

# DAILY NEWS

NEW YORK'S HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER

## High School HOOPS PREVIEW

### Basketball City home to homeless

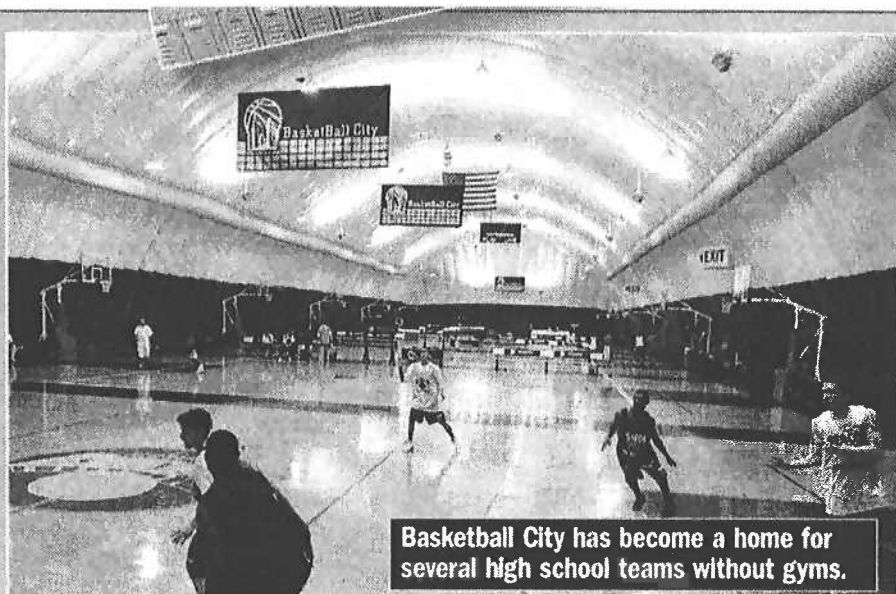
By **MATT MARRONE**  
DAILY NEWS SPORTS WRITER

Some city basketball teams have great gyms at their schools, some have not-so-great gyms. Others have no gym at all.

For Manhattan's Beacon School, one of the latter, Basketball City has been a Saviour.

"We have a gym here in our school that has a 15-foot ceiling. So it's very tight," says Beacon coach John Sarci. "We pretty much exhausted every option in our neighborhood on the West Side. Most people are charging too much money and we just can't afford to pay for the practice time that we need. That's why when Basketball City came in and was nice enough to give us the court time they have available, that was a big help for us."

Basketball City, located at Pier 63, adjacent to the Chelsea Piers complex, has six indoor courts in use from morning to night; it's common to have concurrent games on all six during basketball season. That's because, in addition to corporate teams and local private



Basketball City has become a home for several high school teams without gyms.

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schools, Basketball City is home to 16 public schools (that's 16 boys teams, 12 girls teams and 4 JV teams), which have their court time paid for by sponsors. In return for a place to play, the athletes do community service.

Basketball City also donates additional court time to participating schools.

"Basketball City has kind of become a home court for us," says Beacon center Nathan Baskin, a junior. "Even though it's not our home court, it seems like it is."

Basketball City runs the sponsorship program, called Net Gain, in conjunction with Urban Dove and Youth, I.N.C. "It's just blossomed," says Basketball City president Bruce Radler. "We have a long waiting list — that tells you the

need for first-rate facilities. There's such a demand, we don't have enough courts for them."

Beacon School has played at Basketball City for the past five years, and though the players are forced to travel to get to their own home games — and there isn't enough space for fans to attend — Sarci is grateful. "There are hundreds and hundreds of kids in New York City who need a place after school to play high school sports and get recognized for college and also just to make some memories that will last a lifetime," he says. "If we don't have these programs and if we don't have Basketball City, there's going to be a lot of memories that aren't going to happen anymore for these kids."