

Olympus center gets his chance to shine

By Tim Peterson

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It can't be easy to follow in the footsteps of former Olympus High basketball stars Shaun Green and Marc Jackson.

Just ask Titans forward Colton Stewart.

While he's not approaching the type of stardom Green and Jackson experienced at Olympus, he does feel the pressure of his own success.

"I've been around Olympus my whole life, so you notice all the stars Olympus has had," Stewart said. "I feel like there's a little pressure to match some of those guys."

Stewart has definitely filled some of the void left by the graduation of Nick Paulos and Connor Brady. Both were key players on last year's team that went 18-4. And now, Stewart is finally getting his chance to play. Through four games he leads the Titans in scoring with a 21-point average and has become the team's leader.

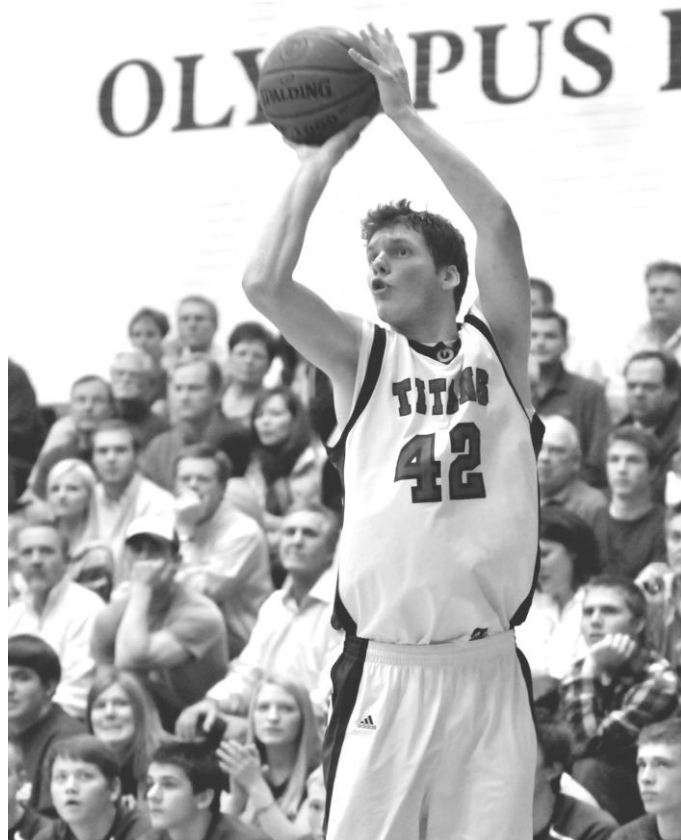
"He's just our beast," said Olympus forward Will Cannon. "He's our go-to guy. He's great in the post and he can play inside or outside."

At first glance, the 6-foot-4 Stewart looks a little undersized as a post player. But he plays with enough savvy to find his shot in the paint or he can launch long-range jumpers.

"He's not the quickest, he's not the most athletic, but he's very coachable [and] he's a great listener," said Olympus coach Matt Barnes. "He really works on the little things and really gets the ball in the basket. If you're a big guy and you can shoot the threes, then you're twice as difficult to guard."

"Unfortunately for him, last year I had 12 seniors and five or six big kids. If we had known he was going to be as good as he was we probably would have done something different — but we knew we had something special."

The Titans are off to a 3-1 start and much of their success is due to Stewart's emergence as a



Colton Stewart took advantage of the one year he had playing varsity basketball.

versatile scorer. His value to the team was on full display in last week's 45-44 loss at Alta.

Late in the game the senior scored on a running hook, and then knocked down a huge three-pointer to tie the game at 35. With 49 seconds remaining, Stewart capped the Titans' comeback with a driving layup to give Olympus a one-point lead.

However, Alta was able to convert on two clutch free throws for the victory. Otherwise, Stewart would have been the hero of the night, like he has been through this preseason. His coach said Stewart's been a great example of how hard work and determination can pay off for a player who isn't naturally gifted for the sport.

"He's come a long way since his sophomore year," Barnes said. "Everything Colt's got, he's worked for. He studies the game, comes in the gym and works for it. He's just a relentless worker."