Make Way For Brother—Cliff Bristow Stars, Too

By Jack Berninger

The greatest challenge of being a younger brother is little more than a fleeting thought for Cliff Bristow.

Not that it's always been that way.

Cliff many times has been compared and probably almost coerced into living up to the standards set by older brother Allan.

Allan, now a standout basketball player at Virginia Tech, gained All-Metro and honorable mention All-American fame while playing for Henrico High School.

And that's quite a feat to live up to when you're the younger brother.

But Cliff, now 18 and a starter for Henrico this season, seems to be having no undo difficulties which could be produced by the situation.

"Bugged Me"

"A couple of years ago it really bugged me when people tried to compare us," explains Cliff.

"But now we've gone our different ways. We're two different individuals."

"If people compare us now, I get a sense of pride about it."

And people do still compare the two.

And of those who could compare, Guy Davis, the Henrico basketball coach who had Allan in his heyday, probably knows the pair's basketball similarities the best.

"Actually it's so hard and almost unfair to compare the two," says Davis, a pretty fair player in his own right. "Allan was so much bigger."

"They're both competitors and Cliff is a little more quiet than Allan was. Both their attitudes are great."

But the playing of the game has to be different for the pair. Allan, now nearly 6'8" was 6'6" in high school. Cliff is just 6'1".

"They both have a very good shooting touch, though," says Davis in comparison. "In fact, 13 feet and out Cliff has a better touch."

And that touch is an example of the student outdoing the teacher.

"I used to swim right much, but then I gradually switched to basketball and Allan taught me everything I know," explains Cliff.

"We have a court in the backyard and a goal up on the garage where we used to play one-on-one quite a bit."

"Basically this helped me offensively, but it also helped me defensively when I'm guarding the bigger man."

"Playing against Allan, one of the top scorers in the country, has done more than just improve the mechanical part of Cliff's game though."

"Allan has given me an optimistic attitude," he explains. "He's always giving me good pointers and he never downs me in anything I do."

With Cliff a full time starter and the leader of the young Henrico team, he has little time to see Allan in action.

"I did get to see him when they played UNC," Cliff says with a bit of pride in his voice. "And I can tell you it was a real treat."

And the feeling would be equal if Allan could view his younger brother at work.

Cliff has developed into a bustling center-forward and has averaged 16 points and seven rebounds in five games.

"It's been real pleasant having him come along like this," says Davis. "Like I say they're almost impossible to compare."

"But Cliff isn't playing in his brother's shadow. He's making one of his own."

Henrico's Cliff Bristow

He Dribbles in Brother's Footsteps