



Cole Brooks, a guard for Seneca Valley, is averaging 28.8 points per game.
(Michael M. Santiago/Post-Gazette)

Post-Gazette Athletes of the Week: Cole Brooks and Paige Brown



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COLE BROOKS

Seneca Valley

The past week: Brooks made seven 3-pointers and scored 29 points as Seneca Valley defeated Butler, 87-81, on Jan. 15. Butler is the defending WPIAL Class 6A champ.

Check this out: Brooks, a 6-foot, 150-pound senior guard, has turned into one of the top shooters — and scorers — in WPIAL basketball.



Brooks came into the week averaging 28.8 points a game. That's double his average of last year. A left-handed shooter, Brooks also had made 31 3-pointers in five games and made seven 3's in three different games. Brooks' father, Gary, is a Seneca Valley assistant coach.

Be honest. Could you have ever imagined averaging 28 a game this season? Honestly, it is a little surprising. But I feel like I've worked so hard the past couple years and I just turned it up a notch this season. I give a lot of credit to a shooting coach I have, Greg Cercone, and also my dad.

Your coach (Kevin Trost) said you might have worked harder in the offseason than any player he has coached. What did you do? I would take a workout from a personal trainer. I wasn't really a kid who would go to a trainer every day. Not only is that too much money, but there comes a point where you can take what trainers do, and then you do it yourself, maybe at your own house.

So what did you do at home in the summer? I would do a ballhandling workout in the morning. I'm fortunate enough to have a shooting machine, The Gun, at my home and then I would do an hour workout in my driveway. I would try to get 500 shots in a day.

How many days did you do this? I didn't miss a day this summer.

You guys are using a different style of play this year. Describe it and has it worked pretty well? I have to give a lot of credit to coach Trost. We're playing a lot faster style and I think that frees me up a little more. The point of it all is to get turnovers and some runouts. If the other team scores, get it out of the net fast and worry about the next play. As a player, it's a lot more fun to play this type of style.

With you being left-handed, who is your favorite left-handed player? James Harden (of the NBA's Brooklyn Nets).

Of course. Do you have a "step-back" move? That's my favorite move (laugh).

So, do the Steelers keep Ben Roethlisberger or let him go? I say let him go. I think we need some new talent in Pittsburgh.

People might be surprised to know that ... ? I was an undefeated ping pong champion at our school in seventh and eighth grade.

— *By Mike White*