

2022-23 Rockets Basketball Preview



Rocket basketball team members are (front from left) Gabe Keller, Tyler Belt, Seth Guess, Case Gobin, Preston Morgeson, Bryson Walker, Jaxon Hatfield, Turner Sharp, Tucker Atchison, (back) assistant coach Dawson Jolley, Tyree McLean, Brayden Poindexter, Zach Counts, Kaiden Travis, Travis Champion, Levi Suddoth, Camron Belcher and head coach D.J.Pigg.

Rocket Basketball Schedule

Nov. 29 at Marshall County
 Dec. 2 Livingston Central
 Dec. 3 Stewart County, Tenn.
 Dec. 5 at McLean County
 Dec. 6 Webster County
 Dec. 9 at Lyon County
 Dec. 13 at Union County
 Dec. 16 at Trigg County
 Dec. 21-22 Logan County Tournament
 Dec. 28-30 Campbellsville Tournament
 Jan. 7 University Heights
 Jan. 10 at Caldwell, All A Classic
 Jan. 14 at Whitesville Trinity
 Jan. 17 Trigg County
 Jan. 20 at Livingston Central
 Jan. 21 Christian Fellowship
 Jan. 24 Union County
 Jan. 28 at McCracken
 Feb. 3 Lyon County
 Feb. 4 Mayfield
 Feb. 9 Caldwell County
 Feb. 10 Dawson Springs
 Feb. 11 vs Carlisle Co. at Murray State
 Feb. 14 at St. Mary
 Feb. 16 at Hopkins Central

Rockets seek to Pigg out with box of chocolates

STAFF REPORT

To borrow and stretch a bit the nuance from the oft-quoted Forrest Gump line, “Basketball is like a box of chocolates.”

More precisely, brand new Rocketman D.J. Pigg will be biting bits and pieces off the corners until he can find something he likes in his inaugural season.

There’s really no telling what he’s going to get.

The caramel and cream of the crop are two guards who could make about any starting five in the region. At times, Crittenden County junior Travis Champion and senior Preston Morgeson can play at an elite level. For CCHS to be successful they will have to do that day in and day out and the rest of the candy will need to find a flavor with favor.

Among the assortment of supporting pieces will be a bookend bigmen Case Gobin and Zach Counts. They’ve been away from basketball for a time, but both are athletic, have big frames and will bring a taste of toughness to the lineup.

Swingman Seth Guess is another senior, but he’s a long-time program guy. Guess has come up through the ranks and will this season chisel out a regular place on the floor.

“He brings toughness, will get in there and scrap and that’s what our team identity will have to be,” Pigg said.

Like Guess, the frontline will need to be tenacious when it comes to things other than simply scorning. Using their big bodies to screen, leverage

position inside and rebound will be tantamount to the missions of Gobin and Counts.

“Case will be a factor for us. I think he will surprise people,” the coach said.

Counts, too, may be able to knock off the cobwebs a bit quicker than some might predict. He hasn’t played basketball in a couple of years, but like Gobin, he’s coming straight off a successful football season and carries energy and momentum and those are intangibles the new Rocket basketball skipper likes to have in the lineup.

“It was important to get him. He’s not as far behind as you might think. Counts has a good touch around the rim and picks up concepts quickly,” Pigg said.

Junior Jaxon Hatfield will be stepping up to a varsity role this season. The coach would like him to play some point guard to free up his two scorers, but the move will remain a work in progress as the season gets underway.

“Jax is a hard-nosed kid who gets after it at both ends of the floor. He’s another guard that we hope can handle some of the pressure and keep us in what we’re trying to do,” said the skipper.

Champion scored 20 points a game last year and Morgeson 13. They will have to repeat that or more for CCHS to be successful.

“Obviously he will play a big role in what we do offensively,” Pigg said of Champion. “He’s coming off a new problem and has slowly worked himself

Rocket Results THE LAST DECADE

2011-12	.....	11-20
2012-13	.....	15-16
2013-14	.....	9-21
2014-15	.....	16-12
2015-16	.....	5-24
2016-17	.....	7-24
2017-18	.....	7-20
2018-19	.....	11-19
2019-20	.....	16-17
2020-21	.....	13-10
2021-22	.....	14-17

back. He’s made leaps and bounds of progress lately and we will expect a lot from him at both ends of the floor. He’s our top returning rebounder, too.”

Morgeson is a streaky scorer with an uncanny ability to nail the big shot. He’s also a lockdown defender when he can control his energy.

“He definitely plays a big role in what we will do this year,” the coach said of Morgeson.

Pigg, a 2016 Marshall County High School graduate, played high school basketball for the Marshals and came to CCHS after serving as an assistant coach at Graves County. Parachuting in from those big programs to a small school will provide its own challenges for the first-year coach. Finding depth hasn’t been something of historic concern, but with the Rockets he will need to develop a bench with a big box of assorted abilities.

If Crittenden County hopes

to maintain its Fifth District role as the perennial runner-up – after four straight second-place finishes – it will need to grow up quickly as league play begins Friday at home against Livingston Central. That will be a critical game for the Rockets, as will its matchups with Trigg County. There’s not a bookmaker in the country giving odds for anyone other than Lyon County to win the district championship. Lyon is ranked among the state’s top 10 and has already knocked off No. 3 Louisville Trinity, albeit in a preseason scrimmage.

Crittenden has gone to the regional tournament five years in a row, and last won a district championship in 2008. It was just the third one of those in history.

Coming off a 14-17 season, Crittenden returns only Champion and Morgeson from its top 10. Guess, Hatfield, Turner Sharp and Gabe Keller were largely JV players who got into the final minutes of less than half of last year’s varsity games. Grooming that group and a few others will be essential for Pigg to have a good start to his Rocket coaching career.

Sharp has proven he can shoot. When he sees the ball go in the basket early, Sharp can find offensive rhythm and get on a roll. He will play a key role in big minutes this season. Keller is long and athletic. He’s a guy who can develop a touch around the basket and become a central figure in the paint.

Junior Tyler Belt, who plays baseball and football, is now going to give high school bas-

CCHS VARSITY ROSTER

Seniors

Number, Player, Height
 2 Preston Morgeson 5’10
 15 Case Gobin 6’5
 23 Seth Guess 5’11
 32 Zach Counts 6’3

Juniors

5 Jaxon Hatfield 5’10
 22 Tyler Belt 6’0
 2 Travis Champion 6’3
 11 Turner Sharp 6’0
 12 Gabe Keller 6’3

Sophomores

14 Tucker Atchinson 5’10
 24 Kaiden Travis 6’0
 3 Camron Belcher 5’8
 13 Tyree McLean 5’11

Freshmen

30 Brayden Poindexter 6’3
 4 Bryson Walker 5’10
 10 Levi Suddoth 5’9

ketball a try. Coach Pigg likes Belt’s energy and athleticism.

From the freshman ranks, Bryson Walker is a light of hope for the future. He can do it all and has a high basketball IQ. Handling the physicality of a varsity schedule this go round will be his greatest challenge, but Pigg expects big things going forward from the ninth grader.

Others among the cast of characters who will be scratching for playing time will be Kaiden Travis, Brayden Poindexter, Tucker Atchison, Tyree McLean and Levi Suddoth.