the floor were working hard on the defensive end,” boys head Coach Derek Roberts said. “As a result, we turned them over a couple of times and got some stops that allowed us to attack on the other end and get to the free-throw line.”

Turnovers, or changes in possession, early in the game allowed West to stay ahead. Roberts also said that the team was not running its best offense, which caused low percentage shots. But in some ways these setbacks allowed the team to see what it needed to work on going into playoffs.

“We have a lot to improve on still, which is the exciting part. The great thing about playoffs that start in two weeks is that everyone is 0-0,” Coach Roberts said. “Offensively, we have to flow better into our sets [and] offenses, which is something that is correctable. Defensively, we need to be more consistent and keep teams off the offensive glass.”

As much as the team knows it needs to improve on, certain aspects of the game remain firmly within its grasp. While its record remains pretty constant compared to past years, the boys team feels its members have really come together this year to start communicating and working together as a team.

“I can say we came together as a team more this year than last year,” Jason Allen ‘19 said. “We played more for each other than for ourselves. The coaches have mentioned it, but we put it to use. I don’t have an example, but it’s our mentality throughout practice and in games.”

Both teams have their regional tournaments in the coming week and feel that the competition against West helped prepare them to take on some of the best teams in the state.

“We feel good moving forward into the play-offs because we want to be playing our best basketball in February in our district,” Coach Roberts said. “We’re hoping that leadership from our seniors can end us on a high note this season. We have beaten or played close with all of the

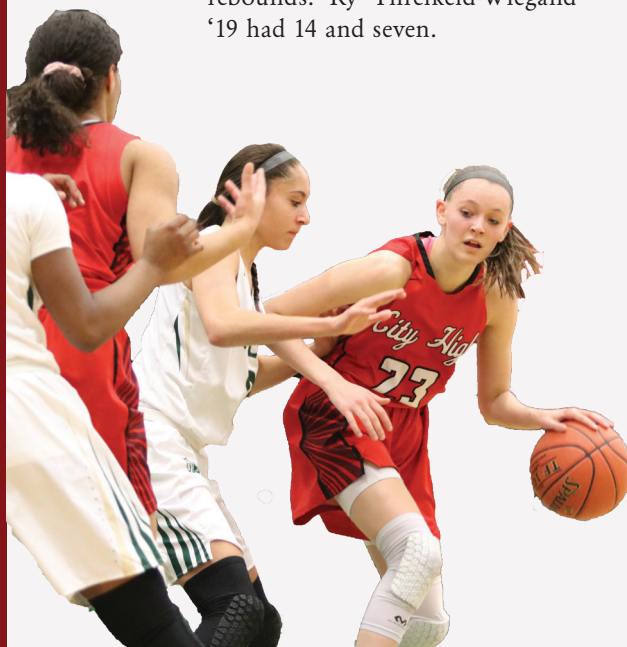
SINCE THEN

BOYS

GIRLS

2/2 City beats Knoxville 70-58

Senior Keyshawn Christian led the night with 21 points and 14 rebounds. Ry Threlkeld-Wiegand ‘19 had 14 and seven.



2/2 City falls to Dowling Catholic 79-69

Before their game against West City was ranked No. 1 in the state, and has since dropped to No. 6. West, previously unranked, now sits at No. 9. City still retains an impressive 14-2 record going into the playoffs.

LEADING SCORERS

Turner	205pts
Threlkeld-Wiegand	126pts
Westlake	105pts
368pts	Joens
305pts	Nkumu
148pts	Rocca



PHOTOS BY LOTTIE GIDAL AND NATALIE GREEN