

### Karla Brown:

Defense specialist had a quick start and helped Oly to be tough at home

By Bruce Smith  
MatchupUT.com

Karla Brown wasn't the leading scorer on the Olympus girls basketball team. But there was no denying her role, or how much she was needed.

And, using her 3.94 grade-point average as evidence, she may have been the smartest.

She recognized the changes in the team beginning on the first day of practice, when many of the players did not know each other. When the season was over, she relished the teammates she got to know.

"I wouldn't have associated with him if it wasn't for basketball," she said. "What I'll miss most are the friends that I made."

Brown played in seven games her junior year, and realized that she must play a bigger role on this year's team.

In Oly's season opener, a home game against Maple Mountain, the team was still trying to get to know each other and discover each person's strengths. While they were doing that, Brown was at her best, pouring in her season high of 10 points as the Titans avoided what could have been a costly upset in a 60-46 win.

"That was my best game," Brown said. "This was our home court and we had to protect it."

The Titans generally did that, winning nine of 11 games at Olympus, including a 32-29 victory over Logan in a 4A state tournament play-in game.

Brown didn't feel like she needed to be the big scorer often, but someone had to take the reigns in that first game, and she did.

"I love basketball," she said. "Coach (**Kael Ashton**) told me that I was one of the best defensive players. I was put on the (opponent's) shooter or the ball handler."



TOP: Karla Brown nails a free throw at Highland.  
BOTTOM: Karla and Amanda Dibblee.

Her toughness on defense forced teammates to take notice and, when they tried to copy her attitude, it only helped the team.

"I think people (opponents) underestimated

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## Brown

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us because of our height,” Brown said. “If they were physical, it was the most challenging for us.”

The Titans learned that quickly. Olympus couldn’t afford to hustle and play its best.

Coming into Tooele with a six-game win streak, the team seemed to lose focus and was in danger of losing to the Buffaloes, who won just four games all season.

“That game was a struggle,” said Brown. “But it showed how tough we all were.”

Her toughness also resulted in an occasional injury.

Just two games later (against Highland), Brown was kicked in the head while going after a loose ball, and couldn’t get up. She was diagnosed with a concussion and couldn’t play for two weeks.

“Last year, I had some problems, too, and couldn’t play for a month.”

But her love for the game forced Brown to stick with basketball. Brown moved from San Diego to Utah with her family when she was a ninth-grader. She has since become a busy young woman who has plans for her future. She has always focused a lot on her studies, but is also one of the few high-school aged kids who owns her own business – teaching piano lessons.

“I’ve learned a lot about time management,” she admitted.

When she is finished with high school, she wants to major in physical therapy at Utah State University and minor in coaching.



**Karla Brown’s gritty style of play was another key to the team’s season.**



**TOP: Karla Brown poses with her parents during “Senior Night.”**

**MIDDLE: Karla looks for a teammate to pass the ball while getting some instruction from Carly Duckworth on the bench.**



**BOTTOM: Karla reads the defense before firing off a pass to a teammate.**