

The Bandera PROPHECY

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Bulldog Basketball superlatives named

By Brady Keane

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The Bandera Bulldogs varsity boys' basketball team received multiple individual accolades at the annual District 27-4A All-District Meeting after an historic season.

Kayden Brown and Gavin Ortiz, both senior guards and sophomore Elijah Salas were named first-team all-district players, while junior Alex Dirck and senior Noah Barnett received second-team all-district honors. Juniors Isaac Segura, Bryson Holden, and Cale Barnett were named to the honorable mention all-district team.

Brown's impressive season earned him a spot on the Texas Association of Basketball Coaches (TABC) All-Region Team for 4A schools in Region IV, making him the first Bandera player to receive such recognition since the 2014-2015 season. Brown led the Bulldogs in scoring with an average of 12.5 points, 4.4 rebounds, 1.9 assists, and 1.6 steals per game while shooting 41% from the three-point line.

Brown's performance has led to him being asked to participate in the 7th Annual Chicken Express Basketball Classic on Saturday, March 25, at Fredericksburg High School.

Ortiz, one of the team's captains, overcame an early-season injury to become a vital player in the Bulldogs' playoff run. Ortiz averaged 6.6 points, 2.0 rebounds, and 1.2 assists per game and was one of the team's top defenders on the perimeter. During district play, Ortiz had a 32 percent success rate from the three-point line.

Sophomore captain Salas demonstrated leadership early in his career and consistently contributed throughout the season as the Bulldogs' primary ball handler. Salas was second in scoring with 7.9 points per game and had 4.4 rebounds per game. He led the team in assists with 121 and recorded 58 steals. Salas made 52 three-point shots, placing him second on the team behind Brown, and had a huge performance in the Bulldogs' playoff victory over Cuero.

Dirck, Bandera's versatile big man, was critical to the Bulldogs' late-season success, earning him a spot on the all-district team. Dirck averaged 4.4 points and 5.9 rebounds per game during his junior year but scored in double figures in four of the team's last eight games and had at least 11 rebounds in wins against Canyon Lake, Davenport, Navarro and Cuero.

Noah Barnett missed a significant portion of the season due to an injury, but he returned to help push the Bulldogs into the playoffs. Barnett averaged 5.1 points, 3.3 rebounds, 1.8 assists, and 1.0 steals per game and consistently made significant plays during the team's playoff push. Cale Barnett, Segura, and Holden were among the team's most energetic players, and each made important contributions that helped the Bulldogs secure a playoff victory. Cale Barnett had 3.9 points, 2.3 rebounds, and 1.0 steals per game, Segura had 4.2 points and 4.2 rebounds per game, and Holden had 2.8 points and 1.8 rebounds per game.

Five players also received academic all-district distinctions for maintaining at least a 90 Grade Point Average throughout the basketball season. Brown, Noah and Cale Barnett, Segura, and Bourgeois made the academic all-district team.

Bourgeois and Noah Barnett went on to receive recognition on the Texas High Schools Coaches Association (THSCA) Academic All-State team, which recognizes seniors who excel in the categories of GPA, class rank, and ACT/SAT score. Barnett earned second team All-State honors while Bourgeois was an Honorable Mention selection.