

**HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS SCENE** KEEPING KIDS IN THE NEWS

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## PUBLISHER'S NOTE

Hey Sports Fans! It's another great day at Sports Scene. A topic that keeps popping up in recent years is concussions in sports among our high school athletes. Mainly football is taking hits in the mainstream media.

Ithaca resident Bret Smith has had two sons, Travis and Jake, lead the Yellowjackets to state championships over the last five seasons, and now his son Peyton will be a freshman in the fall.

All three Smith boys are athletes and all three play quarterback. And concussions have been a topic of conversation between Bret and his wife Aubrey.

"Aubrey and I have talked about the possibility of concussions as well as the possibilities of other injuries all the time," Bret Smith said. "There's a risk of injury in any sport you play. Each sport and each kid is different. You just have to keep a close eye them and make sure they are prepared everytime they hit the field."

The Smiths realize that injuries are a part of the game and recently Arizona Cardinals coach Bruce Arians took a lot of grief lately over controversial statements to Monday Morning Quarterback's Peter King at the NFL owners meetings in Boca Raton, Fla. Arians told King, "People that say, 'I won't let my son play [football]' are fools."

I understand Arians' sentiments. He grew up playing the game, it has been his life and it has given him back as much as he has put into it. His appreciation of football for the values it teaches and the character it builds is spot on.

But his comments about concussions are way off base. Arians told King: "There are more concussions in girls soccer than in football at that age. But no one says we gotta stop playing soccer."

"It's the same thing with knee injuries," Arians added. "There are more knee injuries at eight to 12 in soccer than in football. You can find all the statistics you want if you want to crucify something."

Sorry, but this isn't just a case of football being persecuted.

According to a study by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, of the 3.8 million concussions reported in 2012, 47 percent occurred during high school football. Football had a concussion rate of 64 to 76.8 per 100,000 athletic "exposures," which is defined as an athlete participating in high school practice or competition, regardless of the amount of time played. Girls soccer had a concussion rate of 33 per 100,000 exposures.

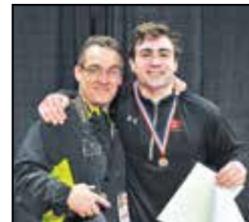
Thankfully, it appears the NFL might finally be acknowledging the obvious. Earlier this month, during a roundtable discussion on concussions by the U.S. House of Representatives' Committee on Energy and Commerce, Jeff Miller, the NFL's senior vice president for health and safety, was asked if the link between football and neurological diseases such as chronic traumatic encephalopathy (CTE) has been established.

"That answer to that question is certainly yes," Miller responded.

Miller's comment was in direct contrast to remarks made during Super Bowl week by San Francisco neurosurgeon Dr. Mitch Berger, who insisted there's still no established link between football and CTE. That same week, during his annual Super Bowl news conference, Goodell referenced his son, saying: "I'd love to have him play the game of football

because of the values you get. There's risk in life. There's risk sitting on the couch."

No matter what happens in the future we all need to keep our athletes on the field safe. It's time to encourage our kids to continue playing the sports they love to play. Risk vs. Reward in everything we do in life.



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Waterford Our Lady of the Lakes made it all the way to the Class D championship game before losing to Powers North Central 59-48. (Alan Holben, High School Sports Scene Photo)

## Waterford Our Lady Settles For Second Place In Class D

John Raffel  
Sports Scene

Waterford Our Lady of the Lakes knew it wouldn't be easy to knock off Powers North Central from the Upper Peninsula in the Class D state championship game at the Breslin Center.

But the Lakers fell behind early, including 27-19 at halftime, and wound up losing 59-48 to end the season at 21-5.

"We thought we could maybe take advantage of some of their personality," Lakers coach Paul Robak said. "They're a team that scores 80 points a game. They want to win by 50. They don't want to win by 10. We wanted to get them to play a style they weren't comfortable with. But they were better than us

today. We out-rebounded them, but we wanted to control turnovers and have 12 or less. We had 12."

North Central shot 50 percent in the first half compared to 28 percent for the Lakers, Jason Whitens had 16 points and seven rebounds for the winners. Andrew Kline led the Lakers with 22 points while Devin Senerius added 17 points and nine rebounds.

For the game, the Lakers shot 11.8 percent (2-of-17) in 3-pointers.

"If a couple more of those go down from distance like we've been doing all year, the game is different," Robak said. "But I'm really proud of the boys."

The Lakers got it down to four points later in the game.

"But to their credit, they re-

bounded and their coach got them settled down to finish out the game," said Robak. "I couldn't be prouder of those seniors. We really improved as a team. That's to their credit."

Kline a 6-4 guard, was among the seven seniors.

"We knew (North Central) would have a lot of confidence coming into the game," Robak said. "They were blowing out teams and won by more than 40 in the semifinals. Coach kept telling us they have all the pressure on them. No one is expecting us to come out and win the game. We knew if we did our thing and play them tough, we had a chance. We had nothing to be nervous about."

"Our seniors, they went out and competed and got the spots we wanted to get to," he added. "They're a darn good team, we're a darn good team too. That's why we're here. I'm proud of these kids for what they did."

Looking at the start of the season, Robak acknowledged it was a goal

to get back to the Breslin.

Devin Senerius was another Lakers senior, and said it was easy to explain his team's success.

"You have to play good defense and offense will do its job," he said. "We just wanted to play our game and play defense and shut down their two top players, No. 30 (Jason Whitens) and No. 14 (Dawson Bilski)."

### Other State Title Action

Michigan State commitment and Mr. Basketball Cassius Winston scored 31 points and had nine assists in leading Detroit U-D Jesuit to a 69-49 win over North Farmington on Saturday at the Breslin Center. Winston was 14-of-16 from the floor.

Jeremy Crawley scored 18 points to lead Detroit Henry Ford (20-6) to a 61-47 Class B state championship win on March 26 over Stevensville Lakeshore. Henry Ford led 27-13 at halftime and 34-28 after the third quarter and had a 27-19 scoring advantage in the final quarter.

## Bridgeport Baptist Wins First Macs Title In Three Decades; Midland Calvary Baptist Defends Title

Dan Stickrad  
Sports Scene

By his own observations, Thomas Coats firmly believes that the first three quarters of the Michigan Association of Christian Schools Division 2 state finals were three of the worst his Bridgeport Baptist basketball team played this season.

"We didn't play all that well. We missed a ton of free throws and we won't talk about how many turnovers we had in the first three quarters," said Coats.

Still, the fourth quarter is what proved to be one of Bridgeport Baptist's best of the season — and those few moments solidified the Broncos' crowning moment as state champions.

Behind a 29-10 fourth-quarter explosion, Bridgeport Baptist rallied for a 65-59 victory over Corunna Immanuel Christian at Clarkston Springfield Christian High School.

The win gave the Broncos (14-5) the MACS Division II state crown — the school's first since 1986.

Bridgeport Baptist lost in the MACS-II finals last season to Waterford Lakecrest Baptist and fell

short in the MACS-I state finals in 2010 to Temperance Stateline Christian — a year the Broncos carried an undefeated record into the title bout only to fall sight short.

Not this time. Bridgeport Baptist gave Immanuel Christian (14-6) a taste of its own medicine over the final eight minutes.

"They were using their press against us for the first three quarters and it was working, but also noticed that their aggressiveness put some of their best players in four trouble," said Coats. "So we decided to attack them. Two of their best players fouled out and another got a technical and fouled out. We continued to pressure them and pulled away. Our defense in the fourth quarter was the difference."

Midland Calvary Baptist defends MACS-I state crown

Sometimes a team or school will have another's number. In this case, Midland Calvary Baptist has everyone's number.

The Kings captured their second straight Michigan Association of Christian Schools Division I girls basketball state title March 5 with a 75-44 vic-

tory over Kinross Maplewood Baptist at Clarkston Springfield Christian High School.

Combining girls volleyball, girls basketball and girls soccer, Midland Calvary Baptist has won five straight state titles over the past two school years in female sports.

"I think it was the best game we played the whole season," stated Calvary Baptist coach Heather Ouderkirk, an all-state player during her prep days at nearby Sanford-Meridian. "I think the difference is we really wanted to win this game. We've had some problems starting slow in most of our games this season. We started fast in the championship and played well for four quarters."

The Kings (15-2) cruised out to a 18-12 after the first quarter and never trailed after the opening minute. Calvary Baptist broke the game open with a 22-3 blitz in the second stanza, good for a 40-15 halftime advantage.

Maplewood Baptist captured the MACS-II state title in 2012 and 2013 and moved up to the MACS Division I in

2014 and captured another state title.

The Black Bears (17-5) held a 15-14 edge in the third quarter to close to within 54-30, although the damage had already been done.

Midland Calvary Baptist closed out the contest with a 21-14 run in the fourth quarter to seal the deal.

Sophomore center Tamrah Konieczka finished with 16 points and eight rebounds for the Kings. Senior guard Alyssa Ouderkirk, who missed over half of the season with an ankle injury, added 15 points, while sophomore guard Tori Konieczka had a fine floor game with 10 points, 13 rebounds and eight assists for Calvary Baptist, which posted a 36-22 edge on the boards.



COURTESY PHOTO | BRIDGEPORT BAPTIST ATHLETICS



Presents

## Sparrow Hospital's PEAK PERFORMERS

### Pirates Settle For Runner Up At State Championship

John Raffel  
Sports Scene

It was a fun boys basketball season for the Fulton Pirates, although it had a disappointing ending at the Class D state finals.

The Pirates were humbled in the title game by eventual state champions Powers North Central from the Upper Peninsula 64-23.

North Central had a 28-0 season. In the game against Fulton, North Central couldn't miss and was 17-of-25 from the floor for 68 percent and 4-of-9 from 3-pointers for 44.4 percent in the first half. For the game, North Central was 25-of-42 for 59.5 percent.

Jason Whitens was 9-of-15 from the floor and scored 23 points while bringing down 10 rebounds. Morgan Coss was 6-of-6 from the floor for 12 points and had five boards. Whitens also dished out five assists. As hot as North Central was, Fulton was cold. The Pirates were 3-of-23 for 13 percent shooting in the first half and 7-of-42 for the game for 16.6 percent.

North Central was up 18-4 after the first quarter and 41-9 at halftime. It was 57-15 after the third quarter.

Colton Antes, who had a huge season for Fulton was 2-of-11 from the floor and scored only six points.

Fulton ended its season at 19-7.

But there were still plenty of memorable highlights for Fulton. The Pirates defeated a 24-2 Bellaire team, 51-41, in the quarterfinals. Antes

scored 16 points and had seven rebounds and four assists to help the Pirates make the semifinals for the second straight year. Caleb Waldon had eight points, two rebounds and two assists and Cole Blair had eight points and two assists.

Fulton was able to win its second straight regional title with a 60-46 win over Big Rapids Crossroads Academy at Mount Pleasant Sacred Heart.

Fulton downed Baldwin 66-54 in the regional semifinal CCA (14-10) was making its first appearance in a regional final.

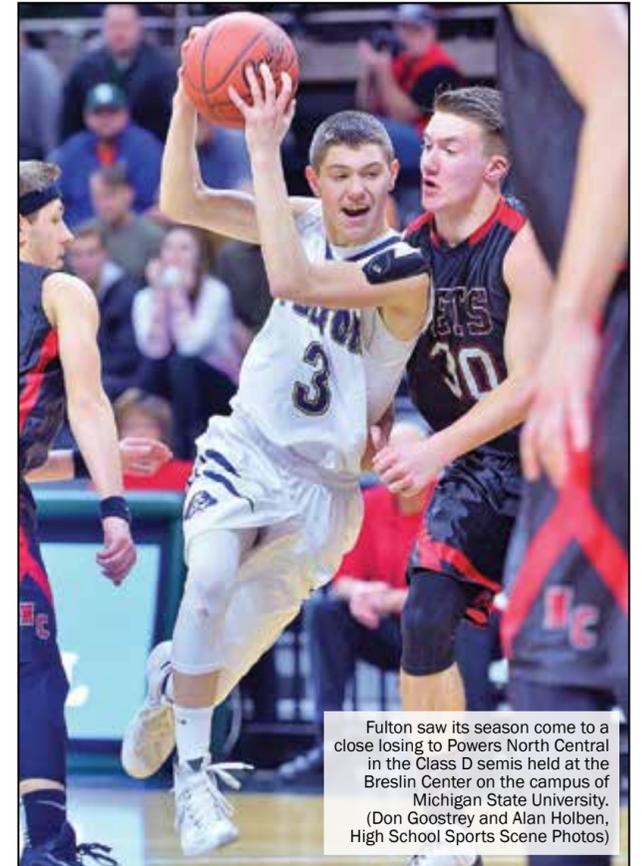
Crossroads had a solid first quarter offensively and led 15-11. The Cougars struggled in the second quarter and trailed 25-19 at halftime.

Antes drove for a layup and 54-41 lead at 1:45 as the Cougars ran out of time. He wound up with 22 points and three 3-pointers.

"I thought defensively we were really good," Fulton coach Todd Walden said. "We did a pretty good job of taking them out of what they like to do. I thought we did a decent job on the boards. We were a little out of sync offensively. But defensively and on the boards, I thought we were really good."

The Pirates canned 10 3-pointers in the semifinals and followed that with eight against CCA.

"It feels just as good as I remember from last year," Walden said. "Coming out of the district, we didn't have a chance to catch our breath with three games last week and Monday and Wednesday of this week. I'll take some time and enjoy this."



Fulton saw its season come to a close losing to Powers North Central in the Class D semis held at the Breslin Center on the campus of Michigan State University. (Don Goostrey and Alan Holben, High School Sports Scene Photos)



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Presenting The



2015-16 Boys Basketball Dream Team



Riley Lewis Named Sports Scene Player Of The Year

Riley Lewis Williamston High School

Lewis averaged nearly 31 points per game through the playoffs, and helped Williamston make it all the way to the Class B semis before losing to Detroit Henry Ford 70-48. Lewis scored a game-high 32 points and scored 30-plus for the third time this postseason. Lewis will play his college basketball at Hope College.

Player Of The Year



Malik Ellison, Flint Beecher High School

At only 5'8", Ellison has already received D1 offers from Detroit Mercy, Dayton, Kent State, Northern Illinois, Eastern Michigan and Southern Mississippi. Ellison led Beecher to its fourth league Class C title in five seasons.



Brandon Johns, East Lansing High School

One of the most exciting sophomores in the country. Led East Lansing to a near perfect season before being upset by Lansing Everett in the playoffs



Dylan Carl, Alma High School

The 6-foot-10 center led Alma to the TVC Central title in his final season. Carl averaged 17.5 points and 10.1 rebounds this season for the Panthers.



Peyton DeWildt Midland High School

Named Co-Saginaw Valley League Most Valuable Player, DeWildt led Midland to a 17-7 overall record and both district and regional championships. The Chemics lost to Macomb Dakota in the Class A quarterfinals.



Mario Whitely Frankenmuth High School

The 6-foot-4 sophomore from Frankenmuth averaged 15.5 points, 8 rebounds and 2.5 assists leading the Eagles to a share of the Tri-Valley Conference East Division title.

FIRST TEAM

Foster Loyer, Clarkston, So. Ronquavious Southward, Saginaw, Jr. Tony Poljan, Lansing Catholic, Sr. Matt Beachler, Lowell, Jr. Shawn Pardee, Millington, Sr.

SECOND TEAM

Dylan Alderson, Clarkston, Jr. Billy Burton, Saginaw Arthur Hill Walter Kelsner, Walled Lake Central Aquavius Burks, Flint Beecher, Sr. Colton Antes, Fulton-Middleton, Sr.

HONORABLE MENTION:

Terry Armstrong, Flint Carman-Ainsworth; Brandon Allen, Haslett; Ian Hodges, Holly; Delano Smith, Walled Lake Western; Jamyrin Jackson, Lansing Everett; Malek Adams, Grand Ledge; Jaron Faulds, Holt; O'Mari Duncan, Flint Carman-Ainsworth; Kyle Woodruff, Holly; Logan Plude, Flushing; Chris Gilbert, Fenton; Cameron Cyborowski, Grand Blanc; Zach Leedom, Grand Blanc; Kam Hankerson; Peyton Miller, Birch Run; Tevin Taylor, Flint Southwestern, Sr.; Trey Newsham, Essexville-Garber; Austin Koin, Standish-Sterling; Charles Garrett, Bridgeport; Ben Stilwell, Ovid-Elsie. Levi Lehman, Ithaca; Kaleb Barrett, Carson City-Crystal; Hogan Hayes, Beaverton; Tyler Humpert, Vassar; Andrew Schroeder, Saginaw Michigan Lutheran Seminary; Drew Fletcher; Saginaw Valley Lutheran; Charlie Harris, Flint Hamady; Malik Smith, Flint Hamady; Raheem Riley, Burton Bendle; Dedric Hendricks, Burton Atherton; Andrew Kline, Waterford Our Lady of the Lakes, Sr.; Collin Dove, Vestaburg; Preston Granger, Lansing Christian; Matt Havey, Lansing Christian; Qwann Crockett, Webberville; Justin Doyle, Alma; Jake Smith, Ithaca; Spence DeMull, Ithaca



Erik Krause Coach of the Year Midland High School

Led Midland to its first regional championship in nearly 25 seasons, while defeating Saginaw High twice this season. The Chemics finished with a 17-7 record.

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# Waterford Lakecrest Baptist Holds Of Rochester Hills Christian For MACS-I State Title

Dan Stickrad  
Sports Scene

Waterford Lakecrest Baptist voluntarily moved up to repeat as a state champion.

The second-seed Defenders captured their third Michigan Association of Christian Schools boys basketball state title March 5 with a 54-49 decision over top-seeded Rochester Hills Christian at Clarkston Springfield Christian High School.

Lakecrest Baptist won the 2011 and 2015 state titles in MACS Division II, but voluntarily bumped up to MACS-I this season and still claimed the school's third state title and first in Division I despite having only 30 high school students.

"We didn't even know at first that we would attempt to do it, but then we decided (right before the cut-off date) and it worked out," said eight-year Lakecrest Baptist coach Jon Dalton, who also won a MACS-I title as a player in 2002 at Temperance Staline Christian. "The goal was to try to win it again, regardless of division. We just felt since we played a lot of bigger schools the past couple of years and we've been successful against bigger schools, that we would give it a try. I'm proud of the way the boys stepped up the whole season. We are a very small school."

Lakecrest Baptist (22-4) trailed only once early in the contest, then held off Rochester Hills Christian's fourth-quarter surge.

The Defenders used a quick start and eventually led 17-7 at the end of the first quarter.

Rochester Hills Christian (22-3), which was playing in its fifth straight state title game, winning the MACS-I title in 2013, clawed back with an 11-9 edge in the second period and trailed 24-18 at the half.

Lakecrest Baptist extended its advantage to 10 points (42-32) by the end of the third stanza before the top-seeded Eagles forged a desperation comeback in the final quarter only to fall short.

Rochester Hills outscored Lakecrest 17-12 in the fourth quarter and actually cut it to four points with three minutes remaining. Senior guard Ryan Patton, Oakland County's scoring champ at 34.2 points an outing, fouled out with 2:34 remaining, ending the Eagles' late-game threat.

Junior guard Jerom Byers nailed a late three-pointer, the last of his five triples, to cut the final deficit down to five points in the waning seconds. Patton, being recruited by numerous colleges, scored 24 points with eight rebounds in his final high school contest, while Byers added 17 points for Rochester Hills, which is 2-6 all-time in MACS title



Waterford Lakecrest Baptist captured the Michigan Association of Christian Schools Division I state title in boys basketball this season, the school's third state title in six seasons. (Donated Photo, Lakecrest Baptist Athletics)

games.

"I thought we did a great job defensively on them," said Dalton. "Rochester is a very good offensive team and Patton and (Byers) can really shoot the basketball. We held Patton to about 10 under his average, and Byers scored 11 of his points in the fourth quarter. With Patton fouling out, we kind of figured that we hold on and we did. I'm really proud of our defense in the tournament."

Junior guard George Romeos had a fine all-around game by scoring 23 points to go along with seven assists, six rebounds and six steals to pace Lakecrest Baptist. Sophomore guard Sean White scored 14 with 16 rebounds, while senior forward Phillip Dail chipped in with 13 points for the Defenders.

Dail also won a Class D state title in North Carolina in 2014 as a sophomore at Durham

Fellowship Baptist before moving to Michigan and aiding Lakecrest Baptist's decent to the top the past two years.

Rochester Hills Christian has become a small-school power in recent years under coach Jon Bronsing, playing in its fifth straight MACS-I title bout. The Eagles also lost in 2012, 2014, 2015 and 2016 while winning the state championship in 2013.

The Eagles also won a title in 1992 and lost in the 1993 state finals. Both of those appearances came in MACS-II.

"I want to take a minute to thank (everyone) for an another amazing Rochester (Hills Christian) basketball season," said Bronsing. "The team finished 23-3, winning 20 straight games, a tournament in Florida, their sixth straight league title, and made it to the state championship again this year."

# Beecher Slips By Calvin Christian For Another Class C Title

John Raffel  
Sports Scene

Flint Beecher won its second straight Class C state title and its fourth in the last five seasons with a 63-61 victory over Grandville Calvin Christian Saturday at the Breslin Center. Malik Ellison scored 21 points for Beecher.

Grandville Calvin Christian's season ends at 21-5. Blake Verbeek scored 22 points for Calvin Christian.

"We knew it would be a battle from the beginning," Coach Mike Williams said. "We prepared all year long for a game like this. I always preach to our kids that championship basketball is played on a half-court. Last year, when we got down here, we were able to press and speed the tempo up and win with a different style. This year, every game we had to win with a different style. I'm proud we were able to install different styles of play. Our kids were able to execute."

Lavane Blake had a key block at the end and admitted he was afraid he might have gotten called for a foul, sending Calvin Christian to the line for the tying free throws.

"I went for it. It was all ball," he said.

"We talked about giving ourselves a chance to win at the end," Williams said. "We knew we wouldn't blow by

this team. Watching them on field, we knew we had to play a championship style of basketball, a college style of basketball. It prepares our kids for any level playing. We practice for these situations. I've been in a lot of games like this.

"From day one, we prepare to go to the state championship. We talk about playing 5-on-5 and help and recovery. Our man should look like our zone and our zone should look like a man."

"Our team's main focus is defense. We practice all the drills," junior guard Jordan Roland said. "We go hard. In the game, we have to play defense. That's our main defense."

"As time wound down, we got the stop," Ellison said of the final minutes of the game. "The one thing we talked about was that if they'd score (to tie the game at the end), let's push it up the court and go right back at them," Williams said. "My attitude was after on Thursday, we had nothing to do. I felt we were ready."

Burks had 22 points in Thursday's 60-59 semifinal win over Detroit Loyola.

"To come here on Saturday to finish it off, it says the world about our kids," Williams said. "We're fighters. We want to represent our area and do things you need to do to be successful."



Flint Beecher won its fourth Class C title in five years after defeating Grandville Calvin Christian in the championship game. (Alan Holben, High School Sports Scene Photo)

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# Midland Falls To Macomb Dakota In Class A Quarterfinals

Scott Keyes  
Sports Scene

Midland High's dream season, which included winning district and regional championships and a pair of victories over Saginaw Valley League power Saginaw High came to a close losing to Maomb

Dakota to a 66-47 in a Class A quarterfinals game held at Grand Blanc High School.

Macomb took an 18-17 lead after one quarter and closed the half with a 34-27 lead.

"I thought we left some points on the court in the first half," said Midland coach

Erik Krause. "We struggled to score."

Dakota led 48-36 going into the fourth, but could not put Midland away. The Chemics chipped at the lead, cutting it to eight points in the fourth before Dakota pulled away.

"There were moments that we had where we had a chance to get closer and just couldn't do it," Krause said. "These kids just refuse to lose."

Payton Dewildt scored 14 points to pace the Chemics, with Garrett Willis adding 10 points. Virgil Walker grabbed 10 rebounds for 17-7 Midland.



Midland High put together one of its best seasons in school history before losing to Macomb Dakota in the Class A quarterfinals at Grand Blanc High School. Midland High finished the season 17-9. (Submitted Photos)

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# Lansing Everett's Cinderella Postseason Run Ends In State Semifinals

John Raffel Sports Scene

Lansing Everett was hoping to contend for its first state title since 2004 when it entered the Class A semifinals on March 25 against North Farmington at the Breslin Center.

But the Cinderella story ended for a boys basketball team that was 10-10 during the regular season and 6-0 in the postseason prior to the 60-48 loss to North Farmington.

After taking a 61-48 district title win over Okemos, Everett posted impressive regional wins over Kalamazoo Central 56-49 and East Lansing 54-48. They survived Hudsonville 63-54 in overtime in the quarterfinals.

The Vikings trailed North Farmington only 20-17 at halftime but fell behind 38-29 after the third quarter.

"Obviously, it didn't end the way we wanted it to," Vikings coach Desmond Ferguson said. He gave a lot of credit to Jackson and another senior, LeeAndre Wright.

"I'm so proud of these two young men, being starters last year and coming back," he said. "We struggled the early part of the season and to have a great run like we did these past two weeks, no way would we have this run if it wasn't for these two guys. They're two of the winningest players we've had at Everett."

Everett was unable to stop North Farmington guard Bill Thomas, who scored 26 points and forward Alex Darden, who grabbed 14 rebounds.

Jamyrin Jackson had a solid game for Everett with 27 points although he was 9-of-23 from the floor. His team was 17-of- 52 in shooting.

"We had some guys who weren't used to the Breslin floor," Jackson said. "I guess it was too much for them."

"We've had slow starts all season," he continued. "That's something that's plagued us all season. We've been winning games in the third and fourth quarters."

Ferguson has been Everett's coach four seasons.

"Everett was 10-72 the previous four years before I got the job," he said. "When I got the job, these guys were freshmen. It's important we have sophomores on varsity to keep Lansing Everett's Cinderella season came to a close with a 60-48 loss to North Farmington in the Class A semis held at the Breslin Center on the Campus of Michigan State University. (Submitted Photo)

the program going. We've been to the Breslin two years in a row and that doesn't happen often. These guys have left their legacy and their mark on the program that will be remembered for many years.

"We play defense like we're supposed to. We still never really put together four quarters. We had comeback wins like being down 12 or 14 to Kalamazoo Central and being down eight to 10 against East Lansing. Defense enabled us to knock off some of those teams, and score some easy buckets. We didn't have as many scorers as previous years. So we had to score in transition or off our defense. We had to turn things up defensively."

But the Vikings struggled offensively against North Farmington.

"I knew that if we got down, it would be a tough ride," Jackson said. "It's the Breslin. Everyone wants to win a state championship. Being down at halftime, it was hard."

North Farmington was 18-of-22 in free throws compared to 7-of-16 for Everett.

"It was teamwork and coming together," Jackson said. "We knew we couldn't do it individually."



# Williamston's Coach Sidelined With Illness But Advances To Class B Semifinal

John Raffel Sports Scene

Riley Lewis did all he could to help his Williamston boys basketball team contend against Detroit Henry Ford in the Class B state semifinals.

But the Hornets fell short against a hot-shooting Henry Ford team that shot 63 percent from the floor in the first half (17-of-27) and 58.3 percent for the game (28-of-48).

It ended an emotional season for the Hornets at 21-4.

Lewis was 11-of-24 from the floor and 5-of-14 beyond the arc for 32 points.

Williamston's coach, Jason Bauer, 36, had been sidelined, and Tom Lewis has been serving as interim coach.

In early March, doctors found two tumors in Bauer's brain and he immediately underwent surgery. The Hornets had notable wins in the postseason including 57-55 in overtime over Wyoming Godwin Heights in the regional semifinals, 64-51 over Stockbridge in the regional finals and 53-46 over River Rouge in the quarterfinals.

Bauer was sitting with the team during the semifinal game.

Lewis had 40 points in an 80-72 win over Lansing Sexton to open the districts.

"We had scripts for the whole run of every team we played," Lewis said. "(Against Henry Ford), they kind of flipped the script. We knew we couldn't play a certain style. But they got out going too quickly. The game got away from us. We weren't able to get it into the third quarter where we knew if we got it there, we're pretty comfortable playing close games and kind of have a recipe to close it out. But they were too tough tonight. I told my guys, 'they lost in the state finals last year and they're going to be hungry.'"

"We had playing some younger teams in Godwin and even in Rouge and these guys were more seniors and I knew they were going to be tough. It's a credit to them. But I'm proud of my team."

"It's how hard they play," Lewis said. "You can tell they're experienced. They play like the show wasn't too big for them. It looked like they had been there before. It looked like they were ready. They threw some hard punches and we couldn't counter."

"It's definitely been magical. I love my team, We came together. We had three losses going into the post season. We showed that we could play together. We played for something, put it into perspective and yes, we lost. Our coach is fighting his battles. Those don't stop here. I love these guys and it will mean being a family forever."

Lewis added that having Bauer on the bench at the game meant everything to the team.

"After four years, he's one of my best friends. To have him on the bench was special. I'm sad we couldn't get it done for him."



Williamston made it all the way to the Breslin Center and the Class B semis before losing to Detroit Henry Ford 70-48. Riley Smith led Williamston with a game-high 32 points. (Alan Holben, High School Sports Scene Photo)

# Big Rapids Makes First Ever Trip To Semifinal Round

John Raffel Sports Scene

The Big Rapids Cardinals posted a memorable season by going to the boys basketball Class B state semifinals for the first time school history.

But the Cardinals came tantalizingly close to also making their first trip to the state finals. But Big Rapids couldn't hang onto a six-point lead in the fourth quarter against Stevensville-Lakeshore in the semifinal game on March 25 at the Breslin Center and fell 61-60 to end its season at 23-3.

Big Rapids had been to the state quarterfinals in 2013 and 2014 but lost to Cadillac both times. This year, Big Rapids defeated a cold-shooting Essexville Garber team 42-23 in the quarterfinals to make the trip to Michigan State.

"This was a fun season, probably the best basketball season, I've had at Big Rapids," senior center Ryan Mackall said.

"They're a great group of guys, coach Kent Ingles added. "They're goofy. You don't always know what they're going to do next. But they always come to play. They did tonight. It's state semifinals and was a one-point game and it could have gone either way."

It was a Lakeshore's height advantage against Big Rapids' speed and shooting and it appeared the Cardinals might prevail to advance to the title game against Henry Ford.

The Cardinals were up 30-29 at halftime and 49-44 after the third quarter. Lakeshore's defensive pressure got the job done at the end.

Big Rapids has been a strong shooting team all year from outside and shot 43.5 percent for the game including 11-of-23 in 3-pointers and 5-of-10 from behind the arc in the second half.

Junior Demetri Martin was 7-of-11 from the floor and scored 22 for Big Rapids.

Senior Kenny Davis had 15 points on five 3-pointers. Both had been deadly from behind the arc all season.

"I just started relaxing and started shooting the ball like I did all season," Davis said.

"I thought it was kind of a crazy game," Lakeshore coach Sean Schroeder said. "In all the films we watched on them, we never saw them make that many 3s. They shot the heck out of them. That's a credit to them. They made a ton of shots. It's a testimony to my team. We seem to find a way to win. That's how it's been during the tournament."

"We rely on throwing the ball inside. When you have guys our size, that makes sense. I'll give Big Rapids credit, a lot of times they made our defense not look very good. That's what happens when you makes 3s. But in the end, we got stops."

Lakeshore came up with some key steals and 3-pointers to take the momentum away from Big Rapids in the late going.

"We missed a couple of free throws and turned the ball over once or twice," Ingles said. "We had a couple of calls and couple steals that didn't go our way. They got a couple of big buckets and they executed down the stretch. We may have lost our composure. We let them get a couple of easy buckets and that hurt us."

Lakeshore's height advantage didn't seem to seriously cripple the Cardinals.

"We missed a couple of assignments during the ballgame that I think hurt us," Ingles said. "To be frank, if you can post up by pushing people away you'll never stop them, and they got away with it all night long."

"Next year should be fun," Martin, a junior, said. "For me, this was fun to play in a big arena. Big Rapids never made it here. To be here is a blessing."



The Big Rapids boys basketball team made it to the Class B semis at the Breslin Center on the campus of Michigan State University for the first time in school history. Big Rapids finished the year 23-3. (Alan Holben, High School Sports Scene Photo)

# Beaverton Boys Savor Another Great Season

Scott Salowich Sports Scene

A basketball team that loses twice as many games as it did the year before usually isn't happy.

That's not the case at Beaverton. The Beavers followed up an epic 2014-15 campaign that saw them finish 24-1 with a 19-2 season that once again included Jack Pine Conference and Class C district championships.

"I was pleasantly surprised," said Beaverton coach Roy Johnston. "I thought we would be good again, but I didn't know how good."

"We lost a couple of good players, but we brought a few back and we had a couple guys who were able to improve enough to help fill in the gaps."

The Beavers rolled through the Jack Pine schedule with a perfect 14-0 mark. A 43-40 victory at Meridian and a pair of five-point wins over Gladwin were the only games that were close.

They split a pair of non-league games with Standish and headed into the state tournament with a 17-1 mark.

In the Houghton Lake district, Farwell beat Coleman 57-37 in the first round, but Beaverton buried the Eagles 65-31 in the semifinals and then topped the host Bobcats 40-32 in the final game after Houghton Lake ousted Roscommon with a 53-47 semifinal victory.

The Beavers won their regular-season meetings with the Wildcats by 34 and 40 points, so Houghton Lake executed a plan to slow things way down the third time around.

"They spread the floor and stalled, and we didn't get the lead until late," said Johnston. "Once we got up by a few, that was all it took, but they did a good job taking the air out of the ball and keeping it close."

Carter Johnston and Hogan Hayes scored 12 points apiece to lead the winners.

A trip to Manton for the regional was next and Beaverton bowed out with a 60-55 loss to McBain that still stings, given that McBain went on to advance all the way to the Breslin Center for the Final Four.

"We were upset because the two good Upper Peninsula teams lost in the districts," said Johnston. "We knew the winner of our game would have a great chance to go to Breslin and chances like that don't come along very often."

"We needed a couple of calls to go our way in our regional game and you're just never going to get them up there."

"Still, we had a great year. I learned a long time ago that you have to appreciate what you've got."

Carter Johnston, a junior point guard, averaged 17 points a game and joined Hayes, a senior sharp-shooter who averaged 16.5 points, on the Jack Pine's All-Conference Team.

Braedon Wolfe, a senior who had not contributed much prior to this season, stepped into the starting lineup and earned Second Team All-Conference honors.

Sophomore guard Nate Taylor earned Honorable Mention in the Jack Pine and will be back in the backcourt with Johnston as the Beavers shoot for the stars again next year.

"We've got our starting guards back and we're ready to put some new guys out there with them," Roy Johnston said.

Team All-Conference after averaging 12.5 points, while freshman forward Lucas Leuder earned Second Team honors after averaging 10 points.

Gladwin was third in the league with a 10-4 mark and was led by Second Team selections Keegan Hover and Mason Nash. Hover, a senior, averaged 14 points per game. Nash, another senior forward, averaged 11.5.

The Flying G's finished 13-7 overall after bowing out of the Class B district semifinals with a tight 58-54 loss to host Essexville Garber, which advanced all the way to the quarterfinals.



Beaverton had another successful season finishing the year 19-2 and won another Class C district championship. (Submitted Photo)

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# Ithaca Hoops Enjoys One Of Best Seasons In School History

## Scott Keyes Sports Scene

After nearly four weeks, more than 20 different gyms and far too much red licorice and Diet Coke, the boys and girls basketball championships are finally over.

So I beg you to "Rage against the dying of the light."

That line from Welsh poet Dylan Thomas has stuck with me for many years, and I've found it applicable to numerous situations. To me, it exemplifies fighting with all you have against a looming end. And, it is my best advice to the thousands of basketball players who played their final games on the final legs of their high school careers in recent weeks.

In Ithaca we watched a mix of veterans and youths on the girls basketball team pull together and win the school's first-ever Class C regional championship before losing to Arbor Prep in semifinals held at the Breslin Center on the campus of Michigan State University.

Seniors Kylee Chaffin, Brooklyn Dolloff and Liz Bentley cemented their legacy into the record books while Division I recruit and sophomore Kayla Belles continues to build hers over the next two seasons.

Meanwhile, the boys won their first regional championship in nearly 60 seasons before losing to eventual state champions Flint Beecher in the Class C quarterfinals 72-45. That game was the final game you will see Jake Smith, Nick Radak and Spence DeMull wearing the Blue & Gold of the Yellowjackets. The loss to Beecher will sting a little, but it doesn't take away the 23-3 overall record, the league champion to go along with the district and regional titles.

Ithaca enjoyed dream seasons while other teams' fates were decided long ago, through offseason work (or lack thereof), dedication to the program, genetics and even what town a family chose to move to. There is little hope for a team sitting at 4-18 to advance more than perhaps one game in the playoffs. While a team near .500 may get to sectionals occasionally, the vast majority will not come close.

One of my favorite quotes you hear from a coach during tournament time is "The difference between winning and losing is

often just a little extra effort." Focusing just a little more during practice, pushing through when you feel a bit winded, hustling just a bit harder to get back on defense on even one trip down the court. It all adds up and can make the difference.

Because let me tell you one thing: if you truly are a competitor, once it is over, you will spend the rest of your life trying to replicate it.

Perhaps you'll be one of the 3.4 percent of high school participants that go on to play in Division I, II or III (along with a few more that play NAIA or JUCO), which will fill that gap considerably.

Perhaps you'll look to stay involved in the game by officiating, or coaching or pushing your children to participate. Maybe you'll become a lowly prep sports reporter.

Perhaps you'll try to recapture that feeling, however fleeting, by playing intramurals, rec league, men's league or pick-up ball. But none can truly replicate the high-school basketball experience. Running out for warmups to a rocking pep band and raucous big-game environment, the bus rides, the summer tournaments, the anticipation, the team meals, the coaches ... the friendships.

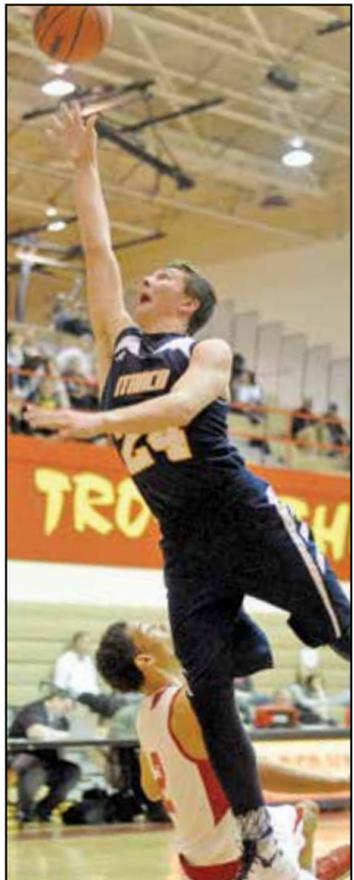
Being a part of a team with someone, especially a small-roster sport like basketball, creates a bond that can be found few other places in life. There's a good chance you've grown up playing with these people for years, maybe since third or fourth grade. You might not even like all of them, but that bond of brotherhood/sisterhood is still there.

Sadly, there are those who have likely checked out already, who are looking forward to the end. I honestly feel sorry for the ones who feel that way. Then again, even the toughest competitors are only high schoolers, and the power of the moment can be difficult to grasp. It often takes the finality of it being over to truly grasp how much something meant, and how rare it is to feel that way.

High-school sports are not and should not be the pinnacle of your life, but they are something unique that you cannot replicate.

So as players laced up their sneakers one last time, do all that you can to delay the unfortunate truth: your high school basketball career will end.

"Do not go gentle into that good night."



Both the Ithaca boys and girls basketball teams enjoyed historic 2015-16 seasons with both teams winning regional championships for the first time in school history. (Scott Keyes and Don Goostrey, High School Sports Scene Photos)

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# Pittsford Shuts Down Sacred Heart For Class D Title

## Dan Stickrad Sports Scene

Maddie Clark put her entire school and town on her shoulders March 19.

The junior three-sport All-State standout wasn't about to let Pittsford fall short again. In fact, she helped her teammates cap an unbeaten season behind a dominating performance.

Clark did everything, finishing with a game-high 23 points on 10-for-15 shooting, added 10 rebounds, collected four steals and swatted two shots in leading Pittsford to a 48-30 victory over third-ranked Mount Pleasant Sacred Heart in the Class D state finals at Michigan State University's Breslin Center.

Pittsford, which lost in the Class D state finals last season to St. Ignace-Lasalle in overtime (64-60), ran the tables this season to finish a perfect 27-0 this season and is 52-1 over two seasons.

"We just wanted to win, do whatever it took to get the W," smiled Clark, who is a part of the Wildcats' 75-2 run over three seasons. "This was our goal

the whole season, getting back here (and winning the title)."

The loss in last year's title bout was enough of a motivator, even when facing Sacred Heart, the 2014 state champion.

"We didn't talk about (the loss to St. Ignace) much this year," said Pittsford coach Chris Hodos. "We brought it up (briefly) at halftime and said 'here we are. Let's not make the same mistakes again.'"

Junior guard Jaycie Burger chipped in with 11 points, four steals and three assists, while teaming up with senior guard Laura Smith (four points, three assists, two steals) to lead the defensive charge. The Wildcats picked up 17 steals in the finals and 59 steals over their final three games. Senior forward Madison Ayers, who elected not to play as a junior, also contributed to the Wildcats' effort eight points, three rebounds and two steals.

Throughout the season, Pittsford held 11 opponents to under 20 points, including five to single digits, and also held 23 of 27 opponents to under 40 points.

"We worked all summer. We took off (the mandated) 15 days and it all more than paid off. We had a great effort today," said Pittsford coach Chris Hodos, who has a 91-8 record in four seasons with the Wildcats. "We had a game plan to neutralize (Averi) Gamble and we did a great job on her."

Clark out-dueled Sacred Heart's Averi Gamble, who was voted as the Associated Press Player of the Year a few days earlier. The Wildcats' defense was sweltering all over the court and Averi picked up two quick fouls in the game's first three minutes.

Gamble was held in check, as the 6-2 senior center was limited to just seven points, eight rebounds and three blocks. Pittsford's perimeter defense and double-teaming of Gamble caused problems for the Irish the whole game — all over the court.

"Kudos to our girls. They battled and did what they had to win the game," said Hodos.

Sacred Heart was forced into a season-high 29 turnovers and Pittsford held the Irish to just 35.7 percent shooting (10-for-28) for the game.

Simply put, Sacred Heart had more turnovers than shot attempts.

The Wildcats' defensive style created seven postseason wins which they allowed only 25.3 points an outing. Over 27 games, Pittsford allowed only 24.1 points a contest.

"It started against Waldron in our district finals. We went to Tornado, which is our trapping game, and I thought their ball-handlers were kind of intimidated, so we wanted to play like that (the rest of the tournament)," said Burger. "That defense works. I thought we frustrated (Sacred Heart) again today."

Freshman guard Scout Nelson led Sacred Heart (24-2) with nine points, but was pressured into 14 turnovers by Pittsford's stifling defensive pressure.

Pittsford held a 11-8 lead after the first quarter and used an 11-5 surge in the second stanza for a 22-13 halftime lead. An 18-7 run in the third period pushed the lead to 40-20 — yet the Wildcats didn't put on the brakes until the final minute.

"I'm proud of the effort of my



Mt. Pleasant Sacred Heart made it all the way to the Class D finals before losing to Pittsford 48-30 in the championship game. (Alan Holben, High School Sports Scene Photo)

girls today, especially the seniors," said Sacred Heart coach Damon Brown. "We'll be back. We're a little disappointed today. We lost to a great basketball team. I thought we had a good first half. We kept it somewhat close. But it got away from us a little bit in the third quarter."



Ithaca's historic run ended with a loss to eventual champion Arbor Prep in the Class C semis at the Breslin Center. The Yellowjackets made it to the Breslin after defeating Flint Hamady in the quarterfinals. (Scott Keyes, High School Sports Scene Photos)

# Arbor Prep Ends Ithaca's Season

## Dan Stickrad Sports Scene

Ypsilanti Arbor Prep and Ithaca shared some similarities entering their Class C state semifinals contest.

Arbor Prep is a school only in its fifth year of operation that boasts a fast-rising girls basketball program, while Ithaca made the quick jump from a cellar dweller to a Final Four team in only four short seasons after several years of struggles.

But on the basketball court at Michigan State University's Breslin Center, the two schools couldn't have been further apart in their semifinals matchup.

Arbor Prep used its full-court press defense and took advantage of a second-quarter injury to Ithaca senior point guard Brooklyn Dolloff to run to a 72-44 victory and advance to the state finals.

Arbor Prep will face Traverse City St. Francis in the state finals at 10 a.m. Saturday. Ithaca finishes its

best-ever season with a 24-3 record.

Ithaca's Brooklyn Dolloff went down with a severe ankle injury with 1:17 left in the first and the Gators took full advantage of her absence. Arbor Prep led 16-15 after the first quarter and used a 20-10 run in the second frame to build a 36-25 advantage at the half.

The Gators (24-2) turned up the heat even further and began the third quarter on a 17-0 to open up a 53-25 lead and Ithaca never threatened in the second half. Arbor Prep led by as many as 36 points in the second half.

"That's the way we play. I'm sure that (the injury) hurt them, but we play that way for 32 minutes," said Arbor Prep coach Rod Wells. "I thought our defense was the difference. That's been our strength all season."

Nastassja Chambers led Arbor Prep with 24 points, seven steals and six assists. Ro'zhane Wells added 11 points and Adrienne Anderson had a fine floor game with 10 points, five rebounds and four steals for the Gators, who forced 11 turnovers in the second quarter and 30 for the entire game.

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# 2015-16 Girls Basketball Dream Team

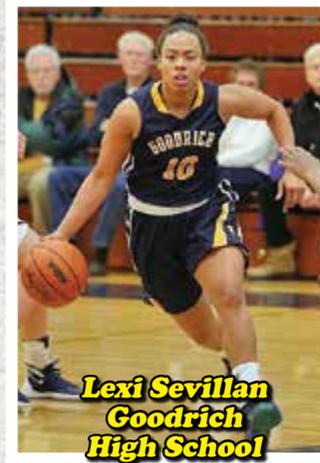


**Cassidy Boensch**  
**Named**  
**Sports Scene**  
**Player Of The Year**

**Cassidy Boensch**  
**John Glenn**  
**High School**

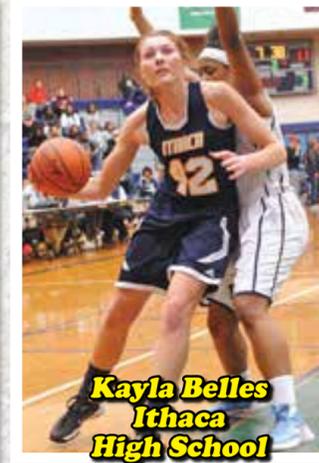
Boensch used her size and strength to average 17.5 points, 12 rebounds and 5.7 blocks while shooting 68 percent to lead John Glenn to a 26-2 record and the Class B state semifinals. Boensch will play at Grand Valley State.

**Player Of The Year**



**Lexi Sevillan**  
**Goodrich**  
**High School**

Averaged 23 points per game, 4.4 rebounds and 3.6 steals. A tough, hard-nosed player, she was able to come up with the big pass or big basket during her varsity career. A finalist for Miss Basketball.



**Kayla Belles**  
**Ithaca**  
**High School**

Belles, a 6-2 center for Ithaca, averaged 16.7 points, 13.4 rebounds, 4.2 blocks and 1.3 assists as a sophomore, leading Ithaca to the Tri-Valley Conference West Division title. Ithaca made it all the way to the Class C semis before losing to Arbor Prep. Belles has offers from Minnesota, Brigham Young, Central Michigan and Michigan State.



**Laurel Jacqmain**  
**Saginaw Nouvel**  
**High School**

Jacqmain, a senior at Saginaw Nouvel, has signed to play for Saginaw Valley State University. The four-year starter helped lead the Panthers to the state title games as a freshman and sophomore, with a state championship her sophomore season. The Trojans made it all the way to the Class A quarterfinals before losing to Hudsonville.



**Taryn McCutchenson**  
**East Lansing**  
**High School**

The Michigan State University commit, came to East Lansing after transferring from Parkersburg West Virginia midway through her senior season. The Trojans made it all the way to the Class A quarterfinals before losing to Hudsonville.



**Ellie Taylor,**  
**Midland Dow**  
**High School**

Taylor, who has verbally committed to St. Louis, is a three-year starter for Dow, leading the team with 18.6 points, 5.3 rebounds, 3.9 assists and 2.6 steals per game. She shot 45 percent from the field and 43 percent from the 3-point line. Taylor set team records with 44 points in a game, 10 3-pointers in a game.

### FIRST TEAM

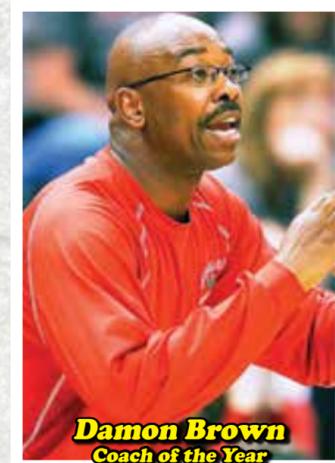
Autumn Kissman, Mason, Jr.  
Moirra Joiner, Saginaw Heritage, Fr.  
Jalisha Terry, Flint Hamady, Sr. Player of the Year  
Robyn Pruitt, Saginaw Arts & Sciences, Sr.  
Renee Sturm, Williamston, Sr.

### SECOND TEAM

Clare Glowniak, Flushing, Sr.  
Alex Troy, Waterford Our Lady of the Lakes, Sr.  
Averi Gamble, Mount Pleasant Sacred Heart Academy, Sr.  
Kalle Martinez, Bay City John Glenn, Jr.  
Jenai LaPorte, Bay City John Glenn, Sr.

### HONORABLE MENTION:

Kaitlyn Smith, Holly, Sr.; Kayla Luchenbach, Clarkston, So.; Ellie Mackay, Novi, So.; Samantha Thick, Lapeer, Jr.; Randi Richardson, Flint Carman-Ainsworth, Sr.; Destiny Strother, Flint Carman-Ainsworth, Fr.; Chloe Idoni, Fenton, Fr.; Addyson Tomczak, Bay City Central, Sr.; Kamrin Reed, Holt, Sr.; Megan Mowid, Haslett, Jr.; Lilly George, DeWitt, Sr.; Erin Honkala, Howell, Sr.; Maddy Watters, Rockford, Jr.; Nicolette Nelson, Sturgis, Sr.; Paige Hallock, Greenville, Jr.; Jacara Thompson, Swartz Creek, Jr.; Laya Hartman, Okemos, Fr. Tyeshia Bowers, Flint Southwestern, Jr.; Brayenne Benner, Frankenmuth, Sr.; Keri Frahm, Frankenmuth, Sr.; Savannah Gibson, Birch Run, Jr.; Jenna Gregory, Freeland, Jr.; Maddie Watters, Williamston, So.; Olivia Roe, Portland, Sr.; Kelsey Finch, Perry, Sr.; Jaylynn Williams, Ionia, Jr.; Katie Wood, Belding, Sr.; Ashley Bowen, Howard City Tri-County, Jr.; Alexis Ayala, Durand, Sr. Yana Hudson, Flint Beecher, Jr. Krystal Rice, Flint Hamady, Jr.; Lindsey Ferrington, Burton Bendle, Fr.; Victoria Robinson, Flint Beecher, Sr.; Emily Fleischmann, Reese, Sr.; Morgan Kaniszewski, Tawas, So.; Sam Kraus, Hemlock, Jr.; Ashley Swarts, Blanchard Montabella, Sr.; Tessa Hosford, Bath, Jr.; Hannah Thelen, Pewamo-Westphalia, Sr.; Brooklyn Dolloff, Ithaca; Kylee Chaffin, Ithaca; Liz Bentley, Ithaca; Jalynn Block, St. Louis; Kenzie Seeley, Alma; Tiffany Senerius, Waterford Our Lady of the Lakes, So.; Shannon Bates, Bay City All Saints, Jr.; Connor Proctor, Fulton-Middleton, Sr.; Grace Haley, Lansing Christian, Jr.; Averi Munro, Morrice, Sr.; Miranda Carlson, Big Rapids Crossroads, Sr.; Courtney McInerney, Heritage, Jr.; Jessica Haffner, St. Johns, Sr.



**Damon Brown**  
**Coach of the Year**  
**Mt. Pleasant**  
**Sacred Heart**

Led the Irish to its second Class D championship game in three seasons. MPSH lost to Pittsford in the finals this season.

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# WOLL Ousted By Pittsford Roadblock Once Again In State Semis

Dan Stickrad  
Sports Scene

After losing in last season's Class D state championship game, Pittsford earned a return trip. It came once again at Waterford Our Lady of the Lakes' expense.

For the second straight season, top-ranked Pittsford proved to be too much for the fifth-ranked Lakers to overcome, as they posted a 62-43 victory in the state semifinals at Michigan State University's Breslin Center.

Pittsford, which went on to capture the state championship with a resounding win over Mount Pleasant Sacred Heart, ousted WOLL by a 57-26 count in last season's semifinals.

"That was a best team we've played all season. They came in with a great game plan," said Pittsford coach Chris Hodos, whose program is 90-8 in his four seasons as head coach. "I think we were able to make some shots in the second half and we did a nice job rebounding and contesting Waterford's shots."

Pittsford out-rebounded WOLL by a 46-28 count and the Wildcats held the Lakers (20-5) to 23.1 percent shooting (12-for-52)

16 rebounds in leading the Wildcats. Jaycie Burger added 15 points and Laura Smith scored eight for Pittsford.

WOLL tied for the second highest points scored against Pittsford this season, as the Wildcats yielded 62 to Grass Lake. Only four schools scored more than 40 against Pittsford.

"Earlier in the season, our boys coach (Mike Burger) told me I thought our defense was terrible," said Hodos. "We really worked on skills and defense everyday. I think our defense is a lot better than it was earlier in the season."

After several lead changes in the first quarter, Pittsford close with an 8-0 run to build a 17-10 advantage. The Wildcats extended the lead to 31-19 at the half.

Pittsford outscored the Lakers 12-5 in the third quarter, keeping WOLL from scoring for the first 5:29 of the stanza. By the start of the fourth period, Pittsford led comfortably 43-24.

"We were much more prepared than last season, when we were over-matched," said Robak. "But that is a very good basketball team. We would have had to have made a lot

more shots to keep it close."

Our Lady of the Lakes made their sixth appearance in the Final Four in a seven-year span.

"We've had a great run since I've been here," noted Robak. "These seniors weren't a part of the state championship teams a few years ago. But they grew up watching them and wanted to be part of that legacy. Our goal was to win a state championship and obviously we came up short of that goal. But this group got to two semifinals and have carried on our tradition."

Tiffany Senerius scored 20 for Our Lady of the Lakes, while Alex Troy added seven points and 10 rebounds for the Lakers.



Waterford Our Lady of the Lakes lost in the Class D semis to Pittsford 62-43. (Submitted Photos)

# St. Johns Falls To Detroit King In Class A Semis

Scott Keyes  
Sports Scene

St. Johns had a season to remember in 2015-16.

Not only did the RedWings win its first regional title since 1997, they also made to the Class A semis at the Breslin Center, losing Detroit King 56-48. King went on to lose to Warren Cousino in the finals.

The Redwings had defeated three other top-10 teams during the tournament run and another twice during the regular season. During regionals, St. Johns knocked off Class A favorite Saginaw Heritage.

"We've played a lot of different styles, but King was a little different in the fact they shot really well from the perimeter con-

sistently," St. Johns coach Mark Lasceski said. "And shots that normally went in for us the past three weeks went off the front of the rim, rattling out, those types of things. In a game like this against a top-10 team like that, they have to go down for you to have a chance to win."

Micaela Kelly led King with 18 points, hitting 5 of 7 shots from the floor including a pair of 3-pointers. Junior guard Alicia Norman made all three of her 3-point attempts and finished with 14 points, and sophomore guard Erica Whitley-Jackson also made three 3-pointers and finished with 10 points.

"If you're a 3-point shooting team, you're always going to have those highs and those lows. We always expect that, and hopefully our defense would hold up until

we started hitting again," 33-year King coach William Winfield said. "We wanted to make sure they were taking good shots, and that was the difference. They played with poise, very sure of themselves."

St. Johns got offensive contributions from a number of players. Sophomore guard Maddie Maloney led with 12 points and six assists, but five others scored at least five points.

Junior forward Jamie Carroll and junior guard Erika Ballinger each added eight. Senior Brooke Mazzolini had seven points, six

rebounds and six assists, and with forward Jessica Hafner was one of only two seniors on the team.

"I felt we had a chance to win all game long," said Lasceski, who completed his 20th season leading the program. "They hit shots, and we struggled at times."

"These kids ... made this an outstanding season, for the St. Johns community, for the basketball program and for them ... Through this run, they grew together, as I would say, family. They've been one of the closest group of kids that I've coached."



# Cousino, Marshall, Arbor Prep All Win First State Crowns

Dan Stickrad  
Sports Scene

When talking about quality conferences, the multi-division Macomb Area Conference is an afterthought.

Perhaps that is changing. Warren Cousino captured it first MHSAA Class A state title March 19 at Michigan State University's Breslin Center, topping state powerhouse Detroit King, 67-65, in the state championship match.

It marked Cousino's first-ever appearance on the season's final day, while it was King's 12th Final Four.

Cousino became Macomb County's first state championship team since Utica won in Class A back in 1999.

"There's some really good basketball being played over in the MAC now," said Cousino coach Mike Lee. "Port Huron Northern got to the quarterfinals and (Sterling Heights) Stevenson made a run. Grosse Pointe North and Grosse Pointe South have been good in recent years ... Utica had a nice team this year. The MAC has some nice programs and it's nice for us to represent them and make this run. I don't think a lot of people outside of our league would have imagined me being up here talking to (the press) about being state champions. We did. But I'm not sure how many others did."

Kierra Fletcher scored a team-high 27 points on 9-for-13 shooting to go along with eight rebounds and five assists for the Patriots (23-4). Mackenzie Anderson added 20 points and six rebounds, while Kate McArthur scored 13 for Cousino, which finished 53.7 percent shooting from the floor.

Cousino led 17-8 at the end of the first quarter and used an 18-11 run in the second quarter for a 35-19

halftime advantage.

Behind Micaela Kelly's 34 points and six steals, King (24-2) surged back in the second half. A 21-15 edge in the third frame brought the Crusaders to 50-40, while King's 25-17 fourth quarter comeback came up only two points short.

The Patriots led by as many as 19 points midway through the third quarter before the Crusaders began chipping into the deficit.

Tia Tedford added 14 points for King.

"We played our game in the second half," said King coach William Winfield. "In the first half, not so good. We had some shots that did not fall and drives to the basket that did not go. That was about the size of it."

Cousino played only one senior in the finals game and will welcome back most of its roster, including Fletcher, who will be amongst the frontrunners for the 2017 Miss Basketball award.

"What's great about this victory is for the first half (Fletcher) played a big role. But there were other people who stepped up today as well," said Lee. In a championship game, we said we needed people to step up, and they did. The sacrifice, the heart, the will and the belief — this team believed more than any other team."

**CLASS B**

**MARSHALL 51, GRAND RAPIDS SOUTH CHRISTIAN 42:**

Marshall built a 25-15 cushion at the half and cruised to the nine-point win and the school's first Class B state championship.

South Christian outscored Marshall 13-9 in the third stanza to bridge the gap to 34-28. Marshall closed out with a 17-14 fourth quarter to push the final gap back up to

nine points.

Jill Konkle led Marshall's balanced attack with 13 points. Emily Delmotte and Taryn Long added 10 points apiece for the Redhawks, who only had six players reach the scoring column. Nicole Tucker added eight points and five rebounds for Marshall.

Markayla Vander scored 16 with six rebounds, while Jennifer DeBoer added 13 points and nine rebounds for South Christian (25-3), which finished as the state runner-up for the second time in three years.

**CLASS C**

**YPSILANTI ARBOR PREP 53, TRAVERSE CTY ST. FRANCIS 37:**

The youngest school in the four classes captured its first state title in any sport March 19 at Michigan State University's Breslin Center.

Arbor Prep, just in its fifth school year as an infant charter school, outscored St. Francis in all four quarters to post the 16-point win.

Nastassja Chambers scored 14 points with three steals and three assists to lead Arbor Prep (25-2). Cydney Williams added 10 points, 11 rebounds and two blocked shots for the Gators, who tortured St. Francis on defense and forced 29 turnovers.

Annie Lyman scored 15, Lauren McDonnell added 10 points and six rebounds and Juliana Phillips chipped in with nine points and 10 rebounds for St. Francis.

Arbor Prep led 12-9 at the end of the first quarter and 25-18 at the half.

The Gators continued to pull away in the second half with a 14-12 edge in the third quarter, good for a 39-30 advantage at the end of the frame. In the fourth period, Arbor Prep closed with a 14-7 run to make it a 16-point win.



Warren Cousino surprised Detroit Martin Luther King to win the Class A championship. (Alan Holben, High School Sports Scene Photo)

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# John Glenn's Dreams Fall Short In Class B Semis

## Scott Keyes Sports Scene

One point. That's all that stood between John Glenn High School and the school's first-ever trip to the Class B finals.

In fact, that point is likely to be in the back of the Bobcat players for years to come; however, it doesn't diminish the fact John Glenn just completed its best season in school history despite losing to Marshall 43-42 in the Class B semis.

Marshall junior Nikki Tucker was "a little nervous" when the future of her team's best season in more than 30 years fell to her ability to make a free throw - and hopefully two - with Marshall trailing by a point and barely a second left on the clock.

What transpired next cemented the final few moments against Bay City John Glenn among the series of finishes that are remembered annually this time of year.

"My teammates talked to me and my coach talked to me, and I realized that I could do it," Tucker said.

"Jill (Konkle) told me, 'Nikki, you do this every day in practice.' And I said, 'Yeah, I do.' I knew there would be no doubt I was going to put them in, and we were going to win, because that's what I needed to do to win and that's what we were going to do."

Although both teams had only one loss entering the postseason, John Glenn (25-2) had beaten the top-ranked team in Class A, Southfield Lathrup, and went on to beat three top-10 Class B teams on the way to Breslin. The Bobcats' only loss before Marshall came against Ypsilanti Arbor Prep, which won the Class C title.

John Glenn featured three players who could star on most teams in Michigan, including Miss Basketball finalist Cassidy Boench - who nearly ended the Semifinal as the crunch time hero. Kalle Martinez (Central Michigan University commit) and Jenai LaPorte (Grand Valley) have all been huge contributors to the Bobcat program over the last four years.

"She (Cassidy) was huge. I don't know how many of (her rebounds) were in that fourth quarter, but

quite a few," said John Glenn coach Cory Snider of the 6'3" Boench and her 16 rebounds, including six during the final period. "I thought that she had to play with a little bit of a different attitude early on in the game when she got in foul trouble. That took away some of her aggressiveness, her ability to get rebounds. And then when she made it through the third quarter with still only three (fouls), she was able to become a little more aggressive and I thought that that showed in her rebounding."

Neither team led by more than four points over the final 14:53 of the game, with John Glenn holding that advantage with 3:56 to play. Junior guard Taryn Long made a 3-pointer to pull Marshall within one, and Tucker's basket with 42 seconds left put the Redhawks ahead by a point.

But Tucker's foul with 14 seconds left sent Boensch, attempting a put-back, to the line for two free throws - and she made both to give the Bobcats the one-point advantage at 42-41.

"We practice those all the time in our gym, and I just cleared my

head I guess," Boensch said. "I knew that my team had my back no matter what, so (I) just focused."

Marshall's ensuing inbounds pass fell back out of bounds off a John Glenn player. The Redhawks eventually got the ball into Jill Konkle's hands, and her last-second layup attempt bounced in and out of the basket - but Tucker was there to gather the rebound and draw a foul, this time from Boensch who was going for a block.

The rest is Finals history. "I told the girls, 'After Nikki makes these, don't foul.' Plain and simple," Coach Konkle said. "I was confident she was going to make them. And honestly, if I wanted anybody at the line, it's Nikki."

John Glenn's final shot of the game fell short.

Tucker, only a 61-percent free throw shooter heading into the week, made 5 of 6 Friday and finished with 14 points and seven rebounds. Long added 10 points.

LaPorte, who will graduate as John Glenn's all-time leading scorer, added 16 points to her total. Boensch had 14 points.



John Glenn's dream season came to a screeching halt with a 43-42 loss to Marshall in the Class B semis held at the Breslin Center. Marshall went on to defeat Grand Rapids South Christian in the finals (Scott Keyes, High School Sports Scene)

# Top Two Teams In Conference Raise Banners

## Scott Salowich Sports Scene

The top two girls' basketball teams in the Jack Pine Conference each got to raise a banner by the time the curtain closed on the 2015-16 season.

Gladwin took off and ran away with the Jack Pine championship, sweeping through its rivals with a perfect 14-0 record.

The Flying G's finished the regular season with a 16-3 mark, but their postseason aspirations came to a screeching halt with a 61-31 loss to Bay City John Glenn in the Class B district semifinals. John Glenn advanced all the way to the Final Four, losing by one point in the semifinals to eventual state champ Marshall.

Senior Carley Cote averaged 12.5 points per game and earned First Team All-Conference honors. Senior Lauren Mose was also on

the First Team after averaging 9.5. Sophomore Carley Hickey averaged 10 points and earned Second Team honors.

Beaverton finished second in the standings with a 12-2 mark and then made a run to a Class C district championship at Roscommon.

The Beavers beat Farwell 42-26 in the first round, the host Bucks 46-38 in the semifinals and Coleman 56-42 in the championship game. They checked out for the season with an overall record of 18-5 after a 58-52 loss to McBain in the semifinals of the Johannesburg-Lewiston regional.

Sophomore Alicia Aldrich led the Jack Pine in scoring with a total of 215 points in 14 league games and earned First Team honors. Senior Mercedes Parker-Urban garnered Second Team honors.

Houghton Lake finished 6-7 in the league and 8-12 overall after

falling to Coleman 54-31 in the semifinals at Roscommon. Senior Hailee Akin averaged 13.5 points and earned First Team All-Conference honors.

The Bucks went 5-8 in the Jack Pine and 5-14 overall, led by Second Team honoree Sydney Blanchard. The junior averaged just short of 10 points per game.

Farwell went 1-13 in the league and 4-16 overall, led by senior Marissa Gassel who earned all-league honorable mention.

Clare was third in the standings with a 9-4 record. The Pioneers knocked Harrison out of the Class B district semifinals at Remus Chippewa Hills with a 71-30 victory and came within a whisker of a district crown before checking out with a 48-47 loss to Reed City in the final.

Clare finished 12-9 overall. Sophomore Natalee Kunse earned

First Team honors by averaging 13 points per game. Junior Lexy Harton was also right around 13 points per game and was named to the Second Team.

Harrison was 6-8 in the Jack Pine and 8-13 overall. Senior Lexi LaChappa was named Second Team All-Conference.



Meridian was 1-12 in the league and 1-18 overall, bowing out with a 63-24 loss to Ithaca in the semifinals of the Class C district tournament that was hosted by the Mustangs. Senior Karleigh Zmiky and juniors Leigha McLaughlin and Madysyn Wirth were all-league honorable mention.

# Chippewa Hills Wrestlers Achieve State Runners-Up Status

## John Raffel Sports Scene

Chippewa Hills took a major step in its wrestling program by advancing in a dramatic way to the Division 3 title match.

But in suffering a 40-16 loss to

Dundee in the state title match, the Warriors acknowledged they still need some development in order to be at the champion's podium.

The Warriors moved past the state quarterfinals for the second straight year during the Feb. 27-28 weekend at Central Michigan

University's McGuirk Arena.

Chippewa Hills won five of 14 matches to Dundee, a perennial state power.

Jaycob Sharp, Brandon Berry, Billy Koepf, Kaden Ellis and Austin Young took victories.

"We've been close a lot of times," Chippewa Hills coach Nate Etheridge said. "We had a heckuva week to get to where we're at. Our kids are great. They train really hard. They're pretty awesome."

It's the first time the Warriors, who have made several appearances in the Elite Eight, have been in the title match.

"This shows how far we can go," Sharp said. "In school history, we haven't been to the

state final. Now that we know what it feels like, hopefully next year we'll be back and hopefully we'll win one."

Arguably the most dramatic win in Chippewa Hills history came early in the day on Feb. 26 in the semifinal against Lake Fenton. The Warriors snuck out a 31-27 win.

Chippewa Hills had a 22-21 lead going into the 130-pound match but Austin Young was behind 7-3 to Saben Spangler. He got a late reversal with time winding down and posted a pin with just a second left. Slade Todd (135) followed with a decision for a 31-21 lead and the Warriors allowed Lake Fenton only back-to-back decisions to secure a four-point triumph.

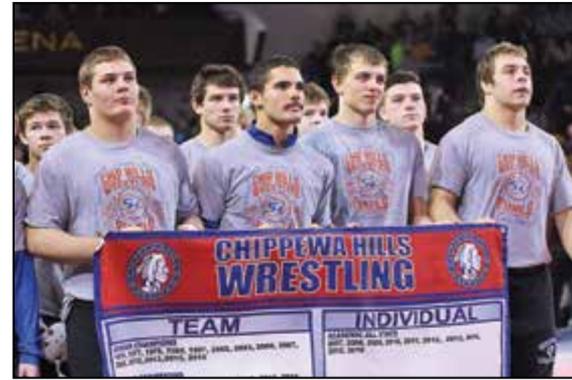
"I went out there and I knew I had to win," Young said. "I knew I had to throw him. I knew it was getting late and someone (later) told me there was only a second left. I didn't realize it was that close when the match ended."

"Coach told me when I went

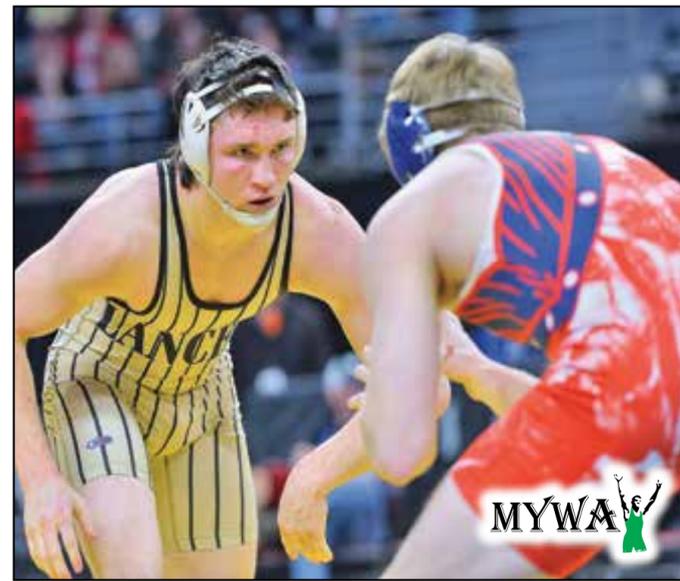
into the third period 'get up and throw,'" Young recalled. "I was trying to throw my headlock. I've been working on that for awhile. He had an underhook, I had an underhook. I noticed his leg was right there. I hit a fireman and that's what got him to his back. It came down to a matter of keeping him on his back and getting the pin. I knew I had to get the pin."

Chippewa Hills defeated Gladstone 48-24 in the quarterfinals to make the semifinal round for the second straight season. The Warriors had a 19-0 lead against Lake Fenton with decisions from David Spedowski, Seth Mitchell, Brendan Perry and Billy Koepf and a pin from Luke Henderson.

Young focused on helping his team during the team season and didn't wrestle in the individual tournaments. He also had a come-from-behind win in the regional title match over Caro that helped the Warriors sneak out a victory against the host school.



Chippewa Hills advanced to its first-ever Division 3 finals before losing to Dundee. Chippewa Hills is coached by Nate Etheridge. (Staff Photo, High School Sports Scene)



Bullock Creek's Aaron McCann lost a heartbreaker 6-5 to Lake Odessa's Daniel Thompson during the Division 3 171-pound finals at the Palace of Auburn Hills. McCann was undefeated going into the final match of his high school career. (Staff Photo, High School Sports Scene)

# Tri-Valley Conference Wrestlers Come Up Short In Individual State Finals

## David Cook Sports Scene

It was a mixed bag at the individual state finals for wrestlers out of the Tri-Valley Conference. A total of seven TVC wrestlers reached the championship match at the individual state finals, but all seven were turned back just short of their goal.

Shepherd freshman Trevor Robinson reached the title match at 125 pounds in Division 3 where he dropped a decision to Richmond senior Aaron Kilburn.

"I had some good matches and beat some good kids," Robinson said. "I have wrestled in some big tournaments so I was not that nervous."

St. Louis junior Connor Holton also made it to the finals where he fell to Dansville's Dresden Simon in the 140-pound title match in Division 4.

"I've come a long way from last year," Holton said. "I expect nothing less than to

win it all next year."

A pair of returning state champions from the TVC were turned back in their hopes to repeat. Swan Valley senior Matt Santos dropped a 2-1 overtime decision at 135 pounds in Division 3. A four-time state placer, Santos finished the season with a 51-2 record and 193 career wins. Santos will continue his career at Michigan State next season.

Millington junior Jared Roehl dropped a 2-1 decision in the 189-pound final in Division 3. Roehl finished the season with a 44-2 record.

Birch Run senior Tyler Childs reached the finals at 160 pounds in Division 3. Childs ended the season with a 43-9 record.

Bullock Creek senior Adam McCann reached the finals at 171 pounds in Division 1 where he fell in overtime. McCann ended the season with a 53-1 mark.

Caro sophomore Blain Wood reached the finals at 112 pounds in Division 3. Wood finished the year with a 51-6 record.

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SPORTS SCENES 2016

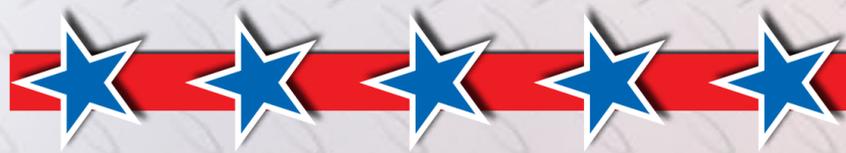
# Wrestling Dream Team

MYWA

## Presenting The 2016 Wrestling Dream Team

By Randy Miniard

HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS SCENE  
KEEPING KIDS IN THE NEWS



**Wrestling Dream Team**

**Kanen Storr**  
Leslie High School

**145 - Senior**

SPORTS SCENE

**LOWER WEIGHT CLASS WRESTLER OF THE YEAR**



**Wrestling Dream Team**

**Max Dean**  
Lowell High School

**189 - Senior**

SPORTS SCENE

**UPPER WEIGHT CLASS WRESTLER OF THE YEAR**



**Wrestling Dream Team**

**Ben Kamali**  
Detroit Catholic Central High School

**103 - Sophomore**

SPORTS SCENE

**Wrestling Dream Team**

**Elijah Weaver**  
Wesley Chapel High School

**112 - Junior**

SPORTS SCENE

**Wrestling Dream Team**

**Jarrett Trombley**  
Lake Forest High School

**119 - Sophomore**

SPORTS SCENE

**Wrestling Dream Team**

**Drew Marten**  
Freemont High School

**125 - Junior**

SPORTS SCENE

**Wrestling Dream Team**

**Dallas O'Green**  
Central City-Capital High School

**130 - Senior**

SPORTS SCENE

**Wrestling Dream Team**

**Ben Freeman**  
Walled Lake Central High School

**135 - Junior**

SPORTS SCENE

**Wrestling Dream Team**

**Ian Parker**  
St. Johns High School

**140 - Senior**

SPORTS SCENE

**Wrestling Dream Team**

**Austin Melton**  
De Witt High School

**145 - Senior**

SPORTS SCENE

**Wrestling Dream Team**

**Steven Garza**  
New Lenox High School

**152 - Senior**

SPORTS SCENE

**Wrestling Dream Team**

**Foster Karmon**  
Grand Rapids Catholic Central High School

**160 - Senior**

SPORTS SCENE

**Wrestling Dream Team**

**Jelani Embree**  
Wesley Chapel High School

**171 - Junior**

SPORTS SCENE

**Wrestling Dream Team**

**Brandon Whittman**  
Dixons High School

**189 - Sophomore**

SPORTS SCENE

**Wrestling Dream Team**

**Lucas Ready**  
Dixons High School

**215 - Senior**

SPORTS SCENE

**Wrestling Dream Team**

**Trent Hillger**  
Lake Forest High School

**HWY - Junior**

SPORTS SCENE

**Wrestling Dream Team**

**Todd Cheney**  
Abbeville High School

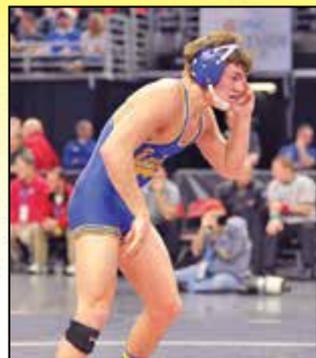
**Coach of the Year**

SPORTS SCENE

- SPORTS SCENE'S HONORABLE MENTION**
- 103: Anthony Gallagher, Corey Gamet, Tucker Scholl, Rayvon Foley, Kyle Kantola
  - 108: Miley Mars, Jack Medley, Jordan Hamden, Spencer Good, Branson Proudlock, Max Johnson, Nick McChian, Cam Mahlich, Cole James, Anthony Mack
  - 119: Kevin davenport, Robert LaFevre, Devon Schroder, Julian Saldani, Dom Lajoie, AJ Facundo, Tristin Serbus
  - 125: Cam Amine, Robert Rogers, Trevor Robinson, Aaron Kilburn, Lucas Hall, Dante Rivera-Garcia
  - 130: Alex Martinez, Kole Krauss, KJ Sultor, Mike Bergmooser, Noah Schoenherr, Nolan Saxton, Dom Gardner, Tyler Sanders, Nick Freeman
  - 135: Riley Brown, Matt Santos, Sean O'Hearn, Nathan Ellis, Brian Case, John Siemasz, Tyler Orrison, Devan Melick, Clay Ragon
  - 140: Dresden Simon, Jwan Britton, Brian LaVeare, Reece Hughes, Dylan Stewart, Zen Dean, Komter Holton, Lane Marzawski, Alex Hrisopoulou, Zac Blevins, Lane Allen
  - 145: Nathan Alenza, Cole Hersch, Coby Moore, Kajuan Caldwell, Jacob Sharp, Lane Allen
  - 152: Amer Munasser, Sean Sterling, Brandon Garcia, Kamron Bush, Kolin Leyler, Sage Castillo, Lane McVicker
  - 160: Blake Montrie, Derrian Perkins, Kyle Johnson, Lucas McFarland, Danny Kruse, Austin Hutchinson
  - 171: Tyler Morland, Erik Birchmeier, Mark Workman, Cash Thompson, Devon Pingel, Adam McCann
  - 189: Brenden McRill, Nick Cooper, Jared Roehl, Brad Wilton, Nicholas May
  - 215: Landen Pelham, Caleb Symons, Quinton Wilber, Erik Conquest, Tanner Thomas
  - 285: Kevin Koenig, Dan Perry, Isiah Espinoza, Brandon Kroil, Maddox Maki, Matt Loyd, Nick Jenkins, Ali Wainab, Jacob Ghergy
- Special Mention Coaches: RJ Boudro, Tim Roberts, Jeff Campbell, Roy Hall, Nate Ethridge, Scott Merry and Derek Phillips

# INDIVIDUAL WRESTLING BRIEFS

Compiled by Butch Harmon, Dan Stackradt & David Cook



## Carson City-Crystal's Dallas O'Green Wins Second Straight State Title

After winning a state title last season, Carson City-Crystal's Dallas O'Green set himself up for a big encore to wrap up his high school wrestling career.

A four-time state placer, O'Green won a state title last year. This year O'Green not only captured a second state title, but he finished the season with a perfect 59-0 record. O'Green defeated Ethan Woods of Manchester 8-2 to win the 130-pound state title.

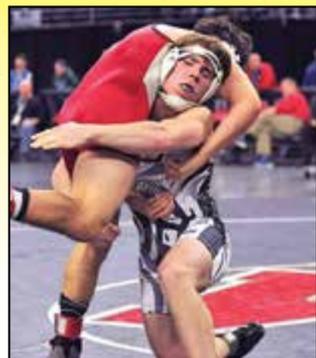
"This one is very special," O'Green said. "It's a big accomplishment. We don't get many wrestlers winning two state titles in a row at our school."

O'Green put in plenty of work preparing for his second run at a state title.

"I worked a lot in the off-season to prepare myself," O'Green said. "I was more confident this year and not as nervous in the finals."

O'Green ended his career as a four-time finals placer as he took sixth as a freshman and third as a sophomore. That accomplishment is something he shares with his coach Trent Ward.

"That has only happened once in our school's history, and that was our coach," O'Green said. "That makes it very special. I feel like we have the best coaches in Division 4, and to be a four-time state placer like Coach is amazing."



## Dansville's Dresden Simon Ends Legendary Career With Second State Title

A number of seniors capped their career in big ways at this year's individual state finals. Dansville senior Dresden Simon was one of those wrestlers that wrapped up an amazing high school career.

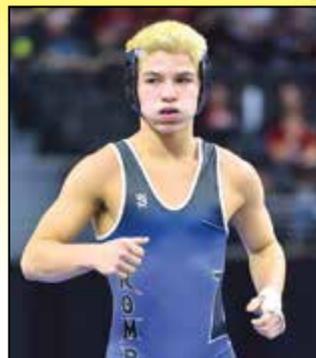
Simon won the 140-pound title in Division 4 with a pin in 1:30. The title was the second in a row for Simon who won the 130-pound title last year. Simon, in fact, never placed lower than third place his entire high school career as he placed second at 119 pounds as a sophomore and third at 112 as a freshman.

Simon finished the year with a 52-1 record after going 58-0 last season. For his career Simon put together a 202-11 record.

"Winning a state title was something I expected," Simon said. "I've been working hard for it. I put in a lot of hard work for it, and it paid off. I went out there and tried to push the pace."

Simon was dominant the whole weekend at the finals as he recorded a pair of falls, a technical fall and a 14-0 major decision in the semifinals.

Simon will be continuing his career close to home next season as a collegiate wrestler at Central Michigan University.



## Lake Fenton's Jarrett Trombley Ends One Dream, Keeps His Own Dream Alive

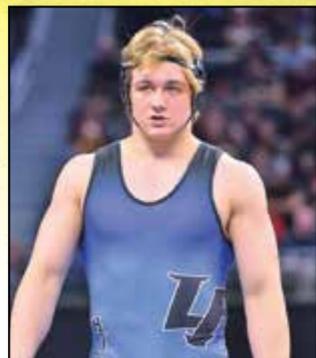
It was one of those matches that will be remembered forever. Not only did Lake Fenton sophomore Jarrett Trombley and Grand Rapids Catholic Central senior Devin Schroder put on a tremendous show on the mat, but they impacted the history books as well.

Trombley, who won a state title last year as a freshman, needed to go to overtime to pull out a 6-4 victory over Schroder. The win prevented Schroder from becoming a four-time state champion and kept his goal of four state titles alive.

"Pretty much everyone knew who won this match would be a (four-time) champion, whether it was me in two years or him today," Trombley said. "I'm just really happy to hold him back from history and make some of my own history today."

Trombley trailed 4-0 early in the match before staging a comeback.

"That's why we work so hard," said Trombley. "We were both very well conditioned athletes; it just came down to whoever had the most heart. In the third period I had to hold him down to go to overtime. I can't explain the feeling. I always wanted to wrestle him (Schroder). He is truly one of the greatest."



## Lake Fenton's Trent Hillger Completes Second Straight Perfect Season

After dominating the 215-pound weight class at last year's Division 3 state finals, Lake Fenton junior Trent Hillger bumped up to heavyweight this year and turned in an even more dominating performance.

Hillger pinned all four of his opponents in this year's finals, capped by a pin in 1:27 in the finals over last year's heavyweight state champion, Maddox Maki of Williamston.

"Being a state champ last year, I wanted to come back as a returning state champ and win the title again," he said. "I wanted to be aggressive and use my speed to my advantage. Coming up from a lighter weight class, a lot of these heavyweights are slower, and I wanted to go out there and wrestle my match."

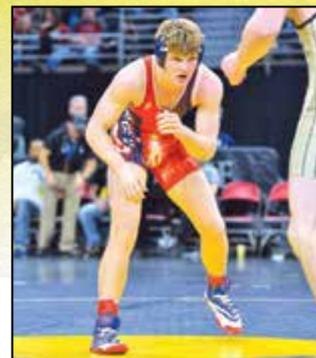
With a 121-0 record and two state titles to his credit over the last two years, Hillger is aiming for a three-peat next year.

"I want to come back next year and be a three-time champion," Hillger said.



# INDIVIDUAL WRESTLING BRIEFS

Compiled by Butch Harmon, Dan Stackradt & David Cook



## Lakewood-Lake Odessa's Daniel Thompson Stays Aggressive to Win State Title

Keeping the pedal to the metal proved to be the key for Lakewood-Lake Odessa junior Daniel Thompson at the Division 3 individual state wrestling finals.

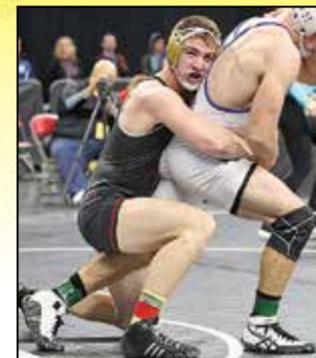
Wrestling Midland Bullock Creek's Adam McCann for the 171-pound state championship, Thompson and McCann went to overtime with Thompson pulling out a 6-5 decision.

"One of my friends (Devon Pingel of Lapeer) helped me out with a scouting report," Thompson said. "He told me to stay aggressive throughout the match and that helped in the long run. I owe him a lot because my focus was to stay aggressive throughout the match."

Thompson also fulfilled a childhood dream by winning the state title.

"Our wrestling room is full of all-state plaques," Thompson said. "When I was a little kid and saw that I always wanted to get one so bad."

Thompson finished the season with a 49-2 record while the loss was the first of the season for McCann who finished his senior season with a 53-1 record.



## Davison's Brenden McRill Brings Home State Championship

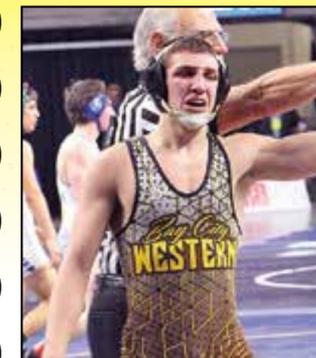
While teammates Max Johnson and AJ Facundo came up short in their state title matches, junior Brenden McRill made sure the Davison wrestling team did not come home empty-handed from the Division 1 individual wrestling finals.

McRill, wrestling at 189 pounds, went overtime to defeat Kalamazoo Loy Norrix's Nicholas May 7-6 in a grueling back-and-forth match.

"I knew I couldn't leave it up to the refs," McRill said. "I knew I had to keep attacking and get takedowns. I just had to score as many points as possible and keep the pressure on."

With the win, McRill finished the season with a 38-2 record.

"I knew this was going to be a fight," he said. "It feels great to be a state champ for Davison. I feel we have the best wrestling program in the nation. Our coaches are the best around and it is an honor to wrestle for them."

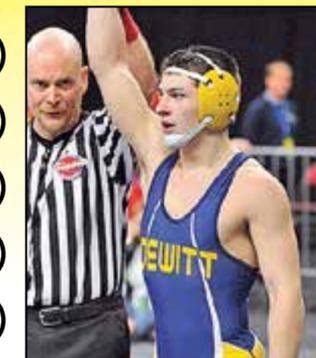


## Bay City Western Junior Noah Schoenherr Wins Elusive State Title This Year

After coming up short in the state finals a year ago, Bay City Western junior Noah Schoenherr was not to be denied this season. Schoenherr, who lost in the 119-pound finals in Division 2 last season, won the 130-pound title in Division 1 this season. Schoenherr defeated Tyler Sanders of Macomb Dakota 7-6 to win the title and finish the season with a 49-2 record.

"This is the best feeling in the world," Schoenherr said. "This was the last match of the year. I had to give it everything I had." Schoenherr also claimed some family bragging rights as he joined his brother Chris as state champions.

"I was a little nervous last year as a sophomore," Schoenherr said. "I was more confident this year."



## Dewitt's Austin Melton Overcomes Last Year's Defeat With A State Title This Year

What a difference a year makes.

Last year as a junior, DeWitt's Austin Melton dropped a tough two-point decision in the 140-pound state finals. This season, Melton took the lead early and claimed a 14-6 decision to win the 145-pound state title.

"It felt great to go out on top," Melton said. "I have been working hard all year long. It feels awesome because last year it slipped away, but now that I finally got it..."

Attacking from the start was Melton's goal in the title match.

"I just tried to keep attacking," Melton said. "I think it's awesome. This is the third time I've made it to the finals."

Melton won the 135-pound title as a sophomore. Over the past three years Melton turned in a combined record of 144-9.

Special thanks to photographers Joe Vozar, Russ Pierce, Dana McCann, Gary Williams, Randy Miniard and Alan Holben.



## Quintin Wilber Of Montrose Has Energy To Spare In State Title Win

To say Montrose senior Quintin Wilber had plenty of gas remaining in his tank after winning the 215-pound state championship in Division 3 is a bit of an understatement. After Wilber defeated

Tyden Ferris of Delton-Kellogg 8-2 to win the title, he performed a back flip on the mat to celebrate.

Wilber was in constant motion from the beginning of the match to the end as he steadily built his lead.

"This feels real good," said Wilber. "I went in with the mindset that I could do it. I came out with the mindset that he will be gassed in the third period."

Wilber also thanked his teammates and workout partners at Montrose for all their help.

"I want to thank my workout partners for pushing me and getting after me," Wilber said, "and to all my teammates, thank you."

Wilber finished the season with a 48-4 record.

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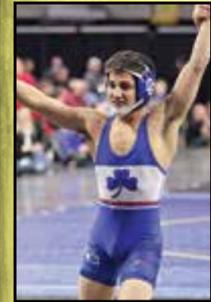
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# DCC Wins Five Individual State Titles

Several wrestlers from the High School Sports Scene coverage area shined bright at the MHSAA Individual Wrestling State Finals at the Palace of Auburn Hills. Below is a breakdown of some of the success stories from the season's final weekend.



**103: BENYAMIN KAMALI, Novi Detroit Catholic Central:** Kamali, a sophomore, downed Ravon Foley of Ann Arbor Pioneer with a 10-8 overtime decision to finish the season 30-1. It was Foley's only loss of the season and Foley (57-1) defeated Kamali in the regional finals two weeks prior. "He beat me at regionals, so I kept pushing the pace and I knew I could beat him," said Kamali. "I wanted to beat him real bad. I knew when we got to overtime, he was real tired, so I pushed the pace and got the takedown. It's an amazing feeling knowing all the hard work paid off."



**119: KEVON DAVENPORT, Novi Detroit Catholic Central:** Davenport's sensational freshman campaign ended with a 47-3 record and a Division 1 state title thanks to a 8-1 victory over Davison sophomore AJ Facundo in the finals. "All of the hard work I put in paid off," said Davenport after his final victory. "I like to thank God, my family, my coaches and all of my siblings. I knew if I just kept working it would pay off. I was able to keep our tradition alive at Catholic Central."



**125: CAMERON AMINE, Novi Detroit Catholic Central:** Amine comes from a long line of successful athletes in the Amine family and capped of his stellar freshman campaign with a 39-9 record and a state title following a 6-0 shutout of Southgate Anderson's Donte Rivera-Garcia. "It was great motivation for me watching everyone else win title before me," said Amine. "We had five guys win titles for CC. That's amazing. We have such a proud tradition. I come from a great wrestling family and that inspires me to be my best at every practice and every meet."



**130: BEN FREEMAN, Walled Lake Central:** In three years, Freeman has yielded only one loss and that came midway through his freshman campaign. The junior added his third title to his resume and finished 42-0 following his pin in just 1:18 over John Siemasz of Westland John Glenn. "I set my goals high, so when I get nervous I just think of what I want to accomplish as an ultimate goal. It makes it all seem really small," said Freeman.



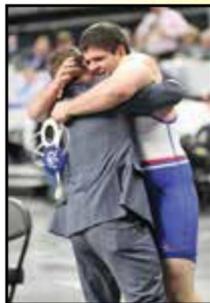
**140: REECE HUGHES, Hartland:** One week after helping Hartland capture its first team state crown, Hughes finished his 51-4 campaign with a 703 upset win over Oxford's Alex Hrisopoulos, a four-time state placer. "It's been an amazing last couple of weeks," admitted Hughes. "First the team title and now this. "I knew I had to have him wrestle my pace," added Hughes. "He's very quick. I slowed him down to set up my shots better."



**171: TYLER MORLAND, Novi Detroit Catholic Central:** Morland lost to Lapeer's Devon Pingel earlier in the year and he gained his measure of revenge on the big stage. Morland, a junior, toppled Pingel in the finals, 6-2, to finish a fine 45-1. "I purposely moved to 171 this year (for the state tournament) because (Pingel) was my only loss of the year," said Morland. "I came back and beat the kid that I lost to. That is all I wanted."



**215: LUCAS READY, Brighton:** Ready lived up to his namesake this season, winning his second state title. He finished 41-1 following a pinball in 1:57 of Lapeer's Sam Kinnie. "I didn't expect to pin him so fast," said Ready. "It was my game plan to finish the match quick, but being in the finals I didn't think I would pin him in the first period. I thought my semifinals match was a little more difficult. But you can't control who you will face. My goal was to get back here and win again."



**285: NICHOLAS JENKINS, Novi Detroit Catholic Central:** One of five state champions for the Shamrocks, Jenkins pulled a few upsets along the way, including a monumental win the title bout over Ali Wahab of Dearborn Heights Crestwood. Jenkins pulled away late in the third period for a 5-1 victory, handing Wahab his only loss of the season (60-1). Jenkins finished 39-10. "I am on top of the world," said Jenkins. "I don't think many people thought I'd be here, not only in the finals but to win it. My coaches and I had a game plan to be patient and I was able to wear him down and execute. I had more energy (down the stretch) than he did and was able to score some (late) points."



# Hall, Davison, Concede To Hartland In 10th Finals Appearance In 17 Years

## Dan Stickradt Sports Scene

As a veteran coach, Roy Hall has been on all sides of the spectrum. He has watched his Davison wrestling team exit the postseason in the early rounds and walk off the mats as state champions.

In the past 17 seasons alone, he has guided the Cardinals to 10 state title matches in Division 1, including six championships and four runners-up trophies.

Hall has guided Davison to 12

Final Fours and 13 Elite Eight appearances in the past 17 seasons. He stepped down for two seasons following the 2008 seasons before returning to the head coaching spot in 2010.

"It's never easy to get here (to the team tournament)," he said. "A lot of work goes into it. But there are reasons why a lot of the same schools get here year after year. There is an amazing amount of hard work and dedication that goes into it in the offseason. And the lot of the more successful programs

also wrestle really tough schedules every year."

Davison won five straight state titles from 2002-2006 and also captured a D-1 crown in 2000. Previously, the school won Class A titles under a different coaching staff in 1980 and 1981.

Hall also had Davison in the finals in 2001, 2013, 2014 and 2016, the latter as the No. 2 seed which lost to top-seed Hartland Feb. 25 at Central Michigan University's

Davison coach Roy Hall encourages his team during the Cardinals Division 1 finals loss to Hartland. (Staff Photo, High School Sports Scene)

McGuirk Arena.

Hartland defeated Davison, 36-23, in this year's title bout, which was Hartland's first-ever state title.

Coming up short to Hartland and veteran coaching colleague Todd Cheney does not bother Hall.

"You always want to do your best and win," said Hall. "That has to be the goal. But we lost to a very good team. Hats off to Todd Cheney and all of (the community) of Hartland. They earned it. I have



respect for Cheney and everything they have done over there. This was their year.

"We'll learn from this and hopefully we'll be able to make it back next year and try to make another run."

# Hartland Finally Stands Atop Mountain Beaming With First State Crown

## Dan Stickradt Sports Scene

The patience of Job.

A moment in the sun.

One could go on and on about the analogies of Hartland's wrestling program and finally winning a state title.

For a program that's been amongst the state's large-school elite for nearly two decades, the Eagles' coaching staff and those in and around the program have become very patient over the years despite many near-misses of winning a crown.

The Eagles, nevertheless, finally had their day on Feb. 25, taking down fellow state powerhouses Oxford (42-19) and Davison (36-23) at Central Michigan University's McGuirk Arena — Oxford in the semifinals and Davison in the title bout.

It ended the frustrations of a highly-successful program that has been a mainstay in the team state tournament for 15 straight years with multiple Final Four appear-

ances and state runner-up finishes, including a finals loss to Brighton in 2015 and four straight state finals defeats from 2004-07 (three to Davison and one to Rockford).

"I could just sense it, part of the way through it (the match with Davison) that this could be different," said Hartland coach Jeff Cheney, who held back tears while talking to legions of reporters from around the state. "We only beat them by a point earlier in the year.

"The community has stood beside us for a long, long time, never giving up," he continued. "We just kept working hard year after year with the hopes that this would finally happen...It's an incredible feeling."

Hartland, which spent two-thirds of the season ranked Number 1 in Division 1, fell from the top spot in late January, then earned the Number 1 seed for the MHSAA team tournament's Elite Eight at CMU — a new venue for the team tournament after 27 years of being contested at Battle Creek's Kellogg Arena.

A new arena — a new result.

"This is an amazing moment for the kids, families, parents — everyone who has been a part of this program, really, over the years," said Cheney. "Just standing here, soaking it all in, looking at the all the expressions of everyone's faces — it's incredible."

Hartland again wrestled a brutally-tough league and non-league schedule this season, including top-level teams from Ohio and Indiana as well as Michigan's cream of the crop. The Eagles' only loss came against Novi Detroit Catholic Central in late January, a team that also reached the Final Four this season but had won 11 state championships dating back to the late 1960s.

Hartland had not enjoyed such glory, until Feb. 25 — a day that will live on in infamy in the community of Hartland.

Behind the mantra of "nothing

Hartland coach Todd Cheney is all smiles after his team defeated Davison in the Division 1 finals. The wrestling championship is the first in school history. (Staff Photo, High School Sports Scene)

given, everything earned," Hartland certainly earned its day in the sun.

The Eagles trailed only once in the match, 3-0 when Davison's Brian Case posted a 3-0 decision at 135, the opening weight class. Wins from Reece Hughes (140), Sage Castillo (145), Logan Vish (152) and Lucas LaForge (160) put Hartland in control five matches in at 21-3.

Kyle Kantola recorded a pin at 112 that put Hartland in a comfortable 33-12 driver's seat, and despite Davison winning three of the final four matches, aided the Eagles' victory dance.

Senior Sage Castillo, one of Hartland's top wrestlers the past three years, said those around the program had suffered two much heart-break over the years.

"I know how it felt last year when we lost to Brighton," noted Castillo. "We had heard the stories of

the losses (in the team tournament) by coaches, former wrestlers, and we were sick by it. We wanted this more than anything."

This is a shining state championship trophy that will forever be placed in a trophy case in Livingston County just a short jaunt off the M-59 corridor, surrounded by legions of other trophies for league, district, regional wins and even five runner-up trophies.

It took the enduring patience, something Biblical straight out of the Book of Job, but a dog named Hartland finally had its day — a moment in the sun well-earned and very much long overdue.



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# Good Friends Kanen Storr And Ian Parker End Prep Careers As Multi-Champions

Butch Harmon Sports Scene

Best friends since grade school, Kanen Storr of Leslie and Ian Parker of St. Johns have shared an outstanding four years of wrestling success.

At this year's state individual finals, the two friends saw their high school careers come to an end in memorable fashion. Storr, wrestling at 145 pounds in Division 3, won his third straight state championship with a tech fall over Remus Chippewa Hills. Parker, wrestling in Division 2, claimed his second straight state title as he defeated Ortonville-Brandon's Bryan LaVearn 6-2.

"We've been friends ever since the fifth grade," Parker said. "We've trained together and helped each other a long the whole way. They say iron sharpens iron and that is exactly how it's been."

"Ian is my best friend," added Storr. "[We] have grown up together.

We work out together three or four times a week."

While they have been competing in different divisions at different high schools, Storr and Parker will be teammates beginning next year. That is when they will be a part of the Iowa State wrestling team, coached by former Lansing Eastern star Kevin Jackson.

"We didn't base the decision to go together, but we have a lot of the same interests," Storr said. "We are just excited that we will be going out there together."

"We both visited at the same time and loved it," Parker said. "It was in the back of our minds that we both wanted to go to Iowa State."

Both Parker and Storr felt a lot of emotions after their final high school match.

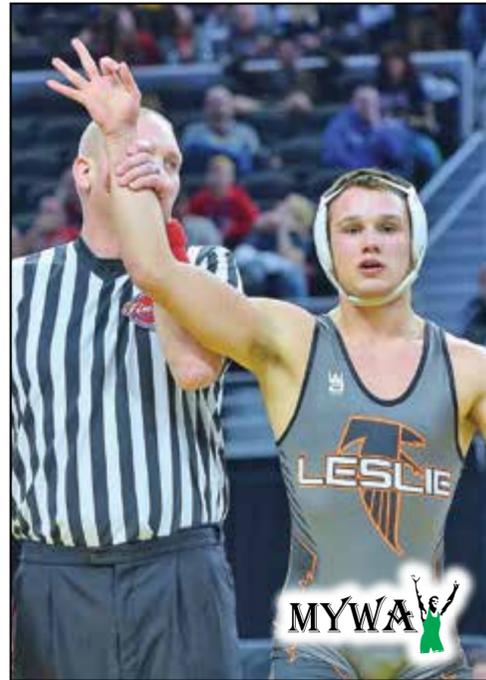
"Winning two is special," Parker said. "I was definitely a lot more nervous going into this match because

it was my final match and there had been a lot of upsets in this tournament. It kind of gets in your head a little bit, but I felt like I calmed it down and did what I had to do to get it done."

Storr also noticed the flurry of upsets in the championship matches.

"Sitting back in that tunnel, watching all these upsets go down, it's a crazy thing," Storr said. "Guys I thought would never lose went down. Going into my match, I really changed my mindset to score and get a comfortable lead, to score, score and score until the end."

St. Johns' Ian Parker and Leslie's Kanen Storr will take their talents to Iowa State University next season. (Staff Photos, High School Sports Scene)



# St. Johns Solid; Finishes Second In D2

Butch Harmon Sports Scene

After being denied a trip to the state team finals last year, the St. Johns wrestling team was on a mission this season. That mission was accomplished as the Redwings not only made it back to the state finals and reached the Division 2 state championship match where they fell to a familiar foe in Lowell.

St. Johns' road to the finals was anything but easy, as the Redwings needed to defeat a number of state-ranked teams to reach the finals. St. Johns defeated DeWitt, ranked second in the state in the district tournament and then avenged last-year's regional defeat to Eaton Rapids by defeating the seventh-ranked Greyhounds in the regional. St. Johns then defeated fourth-ranked

Gaylor in the state semifinals to set up a showdown with top-ranked Lowell in the finals.

"We had a hard road to get back here and it made us a better team," said St. Johns coach Derek Phillips. "We had to beat the number two and number seven teams to get here. It kept our guys hungry."

St. Johns gave Lowell everything it had and the dual was tied at 22-22 with three matches remaining before Lowell won out to secure the title.

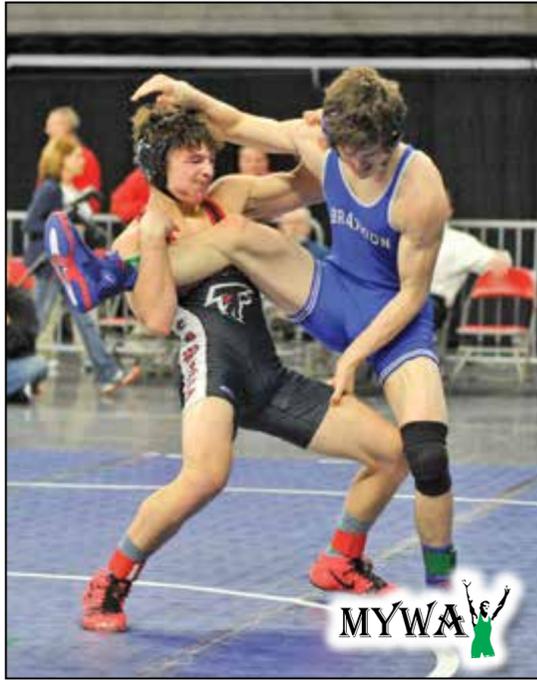
"That was two good teams going at it," said St. Johns coach Derek Phillips. "A couple matches didn't go our way at the end but I knew our team would battle to the end. One thing that this team has not done all year is we haven't given up. Things may not go our way, but it doesn't discourage us. We keep

battling hard, we keep wrestling tough."

Wrestling tough was a staple of the Redwings all season as the team was on a mission to wipe away the disappointment of missing out on the state finals last year.

"The way last season ended left a sour taste, so we all wanted to wrestle tough and get back here," Phillips said. "We didn't talk about it much. We just focused on having fun and getting better every day. I knew if we did that then we would have a successful season. I thought we did get better and we did have fun."

With a strong core of wrestlers expected back next season, the Redwings will again be a threat to win a state title. St. Johns will return a total of six state qualifiers next season led by junior Trent Lashuay who placed second at 135 pounds and junior Bret Fedewa who placed fifth at 152. Junior Lucas McFarland (160 pounds), freshman James Whitaker (125), junior Emilio Sanchez (112) and sophomore Brendan Zalenka (103) also qualified for state.



# Lowell's Max Dean Completes Perfect Senior Season With State Title

Butch Harmon Sports Scene

A state champion as a sophomore, Lowell's Max Dean was unable to repeat as a state champion last season due to a wrist injury he suffered during the football season. This season, a healthy Dean was not to be denied as he claimed his second state championship.

Dean, who finished his senior season with a perfect 37-0 record, defeated Mason junior 9-2 to win the 189-pound state title in Division 2.

"To me, this means a lot," said Dean. "I was heartbroken last year not being able to compete, having that privilege to walk on to the mat and go to war. I really missed that, and it was definitely tough. But it is

really satisfying to come back and win this year."

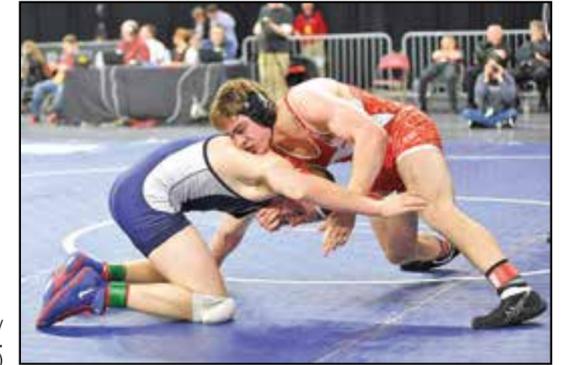
The title capped a big senior season for Dean who also helped the Red Arrows win a third straight state team championship. Dean showed his dedication to the team at the team state meet by bumping up two weight classes to wrestle in the heavyweight division.

"It's definitely a good way to cap my high school career," Dean said. "I'm very blessed to have had the privilege of wrestling for Lowell. I am thankful to have the support of a great community, great coaching staff and great teammates. Lowell is the best place in the world to wrestle."

Dean will be continuing his wrestling career next season at Cornell University, and will join his brother Gabe Dean who won his second NCAA national title this season.

Dean got a taste of New York

wrestling recently when he defeated a New York state champion while competing for Team Michigan at the Battle of New York All-Star Classic that pitted some of the best high school wrestlers from Michigan and New York.



Lowell's Max Dean capped his high school career by winning his second career state championship. (Staff Photo, High School Sports Scene)



# Lowell Wrestling 3-Peat

Butch Harmon Sports Scene

The Lowell wrestling team made it a three-peat and defeated a familiar foe in the process as it turned back St. Johns 37-22 to win the Division 2 team state title at Central Michigan University.

Lowell needed to overcome plenty of resistance from St. Johns, as the match was tied 22-22 heading into the final three matches. A pin by junior Sam Russell at 119 pounds, a pin from senior Lucas Hall at 125 and a decision by freshman Avry Mutschler at 130 gave the top-ranked Red Arrows the final 15 points needed for their third title in a row and sixth state championship all time.

"We've been dealing with high expectations for five years in a row," said Lowell coach R.J. Bourdo. "Everybody just expects us to do this and what no one knows is how hard these kids work and how hard it is to win a state title. Our seniors, every senior did what

they were expected to do. It was just an awesome win. I felt we wrestled above expectations."

Lowell's seniors led the way in the finals paced by Hall, who recorded his fall in 26 seconds.



"It's just the greatest feeling ever," Hall said. "It's really been us multiple years going back and forth with them (St. Johns). It's tough. We knew it was not going to be easy with St. Johns. We've had good times; we've had bad times with St. Johns. Rivalry wins are always the best ones."

Senior standout Max Dean also came up big for Lowell in more ways than one. Dean, who would win the 189-pound state title a week later, moved up two weight classes to heavyweight where he

gave up about 100 pounds to St. Johns senior Jake Gnegy. Dean won the heavyweight match by a 5-4 score. Dean first made the move to heavyweight during Friday's quarterfinal match with Sturgis.

"It was a real fun opportunity and I like challenges," Dean said. "Coach came to me with the idea and I was all about it. Credit (Gnegy), he was really strong. I knew I had to wrestle the match a certain way and didn't want to be under him or anything like that. I was just really excited and glad I could get it done for my teammates. I thought it would be a lot of fun."

Lowell senior Logan Blough added a decision at 215 pounds while senior Danny Kruse won a decision at 171 pounds. Lowell also picked up a pin from junior Eli Boulton at 189, a major decision from junior Bryce Dempsey at 145 and a decision from sophomore George Gonzales at 152 pounds.

Lowell won its third straight Division 2 championship after defeating St. Johns in the finals held on the campus of Central Michigan University. (Staff Photos, High School Sports Scene)



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## YOUNG OWOSSO



### New Lothrop's Caleb Symons Comes Away With Title After Being Denied Last Year

After suffering a heart-breaking loss in last year's state finals, New Lothrop senior Caleb Symons was determined not to let another chance pass him by.

Last season, Symons lost a 4-2 decision in the 189-pound championship match in Division 2. This year, Symons left little to chance as he pinned Devon Kozel of Bangor in 2:35 to win the 215-pound individual title in Division 4.

"I don't know how to explain it," Symons said. "Losing last year tore me apart. Winning it this year made it all worthwhile."

Symons wrapped up his senior season with a 55-1 overall record.

Being on the center stage at least year's finals was an experience that paid off for Symons this year.

"Being here last year, I was not as nervous this time," Symons said.

Making the title even more special for Symons was that the win was also the 150th win of his career.

"Coach told me to go out there and just wrestle my match," he said. "I worked real hard in the offseason getting ready for this season."



### New Lothrop's Cole Hersch Caps High School Career With First State Title

New Lothrop senior Cole Hersch had been to the individual finals twice before during his high school career, but he never had the chance to wrestle for a state title.

This year as a senior, Hersch wrestled his way into the championship match at 145 pounds. He then capitalized on the opportunity as he pinned Gerrit Yates of Hesperia in 4:00 to win the state title and finish the season with a 51-1 record.

"This is just an amazing feeling," Hersch said. "I lost in the second round all the years I've been here. To win it like this as a senior is amazing."

Hersch's title was the fourth individual title of the Finals for New Lothrop, as 145 was the final weight contested at this year's meet.

"For our team to win four individual state titles is pretty special," he said.

Hersch reached the finals with a win by technical fall in the first round, a major decision in the quarterfinals and a 3-0 decision in the semifinals.

"I worked real hard for this in the offseason," Hersch added. "I worked real hard but I also knew I needed to come here and have fun."



### New Lothrop's Erik Birchmeier Rallies To Win Individual State Title

With his back to the wall in his championship match, New Lothrop junior Erik Birchmeier refused to give up and persevered to win his first individual state title.

Birchmeier, who came into the title match at 171 pounds in Division 4 with a 33-2 record, trailed unbeaten Mark Workman of Hesperia 5-2 heading into the final period.

With two minutes to work with, Birchmeier battled back and tied the match at 5-5 to force overtime. Birchmeier then won the title in overtime.

"When I was trailing 5-2 I knew I needed to get after it," Birchmeier said. "I gave it everything I had to get it to overtime. I knew I just had to keep the pressure on."

That pressure paid off with a title for Birchmeier who was a state qualifier last season.

"Everything is a blur right now," Birchmeier said. "It's just one of the best feelings I've ever had. It's right up there with the three-peat at team state."

Birchmeier allowed just three points combined in his first three matches at state to advance to the title match. Birchmeier opened up with a major decision in the first round and then won a pair of 7-1 decisions in the quarterfinals and semifinals.



### New Lothrop's Steven Garza Wins Second Straight State Title

A member of three team state championship teams at New Lothrop, Steven Garza capped his career in a big way as he won a second individual state title.

Garza won the 152-pound title in Division 4 with a 9-5 decision over Zeth Caudill of Springport. With the win Garza ended his senior season with a 57-1 record.

"This is something I've wanted all year," Garza said. "I'm grateful to be here and to be able to take home the state title. There are some great wrestlers here, and to be able to win two state titles is an awesome feeling."

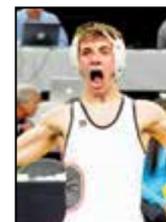
Garza has enjoyed an amazing run of success the last two years. Last season Garza turned in a perfect 42-0 record as he won the 145-pound state title.

"Last year I was really nervous," Garza said. "It was the first one. This one I was still a little nervous, but the jitters were a little different this time."

Garza jumped out to the early lead in the match and controlled the pace throughout.

With the win, Garza secured his place in the storied history of New Lothrop wrestling.

"You know, we've had some great wrestlers come through New Lothrop," Garza said. "To be a two-time state champion and win team state three times is special."



### Perry's Anthony Gallagher Wins First Wrestling Title For Perry In 41 Years

It had been 41 years since a Perry wrestler won an individual state title, and when junior Anthony Gallagher won the 103-pound title in Division 3, he celebrated in fashion.

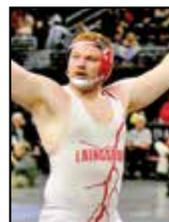
"It's an amazing feeling," Gallagher said. "It's one of a kind. It can't get any better than this."

Gallagher outlasted Lake Fenton's A.J. Geyer 2-0 in the title match to win the crown and finish the season with a 42-1 record.

"My coaches and I put so much work into this," Gallagher said. "So much blood, sweat and tears, and I finally see what I've wanted to accomplish since the start of the year is amazing."

Gallagher became Perry's first individual state champion since Henry Bradley won a heavyweight title in 1975.

Gallagher was not Perry's lone state placer; two other Ramblers also earned all-state honors. Senior Mike Gramza placed fifth at 215 pounds and finished the year with a 33-6 record while sophomore Jacob Spies took fifth at 112 pounds and finished the season with a 35-10 mark.



### Laingsburg's Kevin Koenig Earns Second State Title with First-Period Fall

Laingsburg senior Kevin Koenig was in a familiar place during the Division 4 individual wrestling finals. For the fourth time in his career, Koenig was on the big stage Saturday evening as he was wrestling for an individual state championship.

Koenig won the second state title of his high school career when he pinned Decatur's Logan Kennedy in 1:22 to win the 285-pound state title in Division 4. Koenig won the 215-pound state title as a sophomore and finished runner-up at 215 pounds as both a freshman and a junior.

"Heck yeah, this feels real good," Koenig said. "Being a two-time state champion, not many people have done it. It definitely feels great."

Koenig won all four of his matches at the MHSAA Finals with first-period falls.

"I've pretty much done it all season," Koenig said. "I can't describe the feeling of winning a second one."

Winning is something that Koenig has been familiar with his entire high school career. Koenig went 57-3 as a freshman, 48-3 as a sophomore, 56-2 as a junior and recorded a 55-1 record this season to finish his career with a 216-9 overall record. With four state finals appearances in his career, Koenig is unsure of what he will do at the collegiate level.



# New Lothrop Makes It A Three-Peat In Division 4 State Team Wrestling

## John Raffel Sports Scene

Since 2009, the Division 4 state champions in team wrestling has either been New Lothrop or Hudson. But much to coach Jeff Campbell's pleasure, it's been his New Lothrop team for the last three years.

Hudson and New Lothrop met up for the third straight season in the finals with New Lothrop taking the close 35-27 win. Hudson had won the title five straight seasons before New Lothrop went on to take the last three.

The Hornets ended the season at 24-5. Campbell, in 15 years of coaching, has a 392-70 record.

"I'm real proud of their performance," he said. "Any time you win, it's special. You can't take it for granted. This year, we overcame a lot of obstacles and injuries and things we've been fortunate not to have the last couple of years. This

one feels pretty good and I'm pretty happy for these kids."

In the title match against Hudson, winners were Zack Riley (140), Cole Hersch (145), Steven Garza II (152), Brandon Heinge (171), Erik Birchmeier (189), Caleb Symons (215), Connor Krupp (119) and Austin Wolford (130). Hudson was up 32-27 during Wolford's last match. He beat Carson Price 7-0 to clinch the victory.

"We had the best team we could put on the mat and we wrestled the best we have all year," Campbell said. "If we wouldn't have wrestled our best, we wouldn't have won."

Campbell noted that it doesn't get easier, considering the caliber of competition.

"Kids get better every year," he said. "That group of freshmen Hudson has is good and talented every year. It's getting better every year, wrestling is peaking. The turnout here to watch it has been

pretty special."

Campbell also noted that the key to New Lothrop's success has been the support of community and the parents.

"These kids sacrifice a lot of time for their families to be with us," he said. "The support we get from them is great. The future looks bright."

Caleb Symons (215) had a big major decision, 11-4, in the title match in his senior season. A week later, he would win the state individual title.

"Winning three (team titles in a row), me being a senior going out on top, it's one of the best feelings in the world," Symons said. "This one was closer. It came down to the last match. To have a freshman, Austin Wolford, to go out on his birthday, and get the win was crazy.



The New Lothrop wrestling team captured its third straight Division 4 championship during the recent MHSAA Wrestling Finals held on the campus of Michigan State University. (Staff Photo, High School Sports Scene)

"Not only do we have great coaches, but we have a lot of hard working kids and the community really stands behind us, and that really means a lot."

Symons has had success with both state team and individual tournaments.

"We really pride ourselves on making it a team effort and work-

ing for the guy next to it," Symons said.

New Lothrop also had a tough job in the semifinals with a 38-30 win over Springport. Garza II, Birchmeier, Symons, Harris, Logan Zell (103), Malloy, Krupp and Hersch were winners. The score was 34-0 going into the last match with Hersch winning 11-1.

# Pine River Makes Trip To Mat Semifinals

## John Raffel Sports Scene

One of the most dramatic wrestling matches over the weekend in the state team finals at Central Michigan University was the 35-34 Pine River victory over Decatur in the Division 4 quarterfinals.

Joe Rigling knew it was all up to him, and the 152-pound Pine River wrestler did the job.

Decatur had a 34-32 lead with one match left, but Rigling, in a match that was 0-0 after two periods, put together key takedowns and escapes in the final seconds for a 4-2 victory, which gave the Bucks a 35-34 win and their first ever trip to the state semifinal.

"It's one of the best feelings in the world," Rigling said. "We've never made it this far, as long as I've been in high school.

"I was scared out of my mind," he con-

tinued. "I didn't give up. I wrestled tough all the way through. We picked up a win where we didn't expect."

"We were right where we wanted to be," Pine River coach Tim Jones said. "In the middle weights, we ran into some tough kids. We were hoping to win those and thought that might seal it. But we started adding it up and it came down to the last one."

The Bucks have been to the state event before but they entered the season as a young team.

"We've done some things this year we didn't think we would," Jones said.

The Bucks went on to wrestle state power Hudson in the semifinals and weren't able to make the strong run they were hoping; the Bucks lost to Hudson 55-18.

"In a match like this, you have to start off and you can't lose any close ones," Jones said. "We lost all the close ones. With a team of that caliber and expe-

rience at this venue, they've been here before. You have to make sure you seal every little close match there possibly is. Once the ball keeps rolling, it's tough to slow it down."

Hudson dominated after it was 12-12 "Then the lightweights, that's where they're really good," Jones said. "We have some great kids down low and we thought if we could get in a few in here we could get some steam rolling and make things happen. We just didn't get that energy going."

Hudson lost 35-27 to New Lothrop in the title match later on Saturday.

Raden Holmes, Josh Jackson and Tucker Fansler won matches for the Bucks.

"I was just going to go out there and give it my all," Fansler said. "We made it this far and accomplished a lot together. We worked hard and pushed as hard as we could to get here. I'm thinking we have a chance to come back"

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# Davison, Ithaca, Alma Win Bowling Titles; Davis Shoots 300 In Finals To Win Individual Crown

## Scott Keyes Sports Scene

When Davison junior Taylor Davis was 8 years old, her father Bryan pulled her aside and asked her what she wanted out of her short bowling career.

Mind you she was only 8 at the time, but the answer she gave proved she was way wise beyond her years.

"I want to win a state championship and bowl a 300 game," she said.

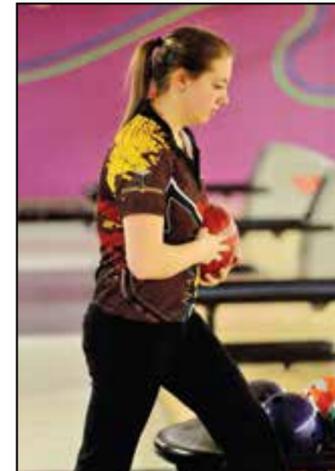
Little did Bryan know those words would become reality nearly a decade after she said them, as Taylor Davis became only the fourth in MHSAA girls bowling history to bowl a 300 game in the singles portion of the tournament.

Davis captured the Division 1 title with a 479-410 victory over Julia Huren of Westland John Glenn. She, along with lone senior Kailee Tubbs also helped Davison capture the team title.

Tubbs was a member of three of the championship teams, and also part of Davison's loss in the finals a year ago to Macomb Dakota.

That loss gave Tubbs and the Cardinals drive to get back to the finals this season.

"I think you always think about that loss in the back of your mind, but I really think it was a building block to this season," Tubbs said after the Cardinals defeated Farmington Hills 1,206-



1,139 in the championship match this time. "To be a part of three of these championships, especially winning one during your senior season, is pretty special. What a great way to end your high school career."

Meanwhile Davis was all business on the lanes.

"I knew it was going to happen eventually, but to bowl your first 300 game on high school bowling's biggest stage is almost unheard of," Bryan Davis said. "To see my daughter step up and roll that final strike for her first 300 game was almost surreal. Then to watch her win a state championship is something I will always remember."

Taylor Davis admits she had butterflies in her stomach, but knew if she threw a good shot good things would happen.

"It was amazing," Taylor Davis said. "I've always wanted to shoot a 300. I was always wondering when I would be able to. To shoot it at the state finals is the best feeling ever. ... After I bowled in the final four on (lanes) five and six I kind of found a new shot. I tried it on seven and eight and it was fine. It worked."

### ALMA WINS D3 TITLE

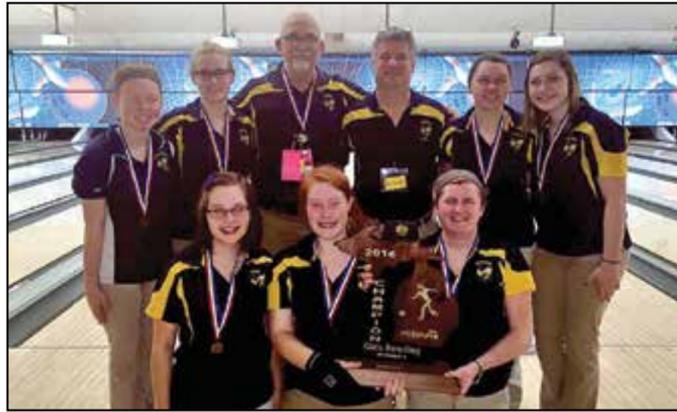
Alma making its first appearance in an MHSAA Final since 2008, and wasn't a strong favorite to contend for the D3 championship.

Alma, a Regional champion, had to overcome a poor start in its first Baker game to edge Hudsonville Unity Christian by 20 pins, 1,282-1,262. Unity Christian won the first Baker game 222-145, and Alma cut the deficit to 43 pins entering the final match - a Peterson match that features a full game by each of the five players.

"We always struggle a little bit in our Bakers, and our strong part is our Peterson games," Alma coach Ken Shunk said.

Alma and Unity Christian each missed nine non-split spares in the Peterson game. However, Alma struck 28 times to 21 strikes by Unity Christian, and that helped Alma wipe out the 43-pin deficit. The outcome was not decided until the 10th frame, and when anchor bowler Kimmie Shunk stepped on the lane, she needed just a solid count on her first ball to wrap up the championship.

"I was pretty nervous," said Shunk, who left the 2-8 spare and converted it. "I usually do



The Ithaca girls bowling team won a Division 4 title defeating New Lothrop in a very close championship match. Meanwhile Alma won the Division 3 championship defeating Hudsonville Unity Christian in the finals. (Submitted Photos)

pretty good under pressure and keep my composure. I just took a deep breath and made a shot, but the pressure was unreal. It was nothing like I've ever been under before."

Shunk, a sophomore who shot in the 230s in the semifinal match, had 198 in the Peterson game as four of the five Alma players topped 190. Senior Susan Schultz led Alma with 209. She threw five strikes in a row from the seventh frame through the first two in the 10th, and that five-bagger proved to be a deciding factor.

Freshman Hallie Weaver added 203 in the Peterson game, while Sarah Gadde, another freshman, had 194. Gadde tossed a 234 in the Peterson game in the semifinals as Alma totaled 982 to overcome a 50-pin deficit against Coloma after the two Baker games for a 1,285-1,179 victory.

Alma, which qualified fourth, defeated Birch Run 1,144-1,133 in the quarterfinals after trailing by eight after the two Baker games.

"We shot in the 900s all day," Shunk said. "We just stayed consistent other than struggling in our Baker games. We've been working hard all year, and they were able to adjust and do well."

Ithaca rolls to D4 championship

The Division 4 runner-up banner hanging in the Ithaca gymnasium served as a reminder for coach Dan Macha and his bowlers; a gentle reminder that there was still some work to be done in order to climb that final step toward an MHSAA girls bowling championship.

"We finished second in 2010 after having finished third in the Regional, just like we did this year," said Macha, now in his eighth year with the program. "We didn't want a repeat. We

wanted to come here (Royal Scot) and finish the job."

The Yellowjackets won their first MHSAA Finals bowling title in school history by defeating rival New Lothrop by three pins in the championship match, 1,141-1,138.

"When we were up 50 pins after the two Baker games we felt pretty good," said senior captain Channing Gulick, "but we knew we had to stay focused. We know them (New Lothrop) and how they bowl, and they weren't going to make it easy for us in the final game."

Gulick, who played the role of super-sub all season long, bowled what Macha called "an incredibly clutch game" in the final game of the qualifying round to vault the Yellowjackets into the second seed for the match play Quarterfinals. Gulick rolled a 229 - 80 pins above her average - to help Ithaca leapfrog five spots prior to the start of match play.

And when freshman Bethany Slater struggled in the first three frames of the Final against New Lothrop, Gulick came off the bench to complete a 160 game. Junior Hayley Sigafoose - who reached the Semifinals as an individual on Saturday - led Ithaca with a 176 in the championship match. Sigafoose had plenty of support from Shannon Whitaker (161), Heidi Seelye (154) and Arianna Woodrow (139).

New Lothrop worked its way to the championship match with victories over top-ranked Vandercook Lake in the Quarterfinals (1,178-1,081) and Sandusky in the Semifinals (1,142-1,125). Kelsey Moore led all bowlers in the championship match with a 236 while teammate Mattie Stewart rolled a 171.

# Swan Valley Wins D3 Bowling Title; Tuttle Wins Third Consecutive D4 Title

## Scott Keyes Sports Scene

A young Swan Valley boys bowling team did the inevitable walking away from the Division 3 finals as champions.

However it wasn't easy in the championship match.

Swan Valley defeated Crowell-Lexington by 43 in the quarterfinals, then used a huge 278 Baker game to route Wyoming Kelloggsville by 107 in the semifinals, setting up a title match against Battle Creek Pennfield.

Swan Valley won the first Baker game by 12 and lost the second by 10, giving the Vikings a slim two-pin lead going into the Peterson game.

"I just told the boys, 'Winner take all, just cover our spares. As long as we cover our spares, we can't lose,'" Swan Valley coach Tony Bremer said. "We covered just a few more pins than they did."

Swan Valley won the Peterson game 880-820, but Bremer was forced to make a tough decision halfway through the match when he pulled four-year senior Josh Goushaw, who had missed spares in four of the first six frames.

"To pull a senior, that was tough," Bremer said, "but I did it for the good of the team, and he understood the move."



St. Charles' Kyle Tuttle is a three-time Division 4 championship after defeating Luke Cantrell of Genesee in the finals. The Swan Valley boys team boy the Division 3 championship. (Submitted Photos)

Jay Schimmoller, a senior who replaced Goushaw, threw five strikes in a row and then a 9 count to turn a score of 72 through six frames into a 191.

The Vikings were led by their anchor, Mason Eddy, a freshman who averaged 215 this season. Eddy had the lone 200 of the Peterson game - a 212 - to lead Swan Valley.

"After we qualified, there was no oil outside, and the lanes were hooking more, so I just moved right," Eddy said. "I had the same shot all day, and I really wasn't nervous. I don't get nervous."

Sophomore Noah Conley added 186 for Swan Valley, while senior Jarrett Thomas had 149 and sophomore Logan Lemmer 142.

Swan Valley was just short of making the top eight after the eight Baker games but had Peterson games of 979 and 917 to jump to the No. 2 seed entering match play.

"There were a lot of bumps in the road," Bremer said. "Our first eight Bakers in qualifying weren't so good, but we finished the last two 188 and 214.

"When we got here, Mason Eddy just kept saying, 'We're top eight' all day, and we got in," Bremer said. Then, in our first quarterfinal match we came out with 278-209 in our Bakers, and from there I knew it was ours."



### TUTTLE WINS THIRD D4 TITLE

Kyle Tuttle is the undisputed, three-time heavyweight champion of Division 4 bowling in the state of Michigan.

The junior's victory Saturday in the Singles Final at Royal Scot, 418-381 over Luke Cantrell of Genesee, contained very little of the drama that surrounded last year's one-pin survival against Ethan Sobczak of Bad Axe.

Tuttle started the first game against Cantrell with strikes in four of the first five frames en route to a commanding 225-192 lead.

"I try not to put myself in situations where I have to dig out of a hole," said Tuttle, the

only three-time singles champion in MHSAA history. "I try to make as many quality shots as possible, and make 'em all count."

Tuttle, the second seed behind freshman Korey Reichard of Vandercook Lake after the morning qualifier, rattled off match play victories over Logan Hughes of Sandusky (479-353), Tucker Hemmila of L'Anse (419-388) and Austin Kraemer of Riverview Gabriel Richard (392-346) to reach the Final.

Cantrell, a sophomore and the ninth seed after qualifying, reached the Final by defeating Blake Gulick of Ithaca (393-318), Reichard (426-371) and Isaac Solis of Adrian Madison (346-332).

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## Breckenridge Celebrates Second Straight Cheer State Title

John Raffel  
Sports Scene

It's back-to-back for Breckenridge's competitive cheer team: state championship style.

The Huskies made it two straight in Division 4 by winning the competition at the Delta Plex in Comstock Park on March 5.

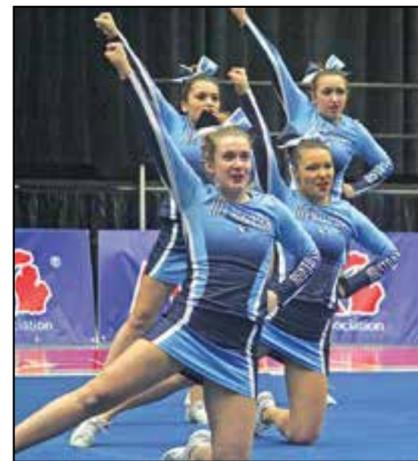
Breckenridge was first with 767.68 points, followed by Michigan Center (754.12), Merrill (738.70), Sanford Meridian (737.80), Houghton Lake (734.88), Hudson (730.58), Shelby (726.80), and Farwell (711.88).

"All three rounds were strong and solid for us on the day," said Huskies coach Deb Gaines. "We were pleased with their enthusiasm, strength and presentation in all of our rounds. They performed as a state champion team should."

Breckenridge led after all the first two rounds 457.38-450.92 against Michigan Center.

"Our top round was round 1," Gaines said. "As I look at the still pics of motions, floor placement, etc., I found very few things out of place. We worked really hard in those areas and we received our highest score of the season in this round and I concur with the judges. It was clean, powerful and precise."

Members of the Huskie team were Amiah Cole, Carmen Collins, Olivia Mayle, Anyssa Betancourt, Megan Carter, Kasey Conn, Emma Rohne, Harly Conklin, Lena Crowell, Alexandria Gillis, Madison Smith, Justine Brabaw, Dakota Colthorp, Kaitlyn Cor-



Sanford Meridian finished fourth in the D4 finals, which was recently won by Breckenridge. (John Raffel, Sports Scene Photo)

son, Paige Guthrie, Alicia Gutierrez, Katie Mortenson and Lindsey Reichard.

Gaines is in her 31st year as coach while co-coach Jenna Graham is in her eighth. This is Breckenridge's third state title in Division 4. The Huskies previously won six state titles in Class C-D.

"This team is extra special as it is the largest team that I have ever coached in my 30-plus years at Breckenridge High School," Gaines said. "It was awesome to be able to put out maximum numbers in each round. They are a great group of athletes and people. I will always remember this team for many reasons. They worked great together through critique and praise. It was a pleasure."

### MERRILL

Merrill enjoyed a strong third-place performance under coach Courtney Schiller.

"I am so proud of the way my team performed," Schiller said. "We were at a disadvantage in difficulty going in, since we don't have the maximum difficulty in round 2, or the maximum choreography in round 3. Additionally, we were the smallest team on the mat. Finishing in third is extremely impressive with these challenges. I think the girls were very pleased with their finish. Although every team wants to win, knowing they put out three great rounds allows them to end the season with no regrets and a proud feeling."

Cheering for the Vandals were Samantha Brand, Kyle Dittenber, Nicole Dubay, Georgia and Molly Frantz, Kari Good, Gracie Horvat, Zoe Leveto, Megan Playford and Ashley Rich.

"After finishing as the state runner-up in 2014, we were unable to put out a team in 2015 due to low numbers and lack of interest," Schiller added. "It was very disappointing for our program. So, when we returned this year, it was like starting over in a sense. Only four of our 10 athletes had ever competed at the varsity level, and two of our athletes were completely new to competitive cheer."

"They made a goal at the start of the season to make it back to state finals, and while it may have seemed like a difficult goal at the



The Breckenridge competitive cheer team repeated as Division 4 champions with a score of 767.68 points. (John Raffel, Sports Scene Photo)

beginning, as the season progressed, I saw it become something attainable. It was really a growing season, and they proved themselves again and again."

But Schiller noted that her team had far surpassed her expectations.

"We were thrilled just to have a team at the beginning of the season," Schiller said. "Once they made a goal of making it back to state finals, that is where we set our sights. The final outcome was our second best finish in program history. That is with a very young, inexperienced team, on a year that we projected to be a rebuilding season. This team overcame the odds and really met every goal they set head-on."

In the finals, the Vandals were third after round 1.

"Round 2 dropped us back into fifth place, and a strong round three performance pulled us back into third," Schiller said. "Our third round was really, really solid at state finals. It was the best I've ever seen them do it, and it was certainly a great day for them to pull that performance out. However, this team was really the picture of consistency all year, and while they may not have had many wins in their meets week to week, they always hit their rounds consistently, never had falls, and maintained the second best average score in the state. I feel that they were a very poised team, and this showed with their performance at the final meet."

### MERRILL

Sanford Meridian Early College was coached by Val MacKenzie, in her 22nd year and was fourth at state. Athletes were Harley Kovach, Jamie Mosher, Courtney Wasalaski,

Katie Blanchard, McKenna Burns, Aubrey Erskine, Arianah Kortge, Elizabeth Melchi, Becky O'Dell and Tana Spangler.

"At state finals my team performed phenomenal," MacKenzie said. "They had the best scores of the whole season. We had an awesome season. My girls improved with each competition. They were a very dedicated and determined team."

"My team well exceeded my expectation. I had a team of three seniors and seven freshman. They blended great for the age span between them and their skills were truly our asset. Out of the 10 girls, seven of them have back tucks (the most difficult skill) all had back handsprings, back walkovers and splits. Also our jumps this season were awesome."

MacKenzie indicated her team's best round was the second.

"It was not our highest score of the three rounds but it's the skill round and we nailed it," she said. "All of the tucks landed great and the timing of the 10 count and skills were spot on. As for the season, round 1 and 2 were our best until the last half of the season when round 3 kicked it with no bobbles."

"My team this is year is the best I have had in a few years. These girls worked hard for perfection and never gave up. We said the whole season nothing would matter until districts. Well, at districts we took second. We were the champions of our regional, and at state we ended fourth. I am so very proud of what this team accomplished this year. I lose three seniors, but have four girls coming up that have awesome skills and will blend in great on the team. We look forward to our upcoming future. It looks fantastic."

## DeWitt Fifth At State Finals, Ovid Elsie Third

John Raffel  
Sports Scene

DeWitt's competitive cheer squad took fifth place at the Division 2 state final on March 5 at the Deltaplex I in Comstock Park. Gibraltar Carlson took first place at 786.26 followed by Allen Park (777.62), Grand Rapids Kenowa Hills (774.80), Dearborn Divine Child (771.42), DeWitt (771.26), Trenton (764.72), Mona Shores (759.00) and Richland Gull Lake (742.14).

"We are thrilled," DeWitt coach Candace Heskitt said. "We couldn't be happier. There's always room for improvement, even down to the 11th hour. But at some point, you have to go out there and say 'let's go out there and have a great time and put on a great show.'"

Heskitt was happy with her team's effort in all three rounds.

"It's been four months," she said. "For them to have their best day of the season at state finals, you can't ask for more."

Cheering for the Panthers were Corrine Baker, Avery Braman, Grace Colarossi, Brianna Cooney, Payton Daggy, Alexis Dalesandro, Ashley Dumont, Erika England, Shilee Gamble, Kallin Greenhoe, Lauren Hasse, Allie Hegerfeld, Hannah Heinrich,

Macy Hendershot, Jennalyn Jubeck, Daisy Manzer, Emma Molitor, Trinity Pung, Mackenzie Smith, Shaylee Snyder, Olivia Townsend, Elizabeth VanDerWoude, Brook Wandle, Amanda Woodworth and Elizabeth Zunker.

"We're happy," Heskitt said. "Everybody's going for the trophy. We're happy with a great performance."

DeWitt was state runners-up last season and returns 21 girls next season.

### OID ELSIE

Ovid Elsie took third place in Division 3 at the state meet. Taking first was Pontiac Notre Dame Prep (775.48), followed by Richmond (765.86), Ovid Elsie (757.44), Monroe Jefferson (755.34), Comstock Park (753.52), Lake Odessa Lakewood (751.92), Paw Paw (746.26) and Escanaba (732.26).

Cheering for the Marauders, coached by Katie Calverley, were Madison Baese, Leah Batora, Noelle Braker, Alexis Bushard, Riley Caswell, Katie Davis, BreAnna Deming, Haley Godfrey, Alicia Grant, Porsch Grieder, Kiana Henning, Jadalyn Horak, Haley Johnson, Madison Kasson, Courtney Loynes, Kayla Melzer, Makenna Vincent, Aubrey Warren and Sara Wilber.

Cheering for Lakewood, coached by Kim



DeWitt finished fifth in the recent Division 2 finals held at the DeltaPlex in Grand Rapids. (John Raffel, Sports Scene Photo)

Martin and Renee Carigon, were Tequila Bautista, Madelynn Beimers, Carley Bennett, Riley Eggers, Bryeana Littlefield, Taylor MacKenzie, Kyle Maurer, Dixie Moorman, Samantha Morrison, Madison Mussehl, Kendall Rooks, Alyssa Sandborn, Trista Shattuck, Sierra Stoepker, Kailey Stube, Ann Twitchell, Haley VanValkenburg, Alexandra Wheeler and McKenzie White.

### FARWELL

Farwell was eighth in Division 4 with 711.88.

Cheering for the Eagles, coached by Taylor Bryant were Abby Elkins, Brianna McQuiston, Morgan VantHull, Lexi Andreas, DruAne Marsh, Morgan Nester, Brooke Pritchard, Kelsey Jones, Aleesha McCurry, Michelle Boyd, Reagan Douglas, Halaina Lavery and Kelsey Seiter.

## Cheers! Now Everybody Knows Their Names

Scott Salowich  
Sports Scene

When it comes to cheers, everybody knows the Jack Pine Conference's name.

The Division 4 state competitive cheerleading finals at the DeltaPlex in Grand Rapids featured three entries from the league.

Meridian led the local charge, placing fourth with a total of 737.80 points. Houghton Lake was just behind in fifth place with

734.88 and Farwell placed eighth with 711.88.

Breckenridge won with 767.68. Michigan Center was second with 754.12 and Merrill barely edged the Mustangs to place third with 738.70.

The local squads qualified by cracking the top four at the regional at Sparta. Meridian won the championship with 721.92, just ahead of the Bobcats with 721.52. Shelby was third with 709.28 and Farwell took fourth with 704.36.

Houghton Lake had the upper hand at the district event, placing first with 726.72. Meridian was second with 703.50 and Farwell third with 700.22.

"No Farwell team has ever made it past districts, so for this team to make it all the way to the state finals was a huge accomplishment," said Farwell coach Taylor Bryant. "That was our goal from the beginning of the season and being there against the best of the best was just amazing."

"We were the only non-ranked team to make it and nerves and jitters got the best of us a few times in the routines, but the girls cheered their hearts out and gave it their all."

"Farwell cheer is now on the map and we will continue to build and build. It will be hard to replace the love and drive of this team, but we are a family and they have started something grand here at Farwell."

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# Grand Ledge First In All-Around

**John Raffel Sports Scene**

It was Rachel Hogan's moment. The Grand Ledge gymnast took home first place for all-around in the Division 1 state individual finals March 5 at Rockford High School. She had taken third in 2015.

Hogan had a total score of 38.000 to sneak past Isabelle Nguyen of Grosse Pointe at 37.950. Last year's all-around champion, Morgan Korf of Rockford, was fifth at 37.625.

Korf had a 37.825 total in 2015 to edge Nguyen (37.750) and Hogan (37.450).

"For my senior year, I just wanted to do the best I could," Hogan said. "There's a definite feeling I would go all out for this year. It feels different because it's my last year and I know that. I want to put it all out there and give it all I've got. I guess there was a little more

of a drive, a little more of a want to get it."

Hogan was first in the vault at 9.875 and first in the parallel bars at 9.700.

"It's really all about the landing on that vault," she said.

Hogan had a 9.150 in balance beam and didn't place. But in floor exercises, she was ninth at 9.275.

"I wanted everyone to do their best and whatever happens happens," Hogan said. "It's incredible, it's means so much to me. I hope every girl left here with the feeling they did their best. I feel that way too. It's a great season."

"Our performances were very good today," Grand Ledge coach Duane Haring said. "Rachel Hogan, she worked very hard. At the end, she pulled it out and had the score that took Division I. She stumbled a little bit on beam and floor. She stuck with it and ended up getting a good score at vault and pulled it out at the end. There's

a lot of tremendous gymnasts here today. I wish they could all have taken first."

Grand Ledge, on Friday, took seventh as a team at the state meet.

"It's amazing, I've been a part of an amazing program with such an amazing coach," Hogan said. "It's awesome to be up there. I'm honored to be a part of that."

"We have a no nonsense program," Haring said. "We try to teach bigger skills and try to make the girls successful at the end of the day. That's our philosophy when we go in the gym."

### Allen Takes First

A highlight at the state meet for Haslett-Williamston-Bath at Level 2 was a first place performance by Brooke Allen in the floor exercise with a 9.375. She took ninth in all-around. She tied for eighth on the balance beam.

"I was really excited," she said. "I wasn't expecting to get first place. It was confidence, staying tight."

Allen, a senior, has gone to the

state finals three times, and this year fulfilled her pre-season goal of winning it all.

"I progressed, but I definitely saved my best for last," she said. "I knew there was a chance (for first). I just wanted to see what would happen."

Allen and her sister did cheerleading for several years prior to high school gymnastics, and had to compete against other girls who had a club gymnastics background.

"Definitely on bars and vault, I found myself behind," she said. "It was easier on floor and beam to catch up because of the tumbling aspect from cheer. I kind of wish I had started earlier to see what would happen."

Allen plans to attend Michigan State and hopes to be a cheerleader. Her gymnastics and tumbling should be a key asset in reach that goal.



Rachel Hogan of Grand Ledge won the Division 1 overall championship with a total of 38.00. She registered a new state record in the vault with a score of 9.875. (Scott Keyes, High School Sports Scene Photo)

# Howell Takes Fourth Place, Gymnasts Earn Titles

**John Raffel Sports Scene**

Nancy Gregory continues to take pride on how much progress her Howell gymnastics program makes over the years.

This season, Howell was fourth in team performance at the Division 1 finals on March 11 at Rockford. Howell's score of 141.925 was below Rockford-Sparta (146.350), Forest Hills (145.100) and Farmington (144.000).

"The team gets better every year," the Howell coach said. "They have some hard working girls and some of them are actually feeling

like they're getting to where they want to be. It's exciting to see them so successful. They didn't win state finals but they had a good season. They increased their team average for the season by two points from last year, which was very good. I thought they had a successful season. Winning regionals was nice. They also had individual finalists who were champions at the state meet."

Kacy Wolfram, "is an awesome gymnast," Gregory said. "She is a very hard working gal. She comes to practice with goals in mind of what she wants to do. She works hard to achieve what she wants

to do."

Wolfram was gold medalist on the vault (9.700). Alyssa Walker (9.475) was gold medalist on beam. Both were in Division 2. Kirsten Phifer was eighth (9.325) on beam in Division 1.

"It's a combination of several things," Gregory said "There's natural talent. Above that, they need to set goals and be receptive to coaching ideas, and be willing to change when they need to do that, and be hard workers. Working hard to accomplish goals is a life skill. Hopefully it will carry over for them."

Phifer is the only senior. The others are juniors.

"Already, they are setting goals for next year," Gregory said. "The team had 13 members this year, six of which are incoming freshmen. One of those freshmen got All-American on the floor. Kacy and the rest of them got a vote each, Kacy on vault and Kirsten on beam. That's a big thing for a high school gymnast. Kids coming up are learning from role models they see who are graduating and moving on."



Howell's Alyssa Walker won the balance beam with a score of 9.475 in Division 2. (Scott Keyes, High School Sports Scene Photo)

# Rockford Gymnasts Reign Supreme Again

**John Raffel Sports Scene**

The Rockford Rams overcame a serious injury to senior standout Madi Meyers to edge Forest Hills and take their second straight championship on their home floor on March 11.

When the meet ended, Rockford was first (146.350), followed by Forest Hills (145.100), Farmington (144.0), Howell (141.925), Canton (140.975), Plymouth (140.225), Grand Ledge (140), Grosse Pointe United (139.825), Livonia Blue (138.250), Brighton (137.500), Lowell (134.950) and Port Huron Unified (134.150).

"With Madi getting hurt, we knew we had to fight in the last two events," Nicole Coughlin said. "On beam, we pulled together. Everyone pulled together for the team. We wanted to do it for Madi. We knew she was disappointed."

The Rams had the highest balance beam performance of the day to clinch the title.

"It was really exciting," Rockford coach Alyssa Burke said. "It was kind of a roller coaster of emotions ... The girls came together after Madi's injury and decided they were not going to be defeated and weren't going to give up."

Rockford scored 36.250 at vault, 34.950 on bars, 37.625 on balance beam and 37.525 on floor exercises.

"The girls came out and nailed their beam, which was the last event," Burke said. "My biggest worry was that the girls were going to get down and get discouraged. It's only normal when someone gets injured. Madi stayed with us."

Myers broke her fibula early in the meet during the vault but cheered on her team.

Nicole Coughlin led Rockford/Sparta with an all-around of 37.275, the third-highest of the event. Morgan Korf scored 36.750. Rockford had eight total gymnasts.

"They all stepped it up," Burke said. "They had big shoes to fill with Madi being out. They did what they needed to do. Carly (Coughlin) nailed our last beam routine of the day and got a 9.6. Everybody stepped up."

"This year, we had expectations," Nicole Coughlin said. "I'm so glad we did it."

Rockford again did well with the individual events on Saturday.

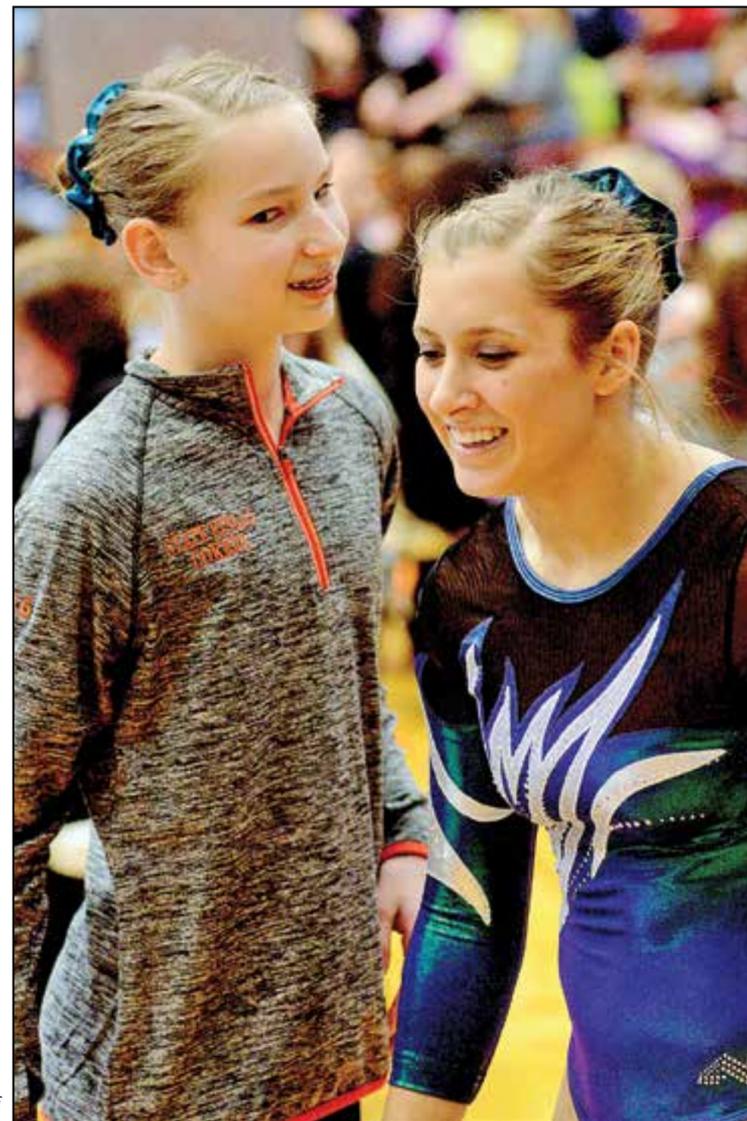
Nicole Coughlin finished third all-around (9.650). Teammate Morgan Korf, who was first a year ago, was

fifth (9.5). Rachel Hogan of Grand Blanc was first (9.875) in all-around.

"Everyone was competing so well today," Coughlin said. "You knew it was going to be a fight. I'm glad that all my hard work paid off today. It felt great."

"They did great," Rockford coach Alyssa Burke said. "Nicole had a solid day, ending up in third which was awesome. Morgan was solid too."

Coughlin won the beam (9.650) and Korf was eighth (9.325). Coughlin was seventh (9.425) and Korf eighth (9.400) in the vault. Korf was fourth (9.325) and Coughlin eighth (9.100) on the bars. Korf was third (9.500) and Coughlin fourth (9.475) in floor exercise. Carly Coughlin was sixth on floor (9.350).



Rockford/Sparta's Nicole Coughlin finished first in the balance beam with a score of 9.650. (Scott Keyes, High School Sports Scene Photo)

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# Winning the Day with Nutrition: Tips for Today's Athletes

By Emily Joseph, RDN

Spring is in full swing! That means warmer days, more opportunities to soak up Michigan sunshine, and also spring sports! Whether you're a soccer player, tennis player, or all-star track athlete, most likely you'll be participating in all day tournaments this season. Nutrition is important, however, ensuring you're properly fueling during weekend tournaments is critical for performance, preventing injuries, and staying energized during long bouts of competition. Below are a few quick, simple, and nutritious tips for making the most of game day nutrition.

**Pre-Game Breakfast.** Breakfast really is the most important meal of the day! On game day, a breakfast consumed 3-4 hours before hitting the field, is most effective for performance. A good breakfast consists of carbohydrates (cereal, toast, muffin, pancakes, milk) + protein (eggs, yogurt, milk) + water. Breakfasts should be lower in fat and fiber so as not to cause stomach discomfort on top of pre-game jitters. Here are a few possibilities for a winning start to the day:

- Scrambled eggs + whole wheat waffle + low-fat milk
- Smoothie made with low fat milk + low-fat yogurt + banana + strawberries + spinach
- Toast topped with nut butter + banana
- Oatmeal made with low fat milk and topped with blueberries

**During Games.** Hydration during games is especially important to prevent cramping or overheating. The American College of Sports Medicine recommends the following for flowing with fluids.

- For playing time < 60 minutes: 3-8 ounces of water, every 15- 20 minutes.
- For playing time > 60 minutes: 3-8 ounces of a sports beverage, every 15-20 minutes. "Nature's sports drink", Chocolate milk, is the perfect beverage on the sidelines.

**Between Game Fuel.** The key play of fueling between games is to load up on nutrients without over eating. Focus on consuming low fiber and low fat foods, such as low-fat chocolate milk, to prevent delayed digestion or stomach cramping. It can be challenging to time snacks or meals between games. If there's less than 60 minutes between games, athletes should consume mainly carbohydrates followed by fluids to help fuel. 1-2 hours between games allows for a larger snack, or small meal. Think; choices consisting of mainly carbohydrates with a small amount of protein. Don't forget to follow with water!

**Half time snack ideas or < 60 minutes between games.**

- 8 ounces of chocolate milk
- Banana ( 1/2 of a banana for young athletes)
- Peeled orange or clementine segments
- Small serving of grapes
- Melon cubes
- Dried fruit

**1-2 hours between games.**

- Chocolate milk
- Nut butter sandwich + fruit or vegetable
- Baked potato topped with low-fat greek yogurt + salsa + shredded chicken
- Bagel + low fat cream cheese + fruit or vegetable
- Turkey pita sandwich + low fat glass of milk
- Smoothie made with low-fat greek yogurt and low-fat milk

**Post-game victory.** Immediately following the game, celebrate your winnings with a glass of chocolate milk. It's a sweet way to raise your glass in honor of a game well played. Chocolate milk refuels with healthy carbohydrates and high quality protein, as well as electrolytes, vitamins, minerals. It also helps to rehydrate, and tastes dairy-licious! Be sure to continue refueling your body with a well-balanced meal a few hours after competition.

Visit [milkmeansmore.org](http://milkmeansmore.org) and click on Nature's Sports Drink, for more information on the benefits of chocolate milk consumption around workouts, sports nutrition tips, and information on healthy living from Registered Dietitians, the experts on nutrition!

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## Area Swimmers Find Success In Pool During State Swim Finals

David Cook  
Sports Scene

Led by senior Nehemiah Mork, the Midland Dow swimming and diving team wrapped up the season by placing in the top ten at the Division 2 state swimming and diving finals. Dexter won the Division 2 title while Warren De La Salle took second.

Mork claimed a pair of individual state titles as he helped lead Dow to a sixth-place finish. Mork won both the 50 and 100 free-style races. Dow also received strong efforts from Hunter Grannum who placed fifth in the diving and Noah Behm who took fifth in the 100 breaststroke. Dow was also strong in the relays as the 200 free relay took second and the 200 medley placed third.

Walled Lake Northern placed 11th overall.

Aryan Abdolhosseini placed fifth in the 500 free, Kaden Schwaiger took fifth in the 100 backstroke and Jacob Wolfe placed eighth in diving to lead Northern.

Fenton took 16th place and was paced by Zac Miceli who placed fifth in the 200 free and sixth in the 100 free.

Okemos placed 20th and was led by Andrew Himebaugh who placed 15th in the 100 backstroke and Hunter Whitman who placed 16th in diving.

### DIVISION 1

Birmingham Brother Rice won a third straight Division 1 state championship as it totaled 313 points. Saline placed second with 234.

Novi finished seventh overall. Ryan Katuski led the way for Novi as he took third in

the 50 free and eighth in the 100 free. All three of Novi's relay teams also placed in the top eight led by the 200-medley relay team of Joey Benman, Narayan Manivannan, Siddhardha Kareddy and Phillip Billiu that placed sixth.

Rockford finished ninth overall. The Rams were paced by Jake Herremans, who took second in diving and Jacob Fase who placed eighth in the 200 free.

Detroit Catholic Central placed 11th overall. Jonathan Lee earned all-state honors in the 100 breast stroke and 200 IM while Matt Loniewski placed sixth in the 100 breaststroke.

Grand Blanc placed 13th. Ryan Johnston finished eighth in both the 100 back stroke and 200 IM.

Walled Lake Central placed 21st and was led by Josh Pascua who took eighth in the 100 butterfly.

Howell placed 24th and was led by Caleb Balgaard who took eighth in the diving competition.

### DIVISION 3

Cranbrook-Kingswood captured the title while East Grand Rapids placed second overall.

St. Johns finished in 15th as a team. The Redwings were paced by their divers as freshman Cayden Petrak placed fourth, junior Brock Petrak took seventh and J.J. Gilroy placed 10th. Ben Rumney also took 14th in the 200 free.

DeWitt finished one place behind St. Johns. Cameron Sackett was DeWitt's highest placer as he placed 13th in the 200 free while Nick Schieberl took 15th in the 100 free.

Ionia placed 20th and was paced by senior Riese Penn who took third in diving.

A pair of young Alma swimmers turned in strong efforts. Freshman Broderick Ross took ninth in the 500 free and 16th in the 200 IM. Sophomore Kyle Lovas placed 14th in the 500 free.

For Haslett, Jeffrey Kai placed 16th in the 100 back stroke and the 200 relay team placed 14th.



The Division 2 swim finals returned to Saginaw Valley State University last month for the MHSAA championships. Dexter went onto win the D2 championship. (Alan Holben, High School Sports Scene Photo)

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# BOYS HOCKEY: Catholic Central Wins 12th State Title

Dan Stickrad  
Sports Scene

Novi Detroit Catholic Central is back right where it finished last season: On top of the charts.

The top-ranked Shamrocks skated past second-ranked Brighton in the Division 1 state finals, 3-0, March 12 at USA Hockey Arena, giving CC its third straight state title and 12th overall dating back to 1994.

The Shamrocks are 13-3 all-time in state finals games, outscoring its 16 finals opponents by a commanding 88-21 in those games. It also marked the sixth time Catholic Central has captured the state title with a shutout.

"I think it was our defensive play that made a huge difference," said first-year CC Coach Brandon Kaleniecki, a 2000 graduate of the school and former All-State player for the Shamrocks. "We had to limit their chances, limit their odd-man rush. I thought we did that very well. We made them play (primarily) in their defensive zone. We knew we would be able to generate scoring opportunities if we played well defensively."

Catholic Central captured its third straight state title under a new coach. But the results were the same — a 16th appearance in the title bout in a 34-year stretch.

"I think the leadership was big for us. We had a great group of returnees that become my best ally for me coming in," said Kaleniecki, referring mainly to Brian Kearns and Nick Macari. "They have had three different coaches. They made (the transition) really great. Anything that I needed done, they would take care of it. Because of this, we had another great

season."

After Brighton's Jake Crespi misfired on a penalty shot just 5:17 into the contest, the Shamrocks took over, boasting a 15-5 shots edge in the first period.

Macari and J.P. Lafferty set up Glynn Robitaille with what proved to be the game-winning goal eight minutes into the second period.

Macari pushed the lead to 2-0 with 2:38 seconds left in the second frame, courtesy of touches from Brian Galvin and Lafferty.

Cody Borke capped the scoring only 1:44 into the third period with another insurance goal, finishing off a pass from Austin Roell.

Alec Calvaruso notched the shutout between the pipes by registering 15 saves for the Shamrocks (26-7-0). Calvaruso also was in goal in a 3-0 blanking of Brighton back in November.

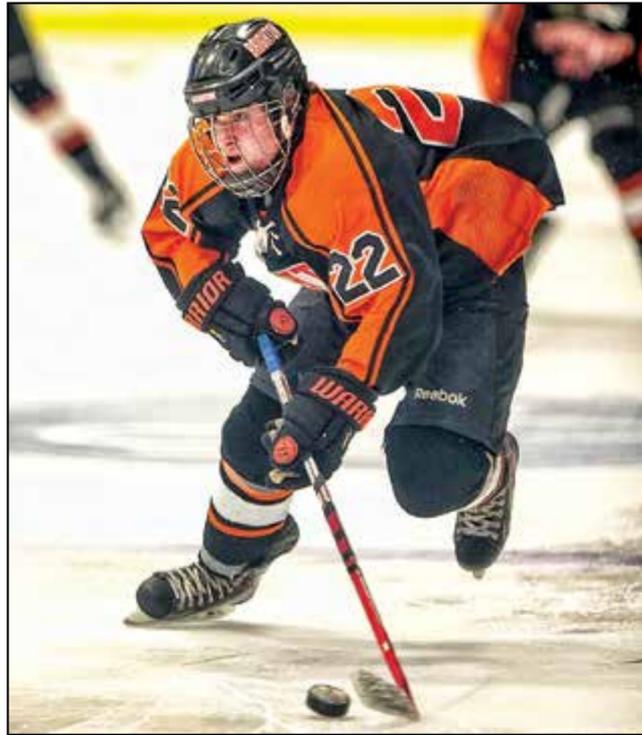
Catholic Central outscored its six postseason opponents 34-5 with three shutouts. Overall this season, the Shamrocks held a 132-51 scoring edge.

Brighton played a brutally tough schedule as well and reached the state finals for the fourth time in 11 seasons. The Bulldogs lost to CC in the 2014 finals (5-1) but defeated CC (2-1) in the 2013 championship contest.

The Bulldogs also won titles in 2012 and 2006 but couldn't match up with Catholic Central in this year's title game.

"They outplayed us," said Brighton coach Paul Moggach. "I don't think we ever got to play our type of game and hats off to them for (controlling the puck). We could never get into any type of offensive rhythm. We had a great run, but came up a little short against a very good team."

Brighton and Hartland advanced to the recent Michigan High School Athletic Association (MHSAA) championships. Brighton would lose to Detroit Catholic Central (DCC) in the finals. (Doug Bargerstock, High School Sports Scene Photos)



# Northern Teams Dominate State Ski Finals

David Cook  
Sports Scene

The ski powerhouses of the North dominated the competition at this year's MHSAA state skiing finals in Division 1 and Division 2.

In Division 1, Marquette doubled up on the titles as it won both the boys and the girls state titles.

A number of local schools turned in strong efforts in the Division 1 boys finals. The Clarkston boys placed fourth overall. Max Wiedman led the way for Clarkston as he placed 10th in the giant slalom and 12th in the slalom. Lakeland finished fifth overall and was paced by James Winzloft who finished 11th in the giant slalom. Detroit Catholic Central placed sixth as a team and Brighton ninth.

Individually, Rockford's Kam Ford placed fifth in the giant slalom. Novi's Mitch Goodman took

ninth in the giant slalom and 13th in the slalom.

In the girl's competition, South Lyon finished sixth in the Division 1. Anna Geyer led the way for South Lyon as she placed fourth in the giant slalom and seventh in the slalom. Walled Lake Northern placed ninth as a team.

A number of local individuals also turned in strong efforts in Division 1. Fenton junior Zoe Weinberg placed second in the slalom and third in the giant slalom. Ashleigh Bicknell, the regional champion in the giant slalom, placed 19th in the giant slalom at state and ninth in the slalom.

In Division 2, schools from the Northwest corner of the Lower Peninsula dominated the competition. Petoskey won the Division 2 boys state title while Elk Rapids/Traverse City St. Francis won the girls Division 2 state title.

The Flint Powers girls placed eighth overall while Harrison took ninth place.



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