



ST. JOHNS' KYLE HAUSER WOULD LIKE TO EARN BASKETBALL TITLE, TOO

PHOENIX, AZ (January 24, 2009) – Kyle Hauser helped the St. Johns High football team win back-to-back Class 2A state championships and now he wants to help his basketball teammates earn their share of glory.

The 6-foot, 165-pound senior point guard is among the state's scoring leaders and is an all-around factor for St. Johns, which was 18-4 through Jan. 24 and has six regular-season games remaining beginning with a game at Rough Rock on Tuesday night (Jan. 27).

Hauser was averaging about 25 points, six assists and 4.5 rebounds, along with a very respectable 3.7 grade-point average.

He was a Class 3A-1A All-State first-team selection by The Arizona Republic as a defensive back and excelled as a wide receiver for the St. Johns football team, which defeated Phoenix Christian for the football crown.

Hauser said it was a challenge moving from football to basketball, but you never would have known it by what happened in the basketball season opener, when he scored 40 points in a 71-65 victory over Class 3A Snowflake.

"He came out of football and had only one practice," said St. Johns coach Ryan Walsh. "After that (first) game, somebody told me he had 40. I said, 'Really?' It didn't seem like it.

"We have a resilient bunch of kids and he helps make things happen. He has been our high-point man, but his baskets are not from forced shots. He does it all within the team concept."

Hauser said playing basketball means being in a different type of shape.

"In football, you run for five or six seconds, then you have a break. In basketball, you are running constantly. It took me about three weeks to get used to it. I couldn't find my legs and my shots weren't falling, but things finally came together."

Last summer, Hauser prepared for football, but he also worked on his basketball skills. He would shoot for an hour three times a week at school or at his church house.

As a junior, Hauser shared point-guard duty with another player, but this season the role has belonged primarily to him.

"I am handling the ball better and I can shoot with my left hand in addition to my normal hand," he said.

As far as defense is concerned, Walsh said the fact that Hauser was a defensive back in football has helped him on the basketball floor.

"He has great closing speed," Walsh said.

Said Hauser: "You can make better breaks and get the steal sometimes."

He has received some attention from a few colleges that are interested in him playing football, but he thinks he will wind up playing basketball.

That would be after he serves a two-year mission for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (Mormon). An international assignment is possible.

"I'm looking forward to that," he said.

He added that he tries to study as hard as he competes in athletics. He enjoys math and aspires to become an engineer.

The playoffs will arrive soon, and St. Johns will be ready, according to Walsh.

"The metro (Phoenix and Tucson) schools will be a challenge for us, but we have good leadership and if we do the things we're supposed to, clean up on turnovers and value each and every possession, we have a chance to win."

Hauser said the St. Johns community has been energized by the football championships.

"We want to do the same thing in basketball," he said. "They have really supported us, and our girls team is doing well. If one or both of our teams could do well at state, that would be great."

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