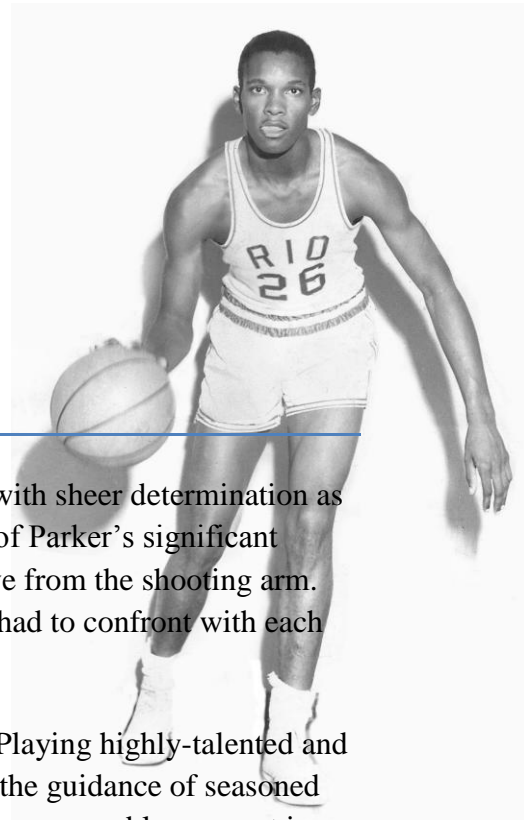




Henry Parker

“Tops the hoops”



The 1955 hardwood season would feature Henry Parker, one with sheer determination as a Pirate playing for Coach Letcher B. Norton. There was no denying of Parker’s significant presence around the glass. He dominated the boards and was explosive from the shooting arm. He was a powerful center for the Charlestown Pirates that opponents had to confront with each outing.

For Parker, this would be his final season dressed as a Pirate. Playing highly-talented and highly rated Flaget Braves of Louisville would be no easy task under the guidance of seasoned coach Jim Huter. Parker and gang were up to the task. This would be a memorable moment in the annals of Pirate Nation history! The highly anticipated hoops match would be played at the old Jonathan Jennings Gym on the city square. The sports hall was small in comparison to other arenas in the area, seating only 600.

This game brought lots of “Pirate hysteria” in double throttle overload! The cracker box-sized gym was overflowing with passionate Charlestown fans as the sports hall was teeming at the rafters! Zealous fans were leaning over the second floor rafter rails and along courtside with Pirates boss Letcher Norton. The roaring crowd witnessed history in the making as spectacular Parker poured in 42 points in the white threaded hoops conquering the highly-rated Kentucky team by a whopping 100-62 score!

Parker shot the ball with consistent dominance, making good on 14 from the floor, 14 from the charity stripe to make history on the more than two-decade old J-J hardwood. Parker’s single-scoring output was the first ever to be achieved by any Pirate in the school’s long history of the sport. It was a defining moment for the congenial Parker. “I didn’t know if this was a record or not. I was just playing basketball. The points at the time didn’t really mean anything to me,” he said. “We were playing the ball the way the coach wanted us to play the ball.”

Henry Parker had a tremendous impact on Pirate history. He is recognized as one of the all-time great basketball players at Charlestown, and is greatly admired, not only for his athleticism, but also for his congenial personality. He was honored on his 60th Anniversary of being the first Pirate to ever amass over 40-points in a single game during the 2014-15 season.

[Read more about this remarkable Pirate basketball star in “Charlestown High School’s Pirates of the Hardwood” and “The Pirates – Centennial” book by Chuck E. Ledbetter, Sr.]