

HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS SCENE KEEPING KIDS IN THE NEWS

555 E Downie St
Alma, MI 48801
(517) 202-1808

www.highschoolsportsscene.com

Publisher
Randy Miniard
randy@highschoolsportsscene.com
517-202-1808

Editor
Scott Keyes
midmichigansportsscene@yahoo.com
989-890-4036

High School Liaison
Paul Hornak
paul@highschoolsportsscene.com
989-331-1168

Northern Michigan Sales
Scott Salowich
ssalowich@yahoo.com
313-408-4410

Editorial
Scott Keyes, John Raffel, David Cook,
Butch Harmon, Scott Salowich,
Dan Strickrandt

Photographers
Chuck Prikasky, Doug Bargerstock,
Zip Widman, Mike Schutt,
Russ Pierce, Skip Traynor,
Bob Campbell, Gary Williams,
Don Goostrey, Kim Larner

Vol. 8, Issue 86 • January/February 2017

CONTENTS

- 4 | Eye On Wrestling
- 6 | Alma Wrestling Wins League Title For First Down In 25 Years
- 7 | Sage Gonzales Leads Alma Wrestling
- 8 | Westside Ramblings
- 9 | DeWitt Wrestling Among Top Teams In D2
- 10 | St. Louis Wins Fifth Consecutive TVC West Wrestling Title
- 11 | Mason's Football Coach Steps Down
- 12 | Seeley Sisters Continue To Excel On Court
- 14 | Eye On Basketball
- 15 | Mt. Pleasant Girls Hoops Remain Undefeated
- 16 | Laingsburg Continues To Thrive On Court
- 17 | Central Montcalm Girls Basketball Hope To End Drought
- 18 | Jankoska Cements Legacy
- 20 | Freeland Hoops Continue Stellar Season
- 21 | Hemlock's Krauss Solid
- 22 | Saginaw Heritage A Contender In Class A
- 23 | Eye On P-W Basketball
- 24 | Front Court Leads Way For Ithaca
- 26 | The Coach's Kid
- 28 | Hemlock Hoops Hanging Tough In TVC
- 29 | Bridgeport Hoops On A Roll
- 30 | Brian Bowen Named McDonald's All-American
- 32 | Fowler Hoops Turning Heads
- 33 | Meet Holt's Jaron Faulds
- 34 | Grand Ledge's Continues To Dominate In Gymnastics
- 35 | St. Charles Bowler Kyle Tuttle Shoots For Fourth Straight Title
- 36 | Northern Report

Find Us On **facebook**



PUBLISHER'S NOTE

It's another great day at High School Sports Scene!

I hope you are all winning against your New Year's Resolutions!

As we get ready to roll into the 2017 Michigan High School Athletics

Association finals in

about a month, I can't help but to reminisce of the past eight years of publishing High School Sports Scene.

Wow, it has been fun!

As a coach, I must applaud all of you coaches because it's a grind every day. Teaching your sport, leading your school and pushing your kids to the max in hopes of having much success on your playing field. At the end of the day, week, month and season, it's not really all about wins and losses, rather it's about the character and improvement of your team and the passion the kids have of trying to achieve their goals, the competition of everyday life and the friendships made through high school athletics, it's priceless!!

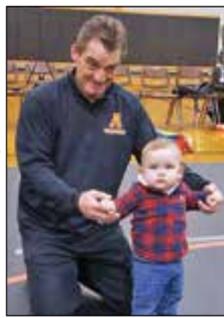
Things I foresee this tournament season.

Coach Tom Zelinski takes the Freeland girls to the Breslin. Lowell coach RJ Boudro leads the Lowell wrestling team to a fourth straight MHSAA state title and Nate Etheridge and Chippewa Hills wins their first-ever MHSAA Division 3 wrestling title.

Also a big congratulations goes out to former Freeland standout Tori Jankoska, who recently set Michigan State University's all-time scoring record in early January. It just shows you what a student-athlete can accomplish when there is determination, drive and a strong-mind and body can do when pushed in the right direction.

Enjoy the rest of the winter sports season players, coaches and fans!

Randy Miniard
Publisher/Owner
517-202-1808
randy@highschoolsportsscene.com



Sundance

888-799-3896

TAX & PLATES INCLUDED IN ALL PRICES!

Sweet Deals!

2016 BUICK ENCORE

\$195/DN. **SAVE \$5,885!**
\$195/MO.
\$3,000/DN. \$115/MO.

SALE PRICE \$19,800

MSRP \$25,385
GM FINANCIAL. GMS 39 MO 10K LEASE. FLEX PURCHASE. COMPETITIVE LEASE LOYALTY. SELECT MODEL. 72 MO @ 2.99% - \$255/MO. SAVE \$10/TAX AND PLATE INCLUDED.

2017 GMC TERRAIN FWD

\$196/DN. **SAVE \$5,695!**
\$196/MO.
\$3,000/DN. \$65/MO.

SALE PRICE \$22,530

MSRP \$28,225
GM FINANCIAL. GMS 24 MO 10K LEASE. COMPETITIVE LEASE LOYALTY. 72 MO @ 2.74% - \$368/MO. SAVE \$173 TAX AND PLATE INCLUDED.

2017 GMC SIERRA DOUBLE CAB 2WD

\$229/DN. **SAVE \$4,925!**
\$229/MO.
\$3,000/DN. \$149/MO.

SALE PRICE \$28,500

MSRP \$33,425
GM FINANCIAL. GMS. 39 MO 10K LEASE. FLEX PURCHASE. COMPETITIVE LEASE LOYALTY. 72 MONTHS @ 2.74% - \$469 MONTH. SAVE \$200 MONTHLY TAX AND PLATE INCLUDED.

OVER 1200 USED CARS AND TRUCKS

<p>2014 CHRYSLER 200 LIMITED</p> <p>4 DOOR SALE PRICE \$12,500</p> <p>\$209/DOWN \$209/MONTH TAX & PLATE INCLUDED IN PAYMENT</p>	<p>2009 GMC SIERRA 2500 HD</p> <p>EXT. DIESEL SALE PRICE \$24,900</p> <p>\$399/DOWN \$399/MONTH TAX & PLATE INCLUDED IN PAYMENT</p>	<p>2014 CHEVY CRUZE</p> <p>SALE PRICE \$14,900</p> <p>\$249/DOWN \$249/MONTH TAX & PLATE INCLUDED IN PAYMENT</p>	<p>2012 GMC TERRAIN SLE-2</p> <p>SALE PRICE \$11,900</p> <p>\$229/DOWN \$229/MONTH TAX & PLATE INCLUDED IN PAYMENT</p>	<p>2010 FORD F-150 REG CAB</p> <p>SALE PRICE \$18,500</p> <p>\$309/DOWN \$309/MONTH TAX & PLATE INCLUDED IN PAYMENT</p>
<p>2012 FORD TAURUS SEL</p> <p>SALE PRICE \$13,900</p> <p>\$269/DOWN \$269/MONTH TAX & PLATE INCLUDED IN PAYMENT</p>	<p>2010 DODGE JOURNEY R/T</p> <p>SALE PRICE \$12,900</p> <p>\$249/DOWN \$249/MONTH TAX & PLATE INCLUDED IN PAYMENT</p>	<p>2009 GMC SIERRA REG CAB</p> <p>SALE PRICE \$17,900</p> <p>\$299/DOWN \$299/MONTH TAX & PLATE INCLUDED IN PAYMENT</p>	<p>2009 CHEVY TRAVERSE LTZ</p> <p>SALE PRICE \$11,900</p> <p>\$229/DOWN \$229/MONTH TAX & PLATE INCLUDED IN PAYMENT</p>	<p>2007 GMC SIERRA EXT CAB</p> <p>SALE PRICE \$13,900</p> <p>\$269/DOWN \$269/MONTH TAX & PLATE INCLUDED IN PAYMENT</p>
<p>2014 GMC ACADIA SLT-1</p> <p>SALE PRICE \$26,900</p> <p>\$437/DOWN \$437/MONTH TAX & PLATE INCLUDED IN PAYMENT</p>	<p>2014 FORD ESCAPE TITANIUM</p> <p>SALE PRICE \$11,900</p> <p>\$229/DOWN \$229/MONTH TAX & PLATE INCLUDED IN PAYMENT</p>	<p>2013 LINCOLN MKX</p> <p>SALE PRICE \$24,900</p> <p>\$399/DOWN \$399/MONTH TAX & PLATE INCLUDED IN PAYMENT</p>	<p>2008 PONTIAC G6</p> <p>CONVERTIBLE SALE PRICE \$9,900</p> <p>\$189/DOWN \$189/MONTH TAX & PLATE INCLUDED IN PAYMENT</p>	<p>2015 JEEP WRANGLER SAHARA</p> <p>SALE PRICE \$32,900</p> <p>\$479/DOWN \$479/MONTH TAX & PLATE INCLUDED IN PAYMENT</p>
<p>2008 BUICK ENCLAVE CXL</p> <p>FWD, 4 DR. SALE PRICE \$12,700</p> <p>\$245/DOWN \$245/MONTH TAX & PLATE INCLUDED IN PAYMENT</p>	<p>2013 FORD EXPLORER LIMITED</p> <p>SALE PRICE \$24,900</p> <p>\$405/DOWN \$405/MONTH TAX & PLATE INCLUDED IN PAYMENT</p>	<p>2009 HONDA CRV-EXL</p> <p>SALE PRICE \$11,500</p> <p>\$223/DOWN \$223/MONTH TAX & PLATE INCLUDED IN PAYMENT</p>	<p>2011 CADILLAC ESCALADE EXT</p> <p>SALE PRICE \$31,990</p> <p>\$466/DOWN \$466/MONTH TAX & PLATE INCLUDED IN PAYMENT</p>	<p>2013 GMC SIERRA EXT CAB</p> <p>SALE PRICE \$24,900</p> <p>\$359/DOWN \$359/MONTH TAX & PLATE INCLUDED IN PAYMENT</p>

877SUNDANCE.COM

ATTENTION! High School Seniors and Special Vocational Education Students
Call Sundance, We Have Special Intern Programs As Well As Automotive Technician Programs And More!

Go To School, Make Money. Graduate With Sundance and Make Money!

New & Used Vehicles:
All Payments are with approved credit, see dealer for details. *On used vehicles from 2.49% - 3.24% APR, 24-84 months financing.

U.S. 27 YOUR GATEWAY TO THE NORTH SUPERSTORE!

MOTORSPORTS & TRAILERS **866-554-4217** www.us27motorsports.com **LINK TO US-27 HERE!**

SERVICE PROFESSIONAL AND PARTS EXPERTS.....SERVICING ALL MODELS OF ATVs, MOTORCYCLES, SNOWMOBILES, PWC AND TRAILERS

EXCELLENT QUALITY!

WINTER FUN!

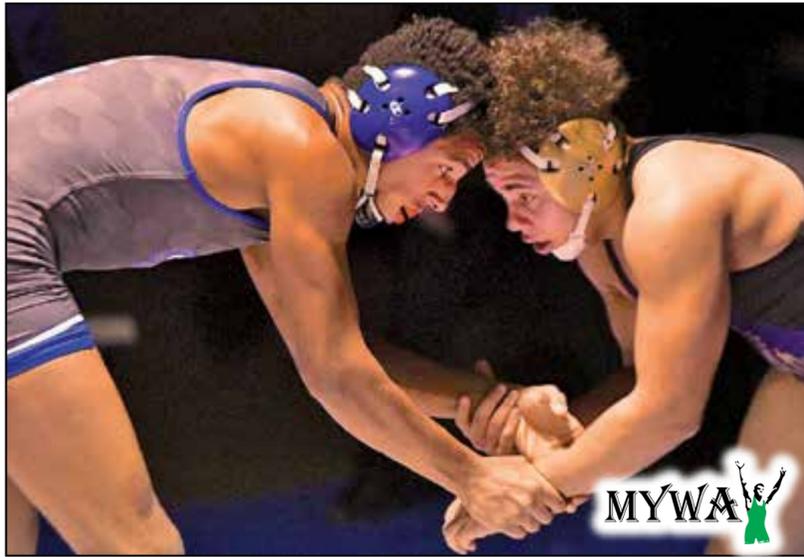
HUNTERS WELCOME!

RIDERS WANTED!

FALL COLOR TOURS!

BEST DEALS!

can-am POLARIS HONDA YAMAHA ski-doo SUZUKI seadoo ARCTIC CAT SURE-TRAC Haulmark AMERICAN MADE HALL-IT



WRESTLING ROUNDUP

Area Wrestlers, Teams Gearing Up For Post-Season Action In February

Butch Harmon Sports Scene

After getting a taste of the individual state wrestling finals last season, Lakeview sophomore Curtis Perry is looking for more this season.

Although unranked at 103 pounds in Division 3, Perry is putting together an impressive season. Heading into the final week of January, Perry has put together a 24-3 record. Perry has won titles at both the St. Louis and Sparta invitationals and placed second at Chippewa Hills.

"My goal is to place at state," Perry said. "I went to state last year but I went two and out. It was a good learning experience and it has helped me this year."

At Perry High School, senior Anthony Gallagher knows what it's like to have success at the state meet as he won the 103-pound title in Division 3 last season. Gallagher is ranked first in the state at 112 pounds this season. So far this season Gallagher has won titles at New Lothrop, Durand and the Orange and Blue Invitational in downriver Detroit. Gallagher is not the lone ranked wrestler

at Perry as sophomore Jacob Porter is ranked fourth at 103, junior Jacob Spiess is ranked third at 125, senior Ethan Orweller is ranked seventh at 152 and senior Kolten Lauer is ranked seventh at 171.

Shepherd sophomore Trevor Robinson is on a mission this season. After placing second at the Division 3 state meet at 125 pounds last season, Robinson has picked up where he left off this year. Robinson is ranked second in the state in Division 3 at 130 pounds this season. Robinson has won titles at both the New Lothrop and Hart invitationals and took second at Freeland.

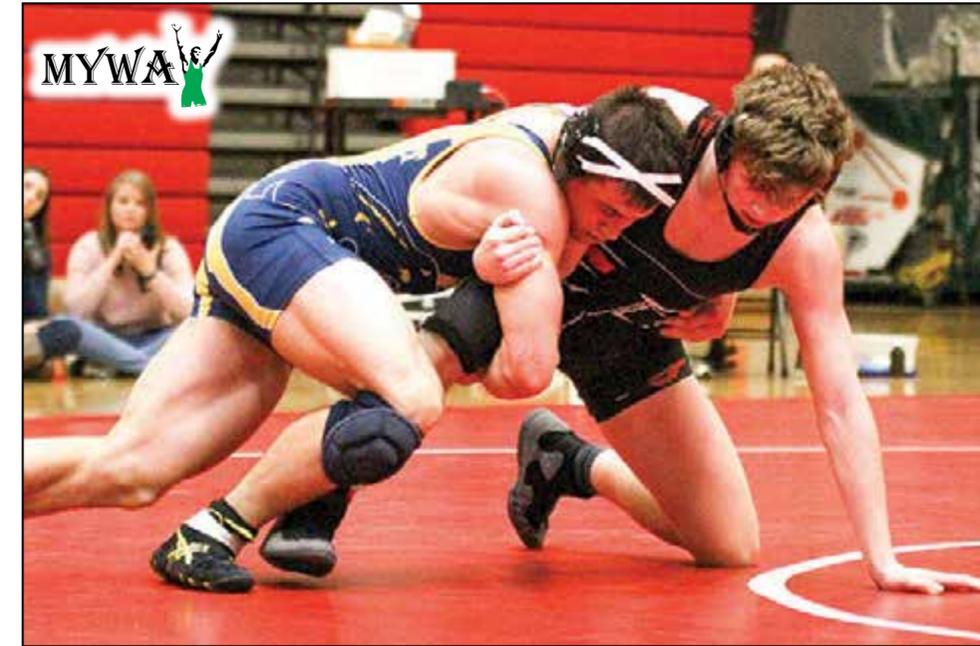
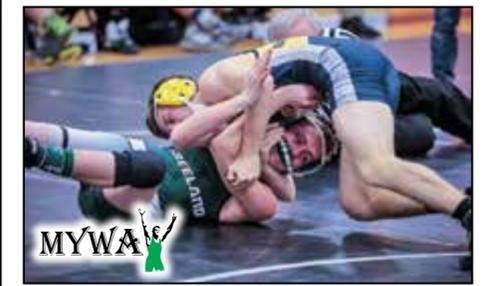
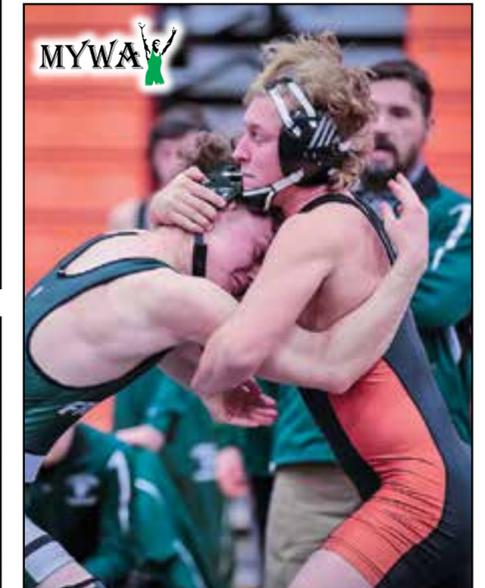
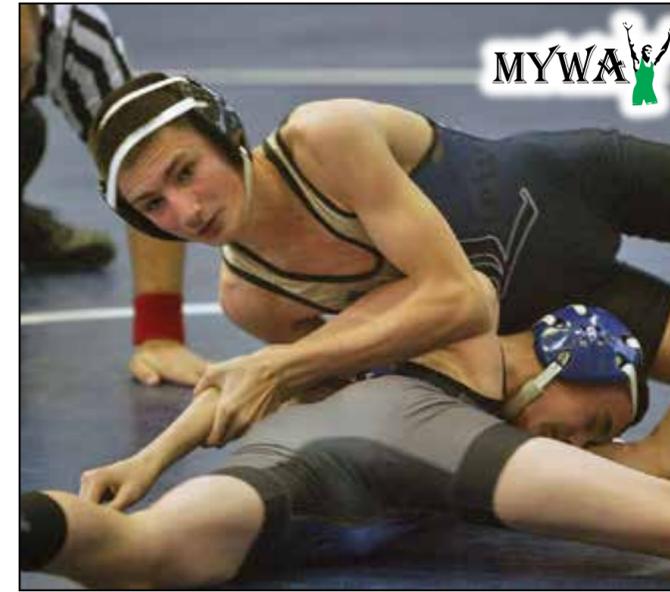
St. Louis has a number of highly-ranked wrestlers this season. Senior Konnor Holton is ranked first at 152 pounds in Division 4 while junior Jake Davis is ranked second at 145. Junior Ernie Diaz is ranked third at 189 pounds while fellow junior Jayce Keuhnlein is ranked fourth at 140 pounds and sophomore Isaac Howd is ranked eighth at 135 pounds.

Carson City-Crystal is ranked ninth in the state in the Division 4 team rankings

Area wrestlers are preparing for the upcoming state tournament as many teams are jockeying for position heading into the final month of the season. (High School Sports Scene Staff Photos)

and the Eagles have shown signs that they are capable of even more this season. Carson City defeated 6th-ranked Bronson 42-36 earlier this season and dropped an eight-point decision to fifth-ranked Decatur and a seven-point decision to eighth-ranked Lawton. The Eagles have a number of wrestlers turning in strong seasons led by Nolan Datema (103), Jamison Ward (112), Daryn Shepler (119), Braxton Seida (140), Daniel Smith (171) and Brian Yeakey (189).

While many teams struggle to find a good heavyweight, the Corunna Cavaliers have two standout heavyweights in seniors Brandon Blair and Luke Cortez. Blair is ranked fourth in the state in Division 3 while Cortez is ranked sixth in the state at 285. The Cavaliers also have four other state-ranked wrestlers in sophomore Trevor Briggs (7th, 130), senior David Dummond (2nd, 160), senior Dylan Briggs (4th, 171) and senior Taylor Jackson (9th, 189). Jack Thayer is also turning in a solid season at 215 pounds.



Simmet Insurance Agency
 Since 1939
 "Protection For You & Yours"
Auto • Home • Farm
Business • Life
 Agents: Bradley M. Simmet, Candace L. Wesson, Autumn Robbe, Brandon M. Simmet
 117 West Center Ithaca, MI 48847 Ph: (989) 875-3580

Evans Eye Centers
 Dr. Lawrence M. Evans
 OPHTHALMOLOGIST
 120 E. Warwick, Alma, MI. 48801 (989) 463-EYES (3937)
 1203 S. Mission, Mt Pleasant, MI. (989) 775-EYES (3937)
 102 S. Third St, Carson City, MI. (989) 584-3111

Discount Tire & Battery
 Greg Hamling
 Manager
 greg@discounttire.com
 Brakes • Tires • Alignments
 193 Michigan Avenue • St. Louis, MI 48880 • (989) 561-4100

COVENANT CENTER FOR ADVANCED ORTHOPAEDICS
 specializing in:
 SPORTS INJURIES • SHOULDER REPLACEMENTS • ADVANCED SHOULDER SURGERY
 JOINT PAIN • HIP AND KNEE REVISIONS • TOTAL HIP AND KNEE REPLACEMENTS
 FRACTURES • ACETABULUM AND PELVIC FRACTURES • NONUNION FRACTURES
 COMPLEX INTRA-ARTICULAR JOINT FRACTURES

 Anthony de Bari, MD Board Certified Orthopaedic Surgeon Fellowship Trained	 B.C. de Beaubien, MD Board Certified Orthopaedic Surgeon Fellowship Trained in Adult Reconstruction	 Colleen Linehan, MD Board Certified Orthopaedic Surgeon	 Michael Tucker, DO Board Eligible Orthopaedic Surgeon Fellowship Trained in Orthopaedic Trauma	 Bryon Chamberlain, MD Board Certified Orthopaedic Surgeon	 Jason Maxa, PA-C	 Lindsey Pilling, PA-C
---	---	---	--	---	----------------------	---------------------------

SAGINAW 4701 TOWNE CENTRE, SUITE 301 989.921.3500	SAGINAW 3875 BAY RD., SUITE 2-5 989.793.1372	SAGINAW 800 COOPER, SUITE 5 989.583.7450	FRANKENMUTH 600 NORTH MAIN ST. 989.921.3500	MIDLAND 1549 WASHINGTON 989.921.3500
--	---	---	--	---

AARON WALDRON TRUCKING, LLC
 7480 West Polk Road, Alma, MI 48801
 Local 989-466-2300
 Or Toll free 866-507-2300

• Haulers of Agricultural Commodities
 • Van and Flatbed Hauling
 • Temporary Dumpster Service
 • 10, 15, 20 & 30 Yard Containers

The name you've grown to trust just got better
 Put Our Team To Work For You

Weichert Realtors
 Broadway Realty Mount Pleasant
 989-775-3800
 WeichertBroadway.com

THE Camera SHOP
 M-F 9am-6pm, Sat. 10am-4pm
 We Can Transfer To DVD
 Home Movies Including:
 • VHS
 • 8mm, Super 8mm & 16mm
 • 8mm & High 8mm video
 • Digital 8mm video tape
 • Mini DV Type

6006 S. Pennsylvania at Miller, Lansing
 517-272-0027
 www.LansingCamera.com

wmlm 1520am
 Real Country Music
 News • Sports • Weather

Your Voice For Local High School Football & Basketball Games!

The New Z 92.5 THE CASTLE
 KROL COMMUNICATIONS INC.



Panther Pride...



Alma Wrestling Team Taking Game To Next Level This Season

Butch Harmon Sports Scene

Of all the high school sports, building a successful wrestling team is one of the more difficult projects. Many of the most successful teams in the state like Lowell, New Lothrop, Davison and Dundee have been successful year after year, and breaking into that top tier takes plenty of patience and hard work.

At Alma, head coach Randy Miniard is in his sixth season of coaching the Panther wrestling team and six years of hard work are beginning to bear the fruits of winning. With a 78-4 win over Saginaw Swan Valley, Alma won the Tri-Valley Central Conference title for its first conference wrestling title in 25 years.

With the win, Alma improved its record to 26-12 overall and 7-0 in the TVC.

While the conference title is a milestone to how far the Alma wrestling team has come, its performance at the Gary Rivers Memorial Invitational in mid-January reflected on how competitive the Panthers are. Alma went 1-3 at the tournament that included many of the premier Division 1 and 2 teams in the state. Against Davison, the No. 2 ranked team in the state in Division 1, the Panthers dropped a 59-16 decision. Against Grand Ledge from the CAAC Blue, Alma dropped a 48-21 decision and against Hudsonville, from the rugged Ottawa-Kent Red Division, Alma fell 43-22. Alma also defeated Byron Center, a Division 2 school from the Ottawa-Kent Green 52-19. To wrestle

and compete with such large and successful program shows just how much improvement the Panthers are making.

Miniard and the Alma program have concrete goals in mind for the program and have been making steady progress at achieving those goals.

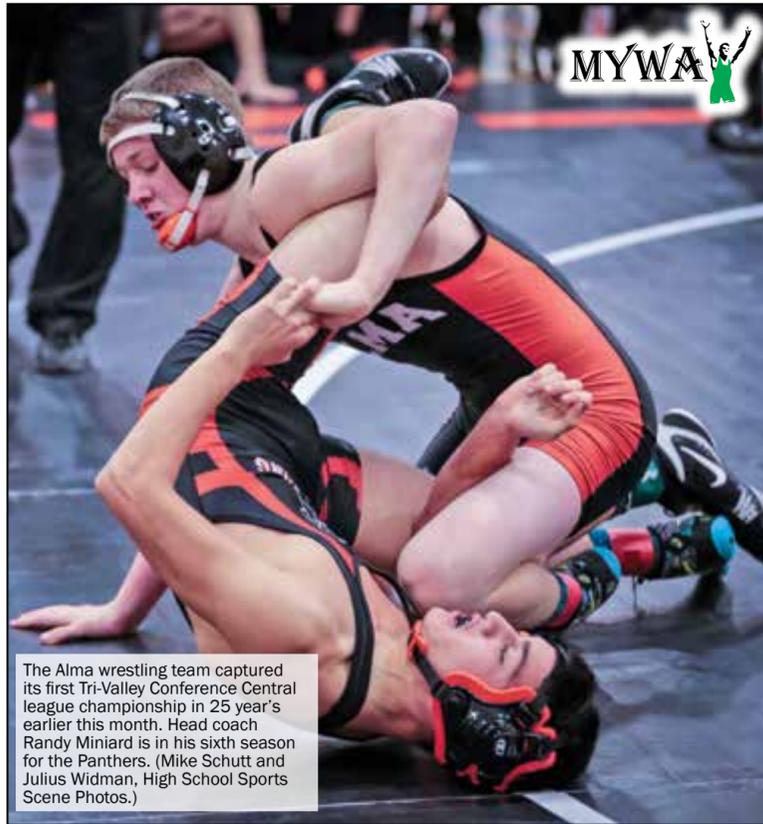
"Every year we get together as a team and set team and individual goals that drive us each day, each practice and each meet to get better and strive to achieve those goals," Miniard said. "Each year our number-one goal is to win the conference, then a district, then a regional and ultimately a state championship."

Over the last two years Alma has been picking off those goals one by one.

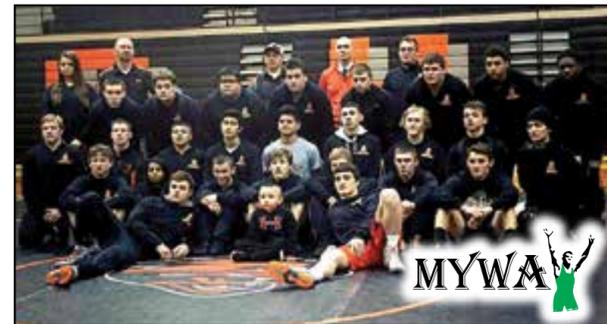
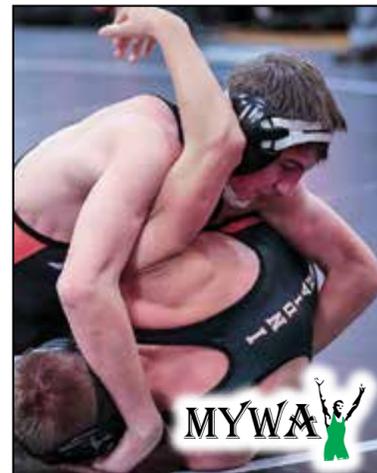
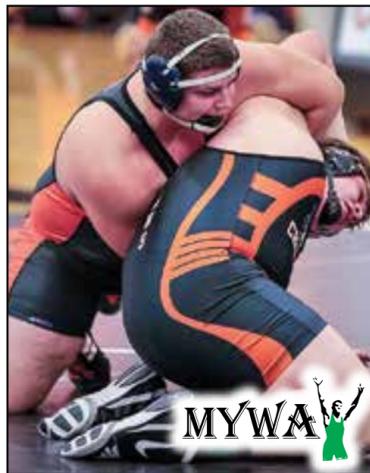
"Two years ago we won a district title with the leadership of Boyd Hubbard, Gabe Wadsworth and Damion Castillo," Miniard said. "It was the first district title for Alma wrestling in many years."

This season, the Panthers are taking the next step.

"This year has been a different story since day one which started after last year's state tournament," Miniard said. "We were going to win a conference title and no one was going to get in our way. Not Swan Valley who had dominated the conference in the past, not Shepherd who had surprised us last year, not Freeland who is always solid and definitely not Chesaning who had beaten us three years in a row."



The Alma wrestling team captured its first Tri-Valley Conference Central league championship in 25 years earlier this month. Head coach Randy Miniard is in his sixth season for the Panthers. (Mike Schutt and Julius Widman, High School Sports Scene Photos.)



This Page Proudly Sponsored by Jake and Suzie Everdeen and



Gonzales Leads Alma Mat Attack

John Raffel Sports Scene

The records speak for themselves.

Alma won a TVC Central Conference title thanks to the talents of many wrestlers who have had strong records this season. Assistant coach Zip Widman pointed this out by releasing records of various Panther performers:

- 152—Sage Gonzales Sr. 31-2; 145—Kyle McCreery Sr. 23-6; 135—Alex Rosas Jr. 26-3; 285—Gregg Simmons Jr. 22-3; 140—Jaden Jerome Jr. 26-7; 189—Travis Hamilton Jr. 18-13; 125—Cole Geister Jr. 14-10; 160—Trenton Knopf Jr. 11-11; 103—Jana Torrez So. 14-8; 130—David Anderson So. 10-7; 152—Caleb Collins So. 6-3; 130—Josh Graham So. 8-4; 125—Jarrett Ferman Fr. 29-3; 135—Justin VanBlaricum Fr. 16-9; 119—Austin Kanine Fr. 11-8; 103—Terry Wentworth 15-12.

Gonzales put in a lot of work during the offseason and it paid off.

"I've improved my body and conditioning," he said.

"We worked pretty hard," Widman said. "We had open mats quite often. We knew we were on the upswing. We won districts the year before last, and we felt the conference title this season was ours to take."

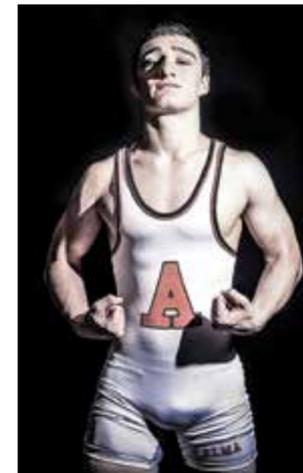
The Panthers were 7-0 in duals during the conference. The close match was against Chesaning.

Gonzales led the way with his record. He pointed to quickness as the key behind his success.

"We're still weak in a few weight classes," Widman said. "But we fill every class and currently have five freshmen in our starting lineup. We only have two seniors in our lineup."

Gonzales, Widman said, "worked hard all summer long. He came to open mats and everything. He really made a committed effort to push himself. He lost in the blood round at regionals last year and I think he decided that wasn't going to happen again. He's improved tremendously each year. Every year he improved and worked at it. He's a takedown guy, he's tough on his feet."

Alma senior Sage Gonzales has lost only twice this season and hopes to end the year with a trip to the individual state finals at the Palace of Auburn Hills. (Mike Schutt and Julius Widman, High School Sports Scene Photos.)



ALMA GMC

Scott DeMull John Hall Chuck Kimber Debbie Whitman Guy Erwin

740 N. Alger Rd, Alma • Toll Free 888-229-2336 • Local 989-463-2161 www.almachevybuickgmc.com

PREMIER COMPONENTS, INC.

YOUR #1 SOURCE FOR MILL ACCESSORIES

- Square & Round Spouting & Accessories • Truss Kits
- Screw Conveyors & Parts • Power Transmission Components
- Belting, Buckets & Fasteners • Drag Conveyors & Accessories
- Level Controls • Bin Sweeps and Unloading Equipment

3984 W. Monroe (M-46) Alma, MI 48801
Ph: (989) 463-4532
Fax: (989) 463-4560
Toll Free: 1-877-681-3064

www.premier-com.com

Kruse, Lowell Gearing Up For Long Post Season Runs

Butch Harmon
Sports Scene

As quarterback of the Lowell football team, David Kruse understands the value of leadership. Without any state champions returning to the lineup for the Lowell wrestling team this winter, Kruse has stepped up as one of the team leaders for the Red Arrows who find themselves atop the Division 2 state team rankings and the favorite to win a fifth straight D2 state title.

Kruse, ranked fourth in the state at 189 pounds in Division 2, has helped the Red Arrows to some impressive wins this season. In late January the Red Arrows hosted the Gary Rivers Memorial. Lowell displayed just how deep and strong of

a team it has this season with impressive wins over Davison (45-22) and Grandville (40-19), two teams ranked in the top six in Division 1. A week prior the Red Arrows posted wins against Richmond (43-16) and Whitehall (55-14), two of the top four teams in Division 3.

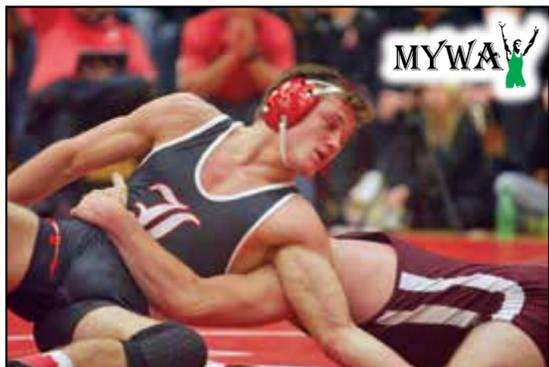
"We're looking real good this year," said Kruse. "We have a lot of younger kids stepping up who are up for the challenge. I think we have a great shot at state this year."

Among the young guys stepping up for Lowell are freshman Austin Boone who is ranked first in the state at 135 pounds and sophomore Avry Mutschler who is ranked third at 140. The Red Arrows are also getting strong efforts from seniors Eli Boulton (2nd at 215 pounds) and Bryce Dempsey (4th

at 160). Juniors Max Bishop (7th at 285) and Keigan Yuhus (4th at 171) are also turning in big seasons.

• The Rockford wrestling team picked up a huge victory in their quest for an OK Red Conference title when it defeated Grandville 34-27. Coupled with a 30-28 win over Hudsonville earlier in the season, Rockford is one dual meet away from clinching the conference dual title. A true team effort has been the key to success for the Rams who have just two wrestlers ranked in the top ten in Division 1. Senior Andrew Hansen is ranked seventh in the state at 140 pounds, while senior Tyler Blave is ninth at 189.

• The Greenville girls basketball team continues its march to an OK White title. Greenville went 4-0 in



its first four league games and 8-2 in its first 10 games overall. The talented duo of sisters Landon, a senior, and Adele Kemp, a sophomore points guard, have keyed the Yellowjackets. Greenville is also getting big efforts from Paige Hallock and senior forward Mallory Hinken.

• The Lowell girls basketball team is giving Greenville a major challenge for the OK White title. Led by talented sophomores Regan Cox and Emily DePew, the Red Arrows opened the season with a 3-1 league mark and 8-2 overall record.

objective of having Rockford student-athletes contribute to the betterment of their community through charitable functions, volunteerism and the investment of their time in helping others. Just another characteristic of what a Miss Basketball candidate should have and that is caring for the people and volunteering with great causes within their community." Waters has liked her team's prospects despite being at the .500 mark.

"It's going pretty well," Waters said. "We've had a lot of close games. I think we're starting to get the hang of everything."

"We aren't a tall team so rebounding is a key to more wins," Waters continued. "We're trying to work on defense too, but I think rebounding would be one of the bigger factors to our success."

Watters gives her own performance passing grades "I feel I'm doing O.K.," she said. "I have things to work on. I just have to get used to the new players on the team. I'm not disappointed on how I'm playing. But I can do some things better."

Watters has been more of a point guard this season.

"The point guard from last year graduated," Watters continued. "We're all trying to adjust. Our goal is to win a district and I think we can do that, and another goal is to win the OK Red which is very challenging with Hudsonville and East Kentwood. I think it's possible if we keep working hard in practice."



Rockford's Maddy Watters will play her college basketball next season at Central Michigan University. (Butch Harmon, High School Sports Scene Photo)

Rockford Player Remains Miss Basketball Candidate

John Raffel
Sports Scene

Maddie Watters has been working to help Rockford's girls basketball team become a competitor in the OK Red Conference this season, but she's also striving to get ready for the Division 1 level when she plays at Central Michigan University next season.

She's been on the Miss Basketball watch list,



and for good reason. Earlier in the season, she scored 16 points and had nine rebounds and six assists in a win over previously unbeaten Hudsonville. She had been averaging 18 points, 3.8 assists, 3.1 rebounds and 2.6 steals per game.

Two seasons ago as a sophomore, she was already drawing interest from college coaches. For the third straight season she was named to the Cornerstone Holiday Tournament all tourney team.

Jim Johnson, of Belding, a local sports promoter whose daughter Taylor Johnson played basketball at Belding and Central Michigan, has been among the boosters promoting Watters for Miss Basketball. In a promotional email for Watters, he wrote the following about her involvement in the Special Treasures program:

"Special Treasures was founded by Rockford parents Amy Kelley and Cindy Quinn. This organization is made up of parents of children with special needs. The mission of Special Treasures is to enrich the lives of children with special needs by providing education, resources, and support while giving hope for brighter tomorrows. RAMS was organized by Rockford resident Tom Carlson with the

11249 West Carson City Rd. | Greenville, MI | (616) 788-2338 | www.tinnehasit.com

DeWitt Wrestling Packs Punch; Gears Up For Long Run In D2

Butch Harmon
Sports Scene

Ranked second in the state in Division 2 at the beginning of January, the DeWitt wrestling team is poised for a deep team state tournament run. The Panthers have faced plenty of tough competition this season and that rugged schedule is sharpening DeWitt for the team tournament.

DeWitt has posted a number of impressive wins this season including wins against Lake Fenton, Brighton, Tecumseh and Grand Ledge. The Panthers also dropped close duels against St. Johns and Mason.

"The season has been going good," said DeWitt coach Bryan Byars. "We've hit a bit of a rough patch lately but that will just help us for the tournament."

This year's DeWitt team features a large group of underclassmen combined with some standout seniors. Seniors Lucas McFarland (160 pounds), Gabe Lerner (171) and Nick Brandt (189) are all ranked in the top 10 in Division 1. Sophomore Quenten Hall (130) and juniors Jackson Severns (125), Kilion Southworth (140) and Sam York (152) are also state-ranked wrestlers. "Lucas McFarland, Gabe Lerner and

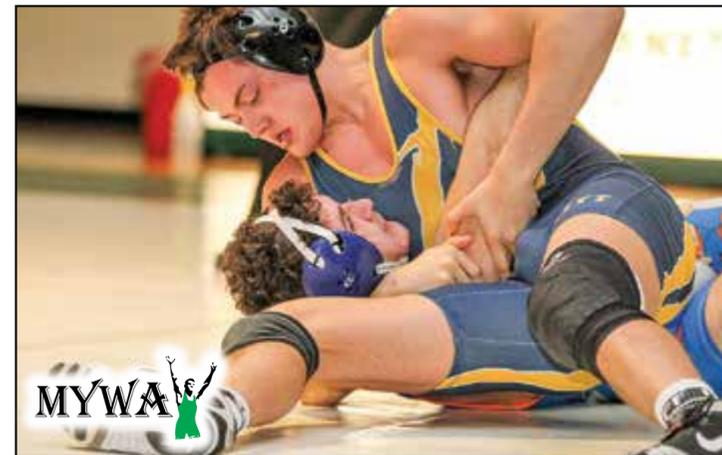
Nick Brandt have really helped our freshmen and sophomores come along," Byars said. "We have a lot of freshmen and sophomores on this year's team and they have been coming along nicely. We stress the team concept and the guys have been doing a great job of coming together as a team."

McFarland, ranked second at 160 pounds and Lerner, ranked third at 171, are also primed for big runs in the individual state tournament.

"Lucas is having a very good season," Byars said. "He is looking real good and has only one loss this season. Gabe is also wrestling real, real tough this year. He's having a tremendous season."

In the team tournament, DeWitt is heading to the Bath district that also includes Ionia. A win at the Bath district will send the Panthers to the Division 2 regional at Mason. The Fowlerville, Charlotte and Lansing Eastern districts will also be at the Mason regional where DeWitt could face off against Mason or Eaton Rapids with a trip to the team state finals on the line.

"The post-season is looking good," Byars said. "I like our draw in the district and the regional. We just have to make sure everyone is healthy and ready to go."



DeWitt seniors Lucas McFarland (top) and Gabe Lerner (below) have the Panthers in a prime position to make a run at possible district and regional titles during the final month of the season. (Kim Lerner, High School Sports Scene Photo)

Nutrients to Refuel • Protein to Rebuild • Backed by Science • Produced by Local Farm Families

Chocolate Milk: Nature's Sports Drink

For more information, please visit www.MilkMeansMore.org or call 1-800-241-MILK (6455) to learn how your school can get involved.



St. Louis Wins Fifth Consecutive League Title

John Raffel Sports Scene

Konnor Holton is having another strong wrestling season, but the St. Louis grappler is hoping to wrap it up this season with a Division 4 state title.

Holton recently helped the Sharks capture their fifth straight Tri-Valley

West title during a recent 66-6 victory over Ovid-Elsie.

With the win, the Sharks improve to 27-3 overall prior to press time, and finish a perfect 7-0 in TVC West action.

Gavin Giles (103), Daniel Davis (112), Angel Rojas (119), Austin Rios (125), Ryan Downs (130), Isaac Howd (135), Jayce Kuehnlein (140), Jake Davis (145), Holton (152), Eli Abbott (160), Matt King (189), Ernie Diaz (215) and Braden Hanley (HWT) all won on the night for the Sharks.

Holton is a returning state runner-up. He's a senior at 152 pounds and

his current record is 29-1.

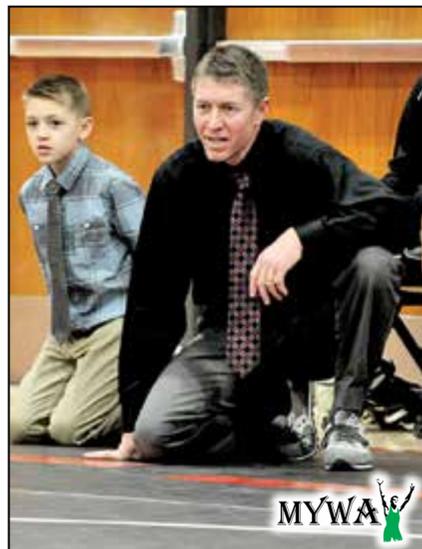
His only loss is to a wrestler in another division.

Second place was Holton's top state finish. Being No. 1 is his top goal this year.

Holton said he's improved "a lot from last year. I feel nobody is going to stop me from taking him down." He said timing and precision are among his strengths, plus the top position.

Holton is in his 11th year of wrestling and he's improved every season.

He's focused completely on wrestling at St. Louis. Holton said he might be wrestling for Olivet College after graduating.



St. Louis coach Kevin Kuhn has led his team to its fifth consecutive league championship. (Randy Miniard, High School Sports Scene Photo)



Dakota Greer Of Tri-County On Mission To Return To Victory Stand At Wrestling State Finals

Butch Harmon Sports Scene

For Howard City Tri-County junior Dakota Greer, the key to getting back to the top of the podium at the individual state wrestling finals may be staying away from log splitters.

A state champion at 103 pounds as a freshman in Division 3, Greer was on course for another run at a state championship last season. Ranked among the top in the state at 112 pounds last season, Greer's season came to an abrupt end just before the state tournament was about to begin.

"Right before the individual district, I cut my thumb on a log splitter and missed the rest of the season," Greer said. "I was having a good year. I was ranked third going into districts and

had a couple losses against AJ Facundo (Davison) and Dylan Wilkins (Sparta) who were both pretty strong wrestlers."

Healthy this season, Greer is picking off where he left off. Greer is ranked second in the state at 119 pounds in Division 3 and has been taking down every opponent he's faced. After winning the title at 119 pounds at the Sparta Invitational, Greer improved his record to 30-0 for the season.

"It was very, very disappointing when I cut my thumb," Greer said. "I missed out on the state tournament and it seemed like I fell off the face of the earth. This year I'm getting my name back. I'd really like another shot at a state title this year. That is my

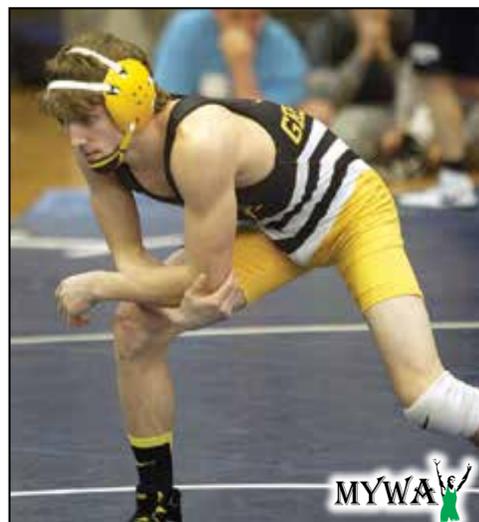
goal."

Greer would also like to help his Viking teammates make a deep tournament run in the team state tournament. Tri-County has been ranked in the top ten in Division 3 for most of the season.

"We have a real solid team this year," Greer said. "We have a good team and we can possibly make it to state. We have had some injuries that we have to overcome but when we have our full lineup we've been real tough this year."

Staying away from the log splitter is also something Greer plans to avoid in the next few weeks.

"Yeah, no more splitting wood this year," Greer said.



Tri-County's Dakota Greer prepares to do battle during the recent Sparta Invitational. (Butch Harmon, High School Sports Scene Photo)

Midland Dow Climbing Top 10 With College-Ready Talent

Dan Stickrad Sports Scene

After three lengthy tournament stays from 2008-2010, the district drought for Midland Dow has reached six years.

The Chargers have the talent this year — if they can escape one of the tougher Class A districts in the state. Fourth-ranked Dow began the season 9-2, the only losses coming against No. 3 Saginaw Heritage — and that came in an 50-47 overtime defeat — and to Class B top-ranked Birmingham Detroit Country Day. Every team

in Dow's district has winning record at the mid-point of the season.

Dow and Heritage shared the Saginaw Valley League North Division crown last season. The rivals tangle in their second SVL contest in early February, while they will likely meet in a district semifinals clash in late February.

Dow lost in the district finals the past two years, including to Heritage a year ago.

"We have to win out between now and then and hopefully win the next game with Heritage," said Dow

coach Kyle Theisen. "To be honest, we're not satisfied with the way our last two seasons have ended. We shared the league, but didn't play well in the districts. I think we can make a run (this season). I think the winner of our district can win a regional. It's going to be a (war). But we can't have any slip-ups between now and then."

Dow reached the Class A regional semifinals in both 2008 and 2009 and lost in the state quarterfinals in 2010 before falling to Dexter. Despite talented squads over the past six years, Heritage or Midland have got the best of the Chargers in district play.

This year's roster is littered with college prospects, as 5-foot-9 senior guard Ellie Taylor, a returning All-State player, is headed to St. Louis, while 6-2 senior post player Kaylee Wasco will play at Binghamton (N.Y.). Both are headed to Division I schools.

Elsewhere, 5-7 sophomore combo guard Molly Davis recently verbally committed to Central Michigan, giving this squad three D-I talents. Davis is team's top ball-handler and floor leader.

The talent does not stop there, as 5-10 senior forward Asjia Blanton, 5-8 sophomore guard Maizie Taylor, 6-0 senior forward Nadia Atton,

5-10 junior forward Quinn McCaffrey and 5-7 sophomore guard Paige Messick are also in a tight-knit, eight-player rotation.

Atton will play college volleyball at Northwood University. Blanton has committed to D-III Albion College, and Taylor has already had some offers from D-II schools.

"We only have eight girls on varsity right now, but what I like about this group is that everyone plays their roles," said Theisen. "We play good defense, we communicate, we have shooters and we have good post play. All eight girls contribute. We have talent, not just 1-2 girls that lead us. We have a lot of players that can hurt you."

The Chargers are a team that can compete for championships. They are scoring 59.9 points a contest while holding the opposition to 41.6 points a game. Dow is 2-2 in game's decided by 10 points or less, although both losses are to teams ranked in the top five in the state.

"We're right there," said Theisen. "I expect that we'll have two more great games against Heritage. We could win both the league and district or finish second in our league and lose in the (district) semifinals. It will be close. The team that wants it the most (will prevail). And the winner of our game should see Midland High in the district finals — and they are a solid team. The winner of our district will have to earn it."



Midland Dow's Ellie Taylor drives to the hoop against Heritage's Mallory McCartney. (Submitted Photo)

VanHavel Steps Down As Mason's Football Coach

Veteran Mason football coach Jerry VanHavel stepped down as head football coach at Mason High School to accept a position with NCAA Division 3 football power Mount Union of Ohio.

VanHavel, who took over as Mason head coach in 1991, turned in a career record of 169-88 at Mason. During his tenure as head coach of the Bulldogs VanHavel led Mason to the state playoffs 15 times including a district championship in 2014. Last year VanHavel led Mason to a 9-2 record.

VanHavel is taking a part-time recruiting position with Mount Union. VanHavel will be in charge of recruiting the state of Michigan for Mount Union. VanHavel's son, Jared, is in his freshman year at Mount Union and is also a member of the football team.



Mason's Jerry VanHavel stepped down after coaching the Bulldogs' football team for 29 years. (Alan Holben, High School Sports Scene Photo)

AMERICA'S CHOICE REALTY L.L.C.

108 E. Center St. Suite A, Ithaca
989-875-5148 • www.homesandland.com

When Buying or Selling Your Choice... Your Home...

Marci Browne Broker - Owner 989-620-1027
 Sherri Hessbrook Realtor 989-875-4649
 Amber Weburg Realtor 989-620-7918

Mid-Michigan Dental Excellence

306 North State Street
Alma, MI 48801
(989) 463 - 4036

www.midmichigandental excellence.com • Find us on Facebook!

Gary A. Schuckebien
General Dentistry
921 N. Pine River Rd.
(989) 875-4721
ithacamidentalist.com

GO DEWITT PANTHERS! GO ITHACA YELLOWJACKETS!

THE STORE
BEER GAS LOTTERY

Elm Hall • 989-833-7311
Open Sun - Thurs 7am - 10pm
Fri & Sat 7am - 11pm

*Deli closes one hour before store closing

NEW OWNERSHIP!
Stop In And See BIG MIKE!

No Limit to the Fun You'll Have

City Limits
Bowling Sports Grill

Pizzas Burgers Steaks Ribs

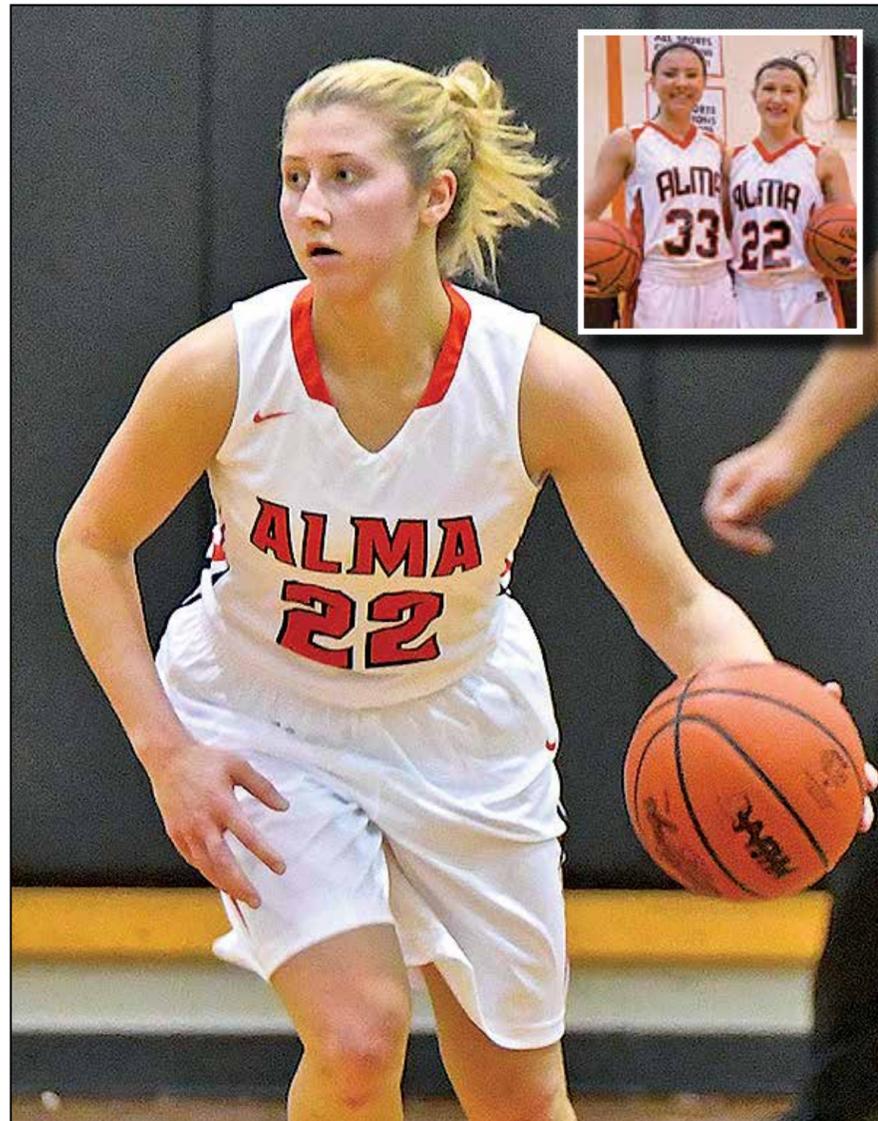
801 N. Cedar St. • Mason
517-244-1090
www.citylimitasmason.com

Good Luck to All Area Teams !!

Alma
1321 Pine Avenue Alma, MI 48801 989-463-1139
Wolverine Optical 7314 North Alger Rd. Alma, MI 48801 989-463-1838

Carson City
Suite 400 102 South Third Carson City, MI 48811 989-584-6868

Mt. Pleasant
Pleasant Optics 500 South Mission St. Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858 989-773-7747



Seeley Sisters Continue To Get Job Done On Court

John Raffel
Sports Scene

Alma's Seeley family continues to make a big name for itself in sports.

Maddy plays at Northwood University while her sister Kenzie is having a huge season as a basketball senior for Alma.

Their mom Tracy Seeley is an educator and former Hall of Fame athlete from Bowling Green.

Dad Paul Seeley played football and ran track at Bowling Green. He was track athlete of the year and pole vault and decathlon champ in the MAC.

Maddy Seeley is having a productive junior season at Northwood. She is averaging 13.5 points and 2.0 assists per game after 17 contests. She's shooting 33.7 percent in 3-pointers and 75.9 percent in free throws. After 75 games in her career, including 45 starts, Maddy is averaging 25.5 minutes per game and is shooting 40.7 percent from the floor in her career. Her career points per game is 11.5.

Northwood is 9-8 after its first 17 games.

Maddy was a first-team all-state player and holds the state record with 22 free throws in one game. She won the districts her senior year and was valedictorian of her class. At Northwood, she is majoring in finance.

Kenzie has already committed to Northwood and will play with her

sister as a freshman.

"I think we can win districts and compete at our regional," Kenzie said.

Kenzie is a 5-foot-6 point guard who has earned team Most Valuable Player honors two times in her career and has also earned All-Tri Valley Conference honors three times in her career.

She was a member of the Mt. Pleasant Morning Sun Dream Team, and, like her sister, is also an outstanding student. She currently maintains a 4.0 GPA.

"We are very excited to have Kenzie joining our program," said Jeff Curtis, who is in his 13th season as Northwood's head coach, in a statement during the November early signing period. "She is a dynamic point guard who has a great motor, is an excellent defender and can score from everywhere. Kenzie will be able to help us out immediately when she arrives next season."

Alma coach Scott Apple has been utilizing Kenzie's talents in building a 9-3 record so far, which includes a 6-2 mark for a second place tie in the TVC.

"She's doing outstanding," Apple said. "She's a great team leader and great defensive player, ball handler and does it all for us. She's a hard worker. She has a great attitude. I can't say enough good things for her."

Apple has been the coach Kenzie's junior and senior seasons. He has

especially been impressed with her scoring and ball handling.

"I actually think her defensive play is unreal," Apple said. "We put her on the other team's best player and she pretty much neutralizes them. Our conference is pretty tough."

Several conference players are going to the next level, but Seeley is able to do the job against them.

"She's definitely a great player on the defensive end," Apple said. "She goes against the best players."

Apple has observed Seeley's improved play from a year ago.

"She scored a lot as a freshman and sophomore," Apple said. "As a freshman, she played with Maddy. Teams concentrated on her sister and that left Kenzie with a lot of open shots. Her sister graduated, so now teams try to take her away because of her speed. Now she's getting two or three girls guarding her."

She did a great job last year. She was outstanding and she's probably better at reading the open area."

"Defensively, I like to guard the best players," Kenzie said. "Offensively, I have a good 3-point shot. I look for the drive, also."

Apple didn't coach Maddy, but was able to watch her play.

"Maddy is a little taller and is the No. 2 or 3 player while Kenzie is a one," Apple said. "Kenzie is a lot faster, and quicker. She can move."

"It's going well this season," Kenzie said. "I got my 1,000th point (in January). This year, I'm showing better leadership, being a senior."

Kenzie acknowledged that the sports histories of her parents has had a major impact on herself and her sister. She's obviously counting down the days when they'll be teammates again.



Kenzie and Maddy Seeley will be reunited for at least one season in the fall as the younger sister recently announced she will be attending Northwood University to continue her basketball career. Kenzie and Maddy both surpassed the 1,000 point mark in their high school careers. (Skip Traynor and Submitted, High School Sports Scene Photos)



EXPERIENCE CAMPUS LIFE
real fun. real friends. real life.

@cmfyc High School Mondays, 7pm
@cmfyc 7th & 8th Grade Thursdays, 7pm
/cmfyc 6th Grade Tuesdays, 3pm

989.463.4274 | 2560 W Cheesman Rd, Alma | www.cmfyc.net

George's D.D. Service
Designated Driver

George Boyle
"SAFE RIDE" Alma, Michigan Phone: 989-763-9778
boyle_irish@hotmail.com CALL ME ANYTIME

Serving Gratiot, Isabella Clinton and Midland counties

MAYAN
INSURANCE SINCE 1915

THE MAYAN AGENCY
Merrill, MI 48637
(989) 643-7207
(800) 646-2926

www.mayanagency.com

NCG offers 10 regional locations including:
Alma, Auburn, Courtland, Coldwater, Grand Blanc, Greenville, Owosso, Lansing, Lapeer & Midland

NCGX CINEMAS
WWW.NCGMOVIES.COM

Private showings and group rates are available by contacting your local NCG Cinema location or by e-mailing Groupshows@NCGmovies.com



Seeley AUTO

New Year, New Location!

Ready For Your Service Needs!

Low Money Down!
Low Monthly Payments!
Guaranteed Financing!

101 Hidden Oaks Dr, St Louis, MI 48880 989-463-AUTO (2886)
seeleycars.com



BASKETBALL ROUNDUP

Mid-Michigan Teams Dot State Rankings

Dan Stickrad
Sports Scene

It was just two years ago when DeWitt made a run to the Class A Final Four. The season ended with a 51-37 setback to Birmingham Marian in the title game.

The Panthers did so despite being only a Class A school for five years — mainly since the basement enrollment break off from Class A to Class B has dropped well over 100 students in recent years to 881 or above for Class A.

Regardless, DeWitt is again one of the top teams in the state. In the Jan. 27 Associated Press polls, the Panthers came in at No. 8 in Class A behind a sterling 10-1 start.

The defending CAAC Red Division co-champions, who finished 19-3 last season and 8-2 in the conference (shared the title with Haslett), DeWitt did not return a large roster. Only Mackenzie Dawes and Jessah McManus, a pair of 5-foot-4 senior guards, and 5-10 junior forward Grace George return from the rotation.

Dawes and McManus are returning starters and in their third varsity campaigns. George was one of the first players off the bench a year ago and has seen a significant role as a starter this winter. The Panthers are quick with a guard-oriented lineup.

There are two seniors, four juniors and four sophomores on the roster this season, and the Panthers are receiving help from all parts of team, which has led to the impressive start for Coach Bill McCullen, who is in his 21st season.

One of the traditionally talent-rich schools from the Lansing area in the past decade, DeWitt is not the only Lansing area squad in the top 10. East Lansing (9-1) is tied for sixth in Class A with Clarkston (11-1).

Near the top of the heap, Saginaw Heritage (11-0) and Midland Dow (9-2) are third and fourth, respectively, but with No. 1 Detroit King and defending state champion Warren Cousino both losing games in recent days, Heritage could leapfrog into the top spot soon if the Hawks remain unbeaten.

Heritage is the only unbeaten Class A school as of Jan. 27 receiving points.

CLASS B

While perennial powerhouse Birmingham Detroit Country Day holds fort at No. 1 and last year's Class

(Russ Pierce and Skip Traynor, High School Sports Scene Photo)

C state champion, Ypsilanti Arbor Prep, is enjoying an undefeated campaign and is ranked second in their very first season in Class B, there are several local teams enjoying success this season.

Williamston is off to an 11-1 start and holds anchor in the No. 3 position. Freeland (No. 6), Bay City John Glenn (No. 7) are also ranked, while Ithaca and Frankenmuth are both honorable mention.

Ithaca was a Final Four school in Class C last season before moving to Class B.

CLASS C

Only around for four school years, Detroit Edison Public School Academy is ranked No. 1 in Class C with an unbeaten mark.

Pewamo-Westphalia (10-0) and Flint Hamady (9-1) are third and fourth, respectively, while Laingsburg (9-1) is sixth and Hemlock (10-1) is eighth. Every school in the top 10 is either undefeated or has just one loss.

In honorable mention, both Byron and Burton Bendle are honorable mention.

CLASS D

Pittsford is creating a target on its back, as the two-time defending state champions are unleashing punishment again with a 12-0 mark and the No. 1 ranking in Class D.

Mount Pleasant Sacred Heart, last year's state runner-up, is also unbeaten and ranked second at 11-0.

Elsewhere, Portland St. Patrick has climbed to No. 4 behind a tough schedule and an 8-2 record, while Waterford Our Lady of the Lakes (8-3) is ranked seventh in a class where the usual suspects dominate the scene.

MICHIGAN ASSOCIATION OF CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS

From the department of downright impressive, Midland Calvary Baptist is dominating on all fronts.

The Kings have won two straight Michigan Association of Christian Schools Division I state titles in girls basketball to go along with two straight MACS-I girls volleyball titles and two straight in girls soccer.

There are seven seniors on this year's talented roster and four are starters for the Kings, who are 10-1 to start the season.

Calvary Baptist left to Central Michigan Christian Athletic Conference two years ago to go independent. Playing a tougher schedule has proved to pay dividends for the Kings.



FIRST CONTRACTING INCORPORATED
Specializing in MSHDA multi Family Renovations
701 South Main - Ovid, MI 48866
989-834-1500

Bumping & Painting • Glass Repair
Insurance Work • Custom Painting
FREE ESTIMATES
TIM'S BODY SHOP
Domestic and Foreign
Most Deductibles Waived Or Reduced
Adam Musselman
Monday-Friday 8:00 am- 5:00 pm phone/fax 989-681-2577

C & S Steel **PRECISION MACHINE & MFG., INC.**
203 Industrial Pkwy. Ave B - Ithaca Ph: 989-875-5145 Fx: 989-875-4754
1102 Industrial Pkwy. Ave. A - Ithaca Ph: 989-875-2359 Fx: 989-875-4615



Gratiot Aerials
Office 517-719-4670 • Mobile 989-285-8685
JoeBosley9133@gmail.com

Farmers, Ask Us About Our Weekly Crop Survey Program!
Aerial Photography
Real Estate Property
Appraisal Property
Commercial Business
Wedding Aerial Photography
Construction Site Photography
SPORTING EVENTS

Sacred Heart Girls Remain Undefeated

John Raffel
Sports Scene

Damon Brown is coaching a different type of girls basketball team at Mount Pleasant Sacred Heart.

The Irish were undefeated after their first 11 games. Most of the wins were lopsided, except for a 23-17 win over Carson City-Crystal in a defensive struggle.

But it's a different version of a powerhouse team for Brown.

"This year it's a different perspective offensively and defensively," Brown said. "Averi Gamble could do a lot for us. Yet, when she's gone, we're still able to do some things. Our team is athletic this year. We're a little more aggressive. The key to our success has been more (effective) defensive and some aggressiveness on the defensive end."

It's as much talent, perhaps as the Irish have had the past few years, which is quite the complement considering the successes they've had in the past.

The Irish lost to Pittsford 48-30 in the title game last year, two years from having won it in 2014 with a 56-53 win over Crystal Falls Forest Park in the title game. Gamble is now at Central Michigan University. She was named the Class D Associated Press player of the year in 2015-16. She scored 1,267 career points and set a school record for points in a game with 40. She was a four-year letter winner in basketball and won three letters in volleyball.

This year, the cast of heroes continues with players like Scout Nelson, who had one of her best games in early January in a 54-28 win over Clare. She had 22 points, five assists and five steals in that game. Hadyn Teerwilliger had 16 points, nine rebounds and five steals while Sophie Ruggles had 13 points and seven rebounds.



As of Jan. 28, Mt. Pleasant Sacred Heart was ranked No. 2 in the recent Class D polls with a perfect 11-0 record. (Skip Traynor, High School Sports Scene Photo)

JIM NAVARRE Supporting Gratiot County's Youth for Over 25 Years!
Central Michigan's Fastest Growing Ford and Lincoln Mercury Dealership
Our Hard Working Sales Staff:
Bob Bechill Jim Britting Tom Wesolek TJ Hodges
M-46 • Alma • Between Alma & St. Louis • (989) 681-5776 • www.jimnavarreford.com
We Service What We Sell, Just Ask Our Many Satisfied Customers!!!

Member FDIC
isabellabank.com 800.651.9111 isabellabankmi
*Third party data charges may apply. Please contact your mobile service provider for details. Account holders under 18 must have a parent/guardian as co-owner.

Tomorrow's *Anywhere* Adventure
Anywhere Checking with Mobile Banking*
Mobile Deposit
Bill Pay with Person-to-Person Payments
Transfer
Manage Cards
ISABELLA BANK

YOUNG OWOSSO Presents The Shiawassee County Sports Update

Laingsburg Girls Basketball Team Turning Up The Heat On Defensive End Of The Floor

Butch Harmon
Sports Scene

When it comes to playing stingy defense, few teams can match the suffocating man-to-man defense that the Laingsburg girls basketball team plays.

Ranked sixth in the state in Class C heading into the final week of January, the Wolfpack have been posting some impressive numbers on the defensive end of the floor. The Laingsburg defense is allowing 23 points per game this season. Laingsburg has allowed just one team to score more than 30 points this season and has limited three teams to less than 20 points in a game.

"This is my fifth year at Laingsburg and since I took over, we have worked on man-to-man defense from day one," said Laingsburg coach Doug Hurst. "Over the last three years our defense is pretty well known across the area. Our defense is our team strength and this year we have been doing a very good job on the defensive end."

The team has also been developing into a more cohesive unit as the season progresses.

"I think we are gradually getting stronger and stronger," Hurst said. "One of the things we've worked on is become a basketball team. I told the girls for us to have any success we would have to become more of a unit, a complete team, and we have been doing that."

Leading this year's team has been senior captains Alex Randall, Sophie Wilsey and Kenedy Franks.

"We have three returning players that played on the team that made it to the Breslin two years ago," Hurst said. "Alex, Sophie and Kenedy played on that team as sophomores and have been doing a good job as our captains and leaders."

Laingsburg is also receiving strong efforts from sisters Sophie and Silvia Strieff.

"Both Sophie and Silvia have stepped up and are playing well," Hurst said. "We also have multiple players on the bench that have been stepping up. We don't have anyone averaging over 10 points per game. We don't have that one player that averages 18, 19 points a game. It's hard for other teams to play against us because anyone can score. Anyone can step up in any one game and lead the offense."

Laingsburg's defense and balanced scoring are needed in what is a close CMAAC race between the Wolfpack, Bath and Pewamo-Westphalia. Laingsburg suffered its lone loss of the season against Pewamo-Westphalia and that loss is something the team is learning from.

"After the Pewamo-Westphalia loss, I talked to the girls about them getting together and having a team meeting," Hurst said. "They told me they talked about their goals and commitment level and since then we've been playing really well. They learned from that loss and are moving forward. We take each game one at a time but the ultimate goal is to win the conference. If we can win a share of the league it will be the third year in a row and that is something we've never done in Laingsburg."



The Laingsburg girls basketball team has hovered around the top spot of the Class C rankings since the start of the season. (Alan Holben, High School Sports Scene Photos)

Sparrow Carson Hospital's Peak Performers Sponsored by: Sparrow Carson Hospital

Central Montcalm Girls Basketball Team Looking To End Title Drought

David Cook
Sports Scene

STANTON - The last time the Central Montcalm girls basketball team won a conference championship, Ronald Reagan was the U.S. President, the Internet was still seven years away and Michael Jordan was selected by the Chicago Bulls in the first round of the NBA draft.

It was 1984 when the Central Montcalm girls last won a girls basketball title. This season, at the halfway point, the Hornets found themselves near the top spot in the Central State Activities Association (CSAA) Gold division and won eight of their first 10 games.

With five sophomores on the varsity, it may have been easy to overlook the Hornets entering the season, but plenty of hard work put in during the off-season is paying off.

"We've been progressing very well," said Central-Montcalm coach Rob Putnam. "It started this summer when we tried to challenge ourselves more than usual. At every camp we went to we tried to play the best teams. We played Williamston, the No. 2-ranked team in Class B and split two games with them. We also played Traverse City St. Francis and big schools like Pinckney and Saline. We tried to play the best competition we could find and we did well and more than held our own."

The payoff of the summer challenges began to show up early this season when the Hornets defeated Greenville and won four of its first five league games with the lone loss coming at Big Rapids.

Central Montcalm has been getting the job done with a total-team effort.

"Our strong point is our balance," Putnam said. "We don't have that one superstar, we have four girls all averaging around nine points per game. Some nights we might have

someone score 15 or 16 points, but we are a balanced, deep team. We also play very good defense. The girls work real hard on the defensive end everyone helps with the rebounding." Senior Kenzie Rutz, a third-year varsity player, provides valuable senior leadership along with averaging 9.1 points and 5.6 rebounds per game.

"Kenzie is our leader," Putnam said. "She is a great leader and the five sophomores on the varsity look up to her. She is also a very good rebounder."

Fellow senior Bree Bragington also provides veteran leadership.

"Bree is a senior and works hard," Putnam said. "She does the little things that need to be done and she does them well. None of her numbers pop out and she will do whatever it takes to help us win."

Three of the sophomores comprise the back court. Kiara Wernette, the team's point guard, is averaging 9.8 points per game and 2.3 steals.

"Kiara is our best defensive player," Putnam said. "We can put her on anyone and she will find a way to contain them."

Sophomores Libby Ledford and Hannah Putnam start at the wing guard spots. Ledford is averaging 9.4 points and 3.2 rebounds per game. Putnam is adding 8.2 points per game and 3.2 steals.

"Libby is a great three-point shooter," Putnam said. "She can shoot it from anywhere."

Hannah is another good three-point shooter. She also keys our defense and has come up with a lot of steals."

Central Montcalm has a big month of February coming up. On Feb. 17 the Hornets host Big Rapids in the school's "Orange out game" to raise funds in the fight against Juvenile Diabetes. The Hornets play in a rugged district tournament that includes both Alma and Ithaca.

The Central Montcalm girls basketball team is looking to break a 33-year dry spell and win a conference championship this season. (Submitted Photo)



YOUNG OWOSSO
989-725-2184 • 800-725-2188
www.YoungAutoSales.com

CHEVROLET GMC
1500 East Main Street
Owosso, MI 48867

Your Best Deals are at Young in Owosso!!
Supporting High School Athletics For 25 Years



Choose Wisely. Choose Sparrow.

Making the right decision is important. Especially when it comes to your health. Sparrow is a leader in every major area of care. Choosing Sparrow means getting clinical expertise, exceptional nurses and breakthrough treatments, unavailable anywhere else in the region. Call 1.800.Sparrow to find your Sparrow Physician today.

Sparrow.org/SparrowCarson • 989.584.3131

Sparrow
Carson Hospital



Tori Jankoska Cements Her Legacy As A Spartan

Former Freeland Standout Becomes MSU's All-Time Leading Scorer

Scott Keyes
Sports Scene

Former Freeland standout and current Michigan State University senior Tori Jankoska continues to rewrite record books wherever she goes.

Freeland's All-Time leading scorer: Check
Saginaw County's All-Time leading scorer: Check
2013 Miss Basketball: Check
Big 10 Champ: Check

Now add two more records to her already impressive resume as Jankoska is officially the all-time leading scorer in Michigan State women's basketball history. Jankoska broke the record with a corner 3-pointer at the 6:53 mark of the first quarter. That 3 gave her 1,819 career points and helped her surpass the record of 1,817 points set by Aerial Powers last season.

The 5-foot-8 guard scored 31 points in the first half to finish with 42 points for the MSU women's basketball single-game scoring record to lead the Spartans to a 94-75 Big Ten win over Ohio State in early January.

Just another day in the office for the Freeland native. "As soon as the first one went in, there's kind of a sigh of relief," Jankoska said. "Then you get an easy layup. The game kind of kept coming to me."

True to her character, Jankoska was just as pumped about the win.

"Everybody stepped up and did what they needed to do," said Jankoska, who also had seven assists and two steals in the victory. "It was one of the most fun games I've been a part of and not just because I was breaking records. Jenna (Allen) was getting rebounds. Brannndais (Agee) was a maniac at the top of the zone. Brannndais was hitting shots, everybody was hitting shots. Everybody was doing their job. It was just really nice to finally see that."

MSU Coach Suzy Merchant said it was quite a thing to

watch. "I felt like I should've bought a ticket to the game. I didn't feel like coaching watching her out there. I've seen, Aerial (Powers) had some games where she's had 22 or 20 plus in the first half but I looked up there and she had 31. Unbelievable. I wasn't worried about it because Tori's a tough kid, but I was hoping that she would get to that seven sooner rather than later, and I swear I looked out and she started the game with eight points. That girl broke the record. What a way to do it, you know? In front of a really good crowd, on TV, here at home. It was just special. It was a special moment for sure."



The Early Years

It was almost eight years ago that I saw a little wide-eyed 13-year-old lighting up gyms against older opponents while she was in middle school. She was even schooling boys at the time. Now she has molded her game into one of the best all-around student athletes to possibly ever come out of Saginaw County. That is a bold statement, but the numbers don't lie.

After committing to Michigan State a freshman, Jankoska's game continued to evolve. As a junior she led Freeland to the Class B finals before losing in the semis.

Her senior season was one for the record books. Jankoska was named Michigan's Miss Basketball in 2013.

Jankoska, who averaged 31 points, five steals and four assists this season, finished her career with 2,333 points, the most for a girl in Saginaw County history and third-most for any Saginaw County basketball player, behind only Tory Jackson and Mark Macon, both from Buena Vista.

"It's incredible to win this because the other girls are so good," Jankoska said after winning Miss Basketball.

The Miss Basketball vote may have come down to the Goodrich-Freeland that saw Jankoska drop 34 points against the Martians with Merchant watching in the stands.

Freeland finished the season 22-2, losing in the regional to Flint Powers. Jankoska battled the flu and finished with 22 points.

The Falcons reached the quarterfinals during Jankoska's freshman season, won a district her sophomore season and lost in the state semifinals her junior season.

In Jankoska's career, the Falcons were 83-16. She credits Coach Tom Zolinski and Merchant for molding her into the player and person she is today.

"Coach Z (Zolinski) was in the stands tonight and it was awesome for him to be here," Jankoska said, after breaking the record against Ohio State. "I gave him a big hug after the game and told him thank you for everything."

Putting Life into Perspective
The daughter of Randy and Lisa, Tori has always managed to keep her parents on their toes during the past decade as basketball became more than an activity for the Jankoska family.

She is the third of four children and the youngest sister behind Jessi, 26, and Jenni, 24. Tori is 22, and little brother Jake Jankoska is 20. Not to mention brother-in-law Will Griffin and nieces Sophia and Gabby have also been a part of the recent journey with Tori. There will be another niece or nephew in the mix in June for the Jankoska family.

Even between the grandkids and her business, Lisa continues to travel to as many games as she can, while only missing two over the last two seasons.

Family games are for fun. Winning is fun. Therefore, when the Jankoskas play, it's to win. Euchre games become so intense that their father Randy, a former power-lifter, refuses to play.

Jankoska credits her drive to "the big man upstairs" and an early life that included competing with her older sisters and with boys.

"There would be some two-on-two games that would end in fights," Tori said. "You're kind of born with that mentality. You want to beat the one in front of you. I've always been that way."

However a big dose of reality struck the family last June as a horrific ATV accident nearly cost Jenni her life.

It was touch and go for Jenni there for a while, but

after numerous surgeries and the strength of God, Jenni battled back from her injuries and made a full recovery.

However Jenni, who Tori considers to be more than just her older sister, but also her best friend, wasn't able to see Tori break the record in person, but she knows she was there with her the entire game.

"Not having Jenni there was hard, but I know she was watching," Tori said. "Jenni is a nurse and was working, but for her to come back from what she went through I am truly amazed how far she has come. This season I came into the year with a new perspective and realized you can never take things for granted in life. Jenni is my big sister. My best friend and I love her dearly."

So, What's Next
Even after breaking all of the records coming out of high school and excelling her first couple seasons at MSU, still, few expected Jankoska to finish as the leading scorer in MSU history or as one of the greatest players in the history of the Spartans women's basketball program.

"I can remember her calling me after those first practices," Lisa Jankoska said in a recent interview. "She said she could compete, but there's this other girl that's really good and there's this other girl who can really shoot. She said, 'Mom, I think I can compete.'"

"Her dream was to go to Michigan State," Lisa continued. "Everything else that has come after that is truly a blessing."

Jankoska just wanted a chance to play, a chance to show that a 5-foot-8 player from Freeland High School could prosper in the Big Ten, a chance to show that there is more to a player than what can be measured by a stop-watch or measuring tape.

"There's no question she can play in the WNBA," Merchant said. "She can score. She can lead. Her basketball IQ is off the charts and why she could be ready to take my job."

"Her IQ on the court is so high. She understands scouting reports. She understands angles. She understands how to get her shot. She's more athletic than people give her credit for, but it's her IQ that sets her apart. It helps dissipate all those other questions once she gets on the court."

From Freeland to Michigan State University, Tori Jankoska has left her stamp on the record books where ever she has gone. Now she can call herself Michigan State University's all-time leading scorer. She also set the single-game record of 42 in the same game she set the all-time mark. (Scott Keyes, High School Sports Scene Photos)



Your Farm Bureau Insurance agent protects your Auto, Home, Business, Farm, Retirement, Lake Estate®, **Life** and more.

Scott Allen
225 E. Center St., Ithaca

FARM BUREAU INSURANCE
Michigan's Insurance Company
989-875-2200
sallen@fbinsmi.com
FarmBureauInsurance.com

Tori, we are so proud of you an all of your accomplishments!
With love - mom and dad.

Allstate
You're in good hands.

Lisa Jankoska, LUTCF
Senior Account Agent • Honor Ring • LUTC Fellow
2135 N. Center • Saginaw, MI 48603
Office: (989) 799-7100 Fax: (989) 799-8881
www.allstateagencies.com/LisaJankoska

Looking Pretty Pet Grooming & Boarding

Over 33 Years Experience
Your Pet is Important • Satisfaction Guaranteed

Tori, we are so proud of you!
From your friends at Looking Pretty Pet

9945 W. Freeland Road
Freeland, MI 48623
(989) 573-2457

Riverside FAMILY RESTAURANT

Congratulations Tori On All Of Your Accomplishments!
- From your friends at Riverside

8295 Midland Road • Freeland, MI 48623 • (989) 695-5563

MARTIN CHEVROLET

2013 Chevy Spark #P88455A GM Certified **ONLY \$7,990***

2013 Chevy Cruze #N9366A **ONLY \$8,800***

2012 Honda Civic #N8275A 410007 Auto **ONLY \$9,900***

GM CERTIFIED VEHICLES! **8800 Gratiot Rd. (W. M-46) • Saginaw**
0% For 36 Months **989-781-4590 • www.martincars.com**
On Select Vehicles Plus tax title and plate fees. see Martin Chevrolet for details

A Place You Can Count On - Since 1914

Lux-Moody-Wolfel Funeral Home
531 N State St.
Alma, MI 48801
Phone: 989-463-8970

Lux and Whiting Funeral Chapel
156 W. Saginaw
Breckenridge, MI 48615
Phone: 989-842-3547

Lux and Schnepf Funeral Home
521 S. Main St.
Crystal, MI 48818
Phone: 989-235-4212

Dodge Funeral Home
404 S. Newton
Middleton, MI 48856
Phone: 989-236-7270

www.luxfuneralhomes.com

IN YOUR HOUR OF DARKNESS LET US BE YOUR LIGHT

Lux Funeral Homes, Inc.
Funeral Directors
Paul C. Lux
Scott Kilgo
Nicholas P. Lux
Laura E. Krebs
Chris Krebs

Lux Funeral Home
228 W. Center
St. Louis, MI 48880
Phone: 989-681-2982

Lux and Schnepf Funeral Home
6479 N. Lumberjack Rd.
Riverdale, MI 48877
Phone: 989-833-7352

Lux and Schnepf Funeral Home
816 E. Main St.
Carson City, MI 48811
Phone: 989-584-3504



Freeland Boys, Girls Continue Stellar Season

**John Raffel
Sports Scene**

The Undeclared.
In Freeland basketball, the undefeated was appropriate for both girls and boys basketball teams through Jan. 26 prior to press time.
Tom Zolinski's girls squad was 11-0. Most of the games have been one-sided although the close ones score-wise were the first two to open the season: 41-33 over Midland and 49-39 over Bay City Western.
In the recent TVC crossover with Ithaca, Freeland hit eight 3-pointers in the first quarter and rolled to a 58-35 victory over the Yellowjackets.
The Falcons (11-0) led 27-7 after the first quarter, and finished the game with 12 3-pointers. Eight different players hit a 3-pointer for Freeland.
Jessica Piper led Freeland with 12 points and three 3-pointers, while Jenna Gregory had 10 points and four steals. Lily Beyer had eight points, while Alyssa Argyle had seven

points and five steals.
Ithaca's standout junior Kayla Belles was held to just 13 points in the loss.
Zolinski expected to see a tough battle on Jan. 27 when his team had a scheduled home game against Frankenmuth.
"It's been our team balance and experience," Zolinski said. "We have two seniors in their fourth year on varsity. I have two juniors that it's their third year. That really helps out a lot."
The seniors are Gregory and Piper while the juniors are Kaylee Argyle and Olivia Farrell.
"Olivia is our top rebounder," Zolinski said. "Jessica and Jenna are both top defenders and are also leading in scoring. Jenna is averaging around 10 points a game and Jessica is right below that. Jessica, Jenna and Kaylee are captains."
Being undefeated, it would have to be considered that Freeland's girls team has met its expectations, Zolinski indicated.
"We've really improved on our defense,"



he said. "As a team, we're averaging almost 60 points a game and only giving up 28."
Along with Frankenmuth, other teams that could threaten Freeland's undefeated mark, Zolinski indicated, would be Swan Valley and Alma.
Freeland boys coach Kevin Bourcier's team was 9-0 after a 51-44 victory over Saginaw Valley Lutheran on Jan. 24. There were other various close wins including 54-47 over Bay City John Glenn in the season opener, and 54-48 over Alma. One of the most lopsided wins for Freeland came in a 73-40 verdict over Bullock Creek. It featured four players in double figures with Drew Bakos at 13, Connor Muscott at 12 and Zac Anderson and Jayce Bourcier at 11.



Both the Freeland girls and boys basketball teams were holding down the top spots in the TVC Central prior to press time. (Russ Piece and Scott Keyes, High School Sports Scene Photos)

Hemlock Star Sam Krauss Finishing Strong, Taking Talents To Ferris State

**Dan Stickrad
Sports Scene**

Even as a young kid, Sam Krauss knew basketball was her first love.
There was never a doubt in her mind.
"Oh no. I knew when I was kid that basketball was my favorite sport," said Krauss, now a senior at Hemlock High School. "I have always loved basketball ever since I can remember."
Krauss is one of the top players to come through Hemlock, as the fourth-year varsity player ranks in the top 10 in numerous career categories in basketball.
The 5-foot-9 guard is averaging around 16.5 points and 6.0

rebounds a contest for Coach Scott Neumeyer's 10-2 Huskies, who are in second place in the Tri-Valley Conference West Division behind Ithaca as of Jan. 25.
But the talented floor general means more to Hemlock than hoops. She is a rare three-sport standout who will play college basketball at Division II Ferris State University.
Last spring, Krauss earned All-TVC First Team honors as a sure-handed shortstop in softball. This past fall on the volleyball court, Krauss again turned heads as a setter and earned first-team all-conference honors as well.
Carrying a fine 3.5 GPA, Krauss has also shot over 80

percent from the four line in her career and even finished 10th in the state in 2016 in the BCAM Free Throw Shooting Contest.
"She's a tremendous athlete. We'll miss her next season," said Neumeyer. "She's the type of player that you wish you had on your team every year. She just loves being out there."
Krauss loves playing in a one high-school district and loves the small town atmosphere at Hemlock, a rural farm town some dozen miles due west of Saginaw.
"Everybody knows everybody. I like it that way," said Krauss. "It's a great little town. I love the fact that I've grown up here. It's true — it can be like a family."

That is a big reason why Krauss is headed to Ferris State to continue playing the sport that she loves.
"I love the fact that it's close (less than two hours away) and my family can still watch me play. I didn't want to leave Michigan, to be honest," said Krauss. "I also loved the coaching staff and the players made me feel so welcome. It was like a family there, too."
While Krauss and Co. has enjoyed their fair share of wins and success over the past 3.5 years, there's one thing that Krauss wants to bring home to Hemlock before she departs: A district championship.
"I have never won a league or district title. That is something that we definitely want to do this (school) year," reminded Krauss. "That's the goal. We want to leave our mark."



Hemlock's Samantha Krauss will play her college basketball at Ferris State University. (Submitted Photo)

MIDSTATE SALES AND SERVICE
Outdoor Power Equipment

Simplicity, Ingersoll, YAMAHA, STIHL, Honda, SCAG, SNAPPER

3251 W. M-21
St. Johns, MI 48879
(989) 224-2711
(800) 582-8152
(989) 224-1781 Fax
midstatesales.net

Clearance sale on all Lawn Mowers
Rebates up to \$300

CRIPPEN MANUFACTURING COMPANY

Providing Quality Grain Equipment Since 1924!

4000 WOODSIDE DRIVE ST LOUIS, MICHIGAN 48880
PHONE 989.681.4323

www.crippenmfg.com

Carman's Tree Service & Stump Removal

Gary Carman
Owner/Operator

8426 N. Wheeler
Wheeler, MI 48662
(989) 330-9782 cell
25yrs. Experienced
Free Estimates
License/Insured

Taking Pride in our Exceptional "Clean up!"

THE ULTIMATE CHOICE FOR PORTABLE SOUND

SM-5 Sound Machine

- Built-in Shure wireless mics. (123-channels - 300' typical range)
- 6-8 hours of battery life (Lithium Iron Phosphate 2000 charging cycles)
- Full Range Biamped system (10" speaker and horn)
- 200 Watts of power (126db clear volume)
- CD/MP3 player with USB port
- Easily adapts most MP3 players to wireless
- Gym, track, swimming pool, cheer, golf, or aerobics; The SM-5 goes anywhere you need to be.

"I love my speaker and could not live without it. It has saved my voice and has changed my life. We don't just use it for PE, but also for assemblies, lunchtime activities, and after-school release."

Suzanne Hansen - Oceanside, CA

THE BEST FULL RANGE PA SYSTEM - EVER

For more information on the Sound Projections line call: 888-291-1288
www.soundprojections.com

6-year Warranty Made in the USA

Available Through: Roth Sound 989-779-8828
www.rothsound.com

SM-5 only 35 pounds fully loaded

Become a School Coach or Game Official

Contact your local high school athletic administrator or the Michigan High School Athletic Association

MHSAA
michigan high school athletic association

1661 Ramblewood Dr.
East Lansing, MI 48823
517-332-5046
www.mhsaa.com



Saginaw Heritage Remains Contender In Class A

Dan Stickrad
Sports Scene

The more things change, the more they stay the same.

The personnel has switched slightly each year, but Saginaw Heritage is once again one of the top girls basketball programs in the state in 2016-17.

Heritage is currently ranked third in the Class A in the Jan. 24 Associated Press polls. The Hawks hit the mid-point of the season unscathed at 12-0, including 8-0 in the Saginaw Valley League North Division — one game ahead of Midland Dow.

“Every year is a little different,” said Heritage coach Yvonne DeLong, who has coached multiple schools to success in Michigan. “Last year we had a 6-4 girl and a lot of height and depth. This year we are not as tall — we do have some decent height. And we are not as deep. But the chemistry is there. We have different girls stepping up to lead us.”

Saginaw Heritage finished as the state runner-up in 2001 and the state finals in 2002. The Hawks have enjoyed plenty of success in recent years as well.

Heritage reached the state quarterfinals in 2013 before falling to Dexter by a point (34-33). In 2014, the Hawks were upended in the district finals by Midland.

In 2015, Heritage made another lengthy run in the post-season with a third appearance in the Final Four, falling to DeWitt (44-36). Last season, the Hawks were upset in the regional finals by St. Johns (46-43).

The Hawks took a minor hit when 6-1 junior forward Jaela Richardson moved to the Denver, Colorado, area, last summer, which hurt Heritage’s depth.

The team has only 10 players on varsity this season with a seven-player rotation in close games. Most have been blowouts.

Sophomore Moira Joiner, a 5-9 guard, has shown to be a game-changer, while junior Jessi Bicknell (5-9) and sophomore Mallory McCartney (5-7) are fine complements in a talented three-guard backcourt. Senior Courtney McInerney and sophomore Shine Strickland-Gills are a pair of interchangeable 6-1 post players that can rebound, score on the low block and block shots with regularity.

Off the bench, senior guard/forward Haley Brefka (5-6) and freshman point guard Lauren Reed (5-4) provide immediate depth for a very talented squad.

“One of the goals is to try to win our division in the

(SVL),” said DeLong. “We’re in first place right now. But we have some tough games coming up. We have another game against (Midland) Dow coming up in a few weeks and we beat them in overtime.”

Heritage is beating teams by nearly 20 points an outing this season. The Hawks are averaging 49.5 points a game, yielding just 28.3 points defensively and even has a 57-point win to their credit this season.

The only two close games came against Solon (Ohio) High (38-35) and Midland Dow (50-47), a team ranked fourth in the state.

Heritage started 8-0 in conference play, one game ahead of Midland Dow. The two shared the crown last season.

“I think if we can win our district, we can make a run,” said DeLong. “But it won’t be easy because our district is so tough. There are no weak teams in our district. We would likely have to beat Dow just to reach the district finals. We open with Mt. Pleasant and they are solid. Midland is in our district and they are solid. As long as we stay healthy and if we can win our district, we have the talent to go a ways. But we have to keep playing the same way we have been playing — keep working hard and stay away from injuries.”



Left: Heritage senior Courtney McInerney pulls up for a jump shot during a game earlier this season. Right: Sophomore Mallory McCartney has played a key role in Heritage’s success thus far this season. (Scott Keyes, High School Sports Scene Photos)

Shred Experts
Proud Supporters Of Our Area Athletes
1595 Champagne Dr. South
Saginaw, MI 48604
www.shredexperts.com • 989.752.4200 office

GRAFF CHEVROLET DURAND
Jason Saunders
Sales Professional
(989) 288-2657
Flint (810) 232-9157
Fax (989) 288-2347
jsaunders@hankgraff.com
9009 Lansing Road
Durand, Michigan 48429
www.graffchevydurand.com

SANDLOT SPORTS
Custom Screen Printing & Embroidery
Team Uniforms • Trophies • Business Apparel • Workwear • Varsity Jackets
NOW FEATURING ONLINE TEAM ORDERING
sandlotssports301.com/custom-online-store
1221 Salzburg Bay City, MI 48706 989-391-9684
5605 State St. Saginaw, MI 48603 989-791-5900
2900 Universal Dr. Saginaw, MI 48603 989-781-2991
www.sandlotssports301.com

Gratiot Towing (989) 875-8484
108 North Newton St. Middleton, MI 48856
Tel: 989-236-7296
www.demottins.com

Defense Key To Strong Start For Pewamo-Westphalia Girls Basketball Team

Jared Robert
Sports Scene

Thanks to some stingy defense this season, the Pewamo-Westphalia girls basketball team has found itself battling Laingsburg and Bath for the top spot in the rugged Central Michigan Athletic Conference (CMAC).

Defense has been key for the Pirates so far this season. Pewamo-Westphalia opened the season with 10 wins in its first 11 games. Through those first 11 games the Pirates allowed only one team to score more than 31 points on their defense while holding five points to less than 20 points.

“Our biggest strength this year has been our ability to turn opponents over,” said Pewamo-West-

phalia coach Steve Eklund. “We are forcing 28 turnovers per game through our first 10 games. That creates a lot of extra possessions for us and has often resulted in advantage breaks that we have converted.”

The Pirates have also turned up the heat with their half-court defense.

“Our biggest area of improvement so far has been on the defensive end of the ball in the half-court,” Eklund said. “We made some philosophical adjustments over the long Christmas break and so far we are very pleased with the results. We still need to be more disciplined on this side of the ball but we’re headed in the right direction. Half-court defense is so important in March, as there

are simply teams that can be incredibly difficult to press as the competition gets better. We have to be able to play multiple styles.”

Pewamo-Westphalia is also becoming more consistent each game out.

“We’re starting to play more consistent basketball on a nightly basis,” Eklund said. “And players are getting more comfortable in their roles.”

On the offensive side of the floor, Emily Spitzley leads the Pirates in scoring at 12 points



(Photo Courtesy of Nobach Creative)

per game and Ellie Droste is at 10 points per game.

“Both girls are very good three-point shooters, but far from one-dimensional,” Eklund said. “Most nights we have a very balanced attack. Often playing

a 10-player rotation takes away from some of the big numbers you might see from a 9-1 team but the kids are really selfless and don’t care who leads the way as the long as the scoreboard is in our favor at the end of the night.”

Pewamo-Westphalia Boys Off To A Strong Start In The Central Michigan Athletic Conference

Butch Harmon
Sports Scene

With the boys basketball season near the midway point, the Pewamo-Westphalia boys basketball team has found itself in a familiar place: at the top of the Central Michigan Athletic Conference (CMAC) standings.

Despite graduating a pair of all-conference players from a team that reached the regional finals last season, the Pirates are off and running this season. Pewamo-Westphalia opened the season with eight straight wins and opened up a two-game lead in the CMAC heading into the final week of January.

“We’re progressing well,” said Pewamo-Westphalia coach Luke Pohl. “So far we are staying healthy

and have not had any injuries. We can put five guys on the floor that can shoot the three and pass the ball well. We also play pretty good defense and make people earn what they get.”

Pewamo-Westphalia’s starting lineup is comprised of a pair of seniors and three juniors. Seniors Ryan Smith and Logan Hengesbach bring plenty of experience to the lineup and have started the season strong. Junior forward Jimmy Lehman (6-foot-4) has also been playing strong this season and is joined in the starting lineup by fellow juniors Bryce Thelen and Garrett Trieweiler.

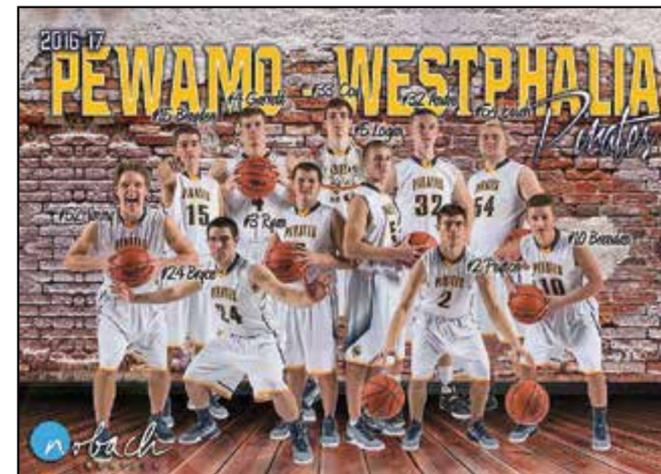
The blend of potent offense and stingy defense makes the Pirates a tough team to face. In its first eight games, the Pirates held all but two opponents to less than 40 points

while offensively the Pirates scored 60 or more points in six of the first eight games.

Pewamo-Westphalia also has a number of young players gaining experience.

“Our subs are getting better and better every week,” Pohl said. “All of them are underclassmen. Andre Smith is a 6-3 sophomore who is giving us a lot of good minutes. Coy Simon is a 6-5 junior that has improved a lot.”

The Pirates finished with a 23-3 record last season on their way



The Pewamo-Westphalia boys and girls basketball teams are peaking at the right time heading into the final month of the season. (Photo Courtesy of Nobach Creative)

to the regional finals and another strong tournament run is possible.

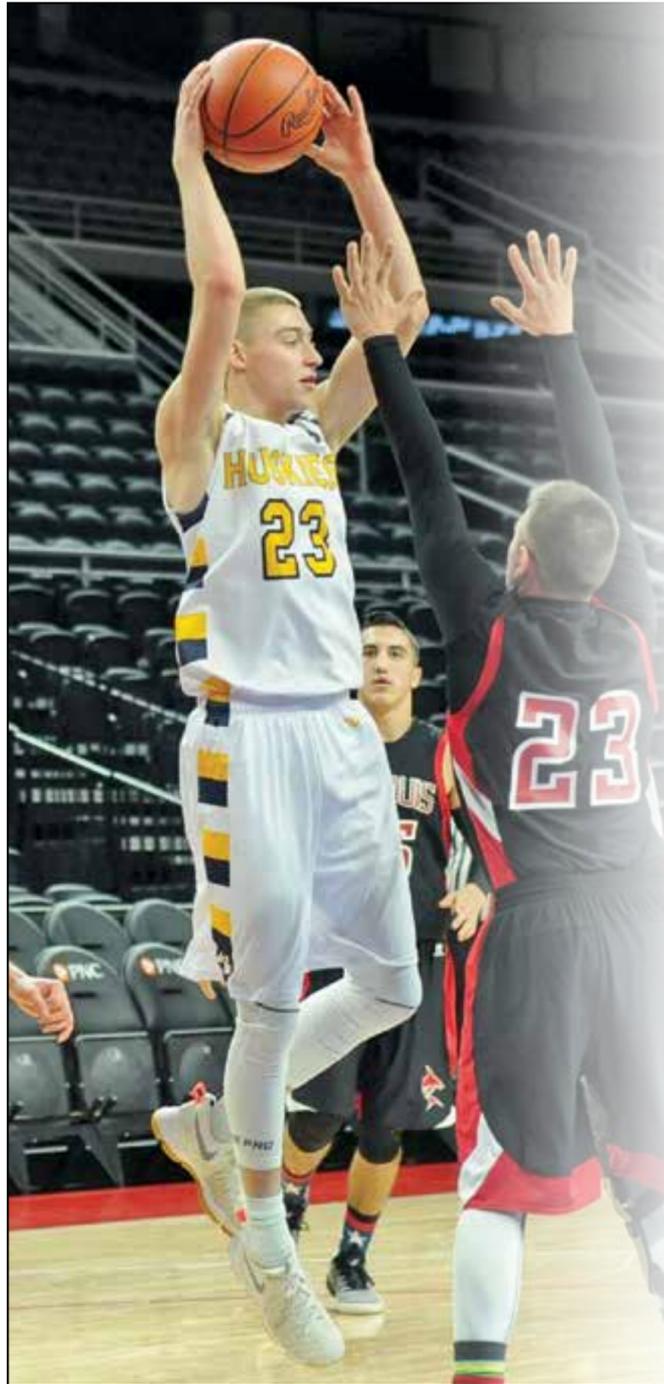
“We’re hoping to win our league and make a good, long run in the

tournament,” Pohl said. “We are not even to the halfway point of the season yet so there is a lot of basketball left to play.”

Your local agent is your neighbor – someone you can trust and someone who’s here for you when it matters most!

Your #1 fan
DEMOTT INSURANCE AGENCY
108 North Newton St. Middleton, MI 48856
Tel: 989-236-7296
www.demottins.com

Auto-Owners INSURANCE
LIFE • HOME • CAR • BUSINESS



The Coach's Kid

Breckenridge's Gavin Ostrander Excels Under Dad's Guidance

Scott Keyes
Sports Scene

(Breckenridge boys basketball coach Jeff Ostrander added his firsthand experience to this article)

When I was 9, my baseball team stank. As if our hitting and fielding weren't pitiful enough, our baby-blue uniforms carried the name of the local mental hospital. One afternoon, our coach tried to light a fire under us with a post-practice pep talk. "If you loaf," he announced, "I'm going to put you in center field and bat you ninth."

At the next game, I was in center field and batting ninth. Me, Mr. Perfect Attendance. And who gotten the glory of standing on the pitcher's mound? The coach's son.

I hated the coach's son. Hated, hated, hated the coach's son. This kid, who sucked just as much as the rest of us, got to pitch just because his dad got the afternoons off? It wasn't just that one year. The coaches' sons got picked for every all-star traveling team. I stayed home, threw the ball against the garage door, and cursed Little League for not having any nepotism laws.

But as you come to realize being the coach's son is not all it's cracked up to be.

It's the coach's son who allows a community to come together as one.

It's the coach's son who pulls everyone together in a time of need.

Sometimes the coach's son gets a bad wrap because he is the coach's son.

But in Breckenridge, the coach's son is a reality.

High School Sports Scene caught up with Breckenridge Head Varsity Coach Jeff Ostrander, and here is his and his son Gavin's story.

As with every small town, it takes a lot of volunteers to make the extra stuff happen. Jeff has been very involved with his community, and when his kids started school, that involvement shifted to school related activities. Jeff has coached every-

thing from football to baseball and even odyssey of the mind. Whatever his kids were interested in, he helped out.

Basketball has always been a sport he really liked. Jeff started teaching his kids how to play at an early age and he spent many hours playing "HORSE" in the driveway. His son Gavin caught on quickly and became a really good shooter at a young age. When it came time for youth basketball signups, he was the first in line and Jeff was asked to help out. When travel ball started in fifth grade Jeff volunteered to coach. Now, he has helped out with everything else over the years so this seemed like a simple step in that same direction.



Little did Jeff know at the time that it would take both he and Gavin down a very bittersweet road.

"Any time a parent and a child can do something together that they both have a great interest in it's a very special thing," Jeff said.

"But I'm here to warn you that coaching your kid in sports is a road that you better prepare yourself before traveling down it. The truth is I wouldn't change a thing, but if I knew then what I know now. I don't think I would do it the same way.

"The perception with the other players, parents and public is the coach is favoring his kid in reality you tend to hold your child to a much tougher standard," he continued. "The expectations become unachievable at times and the praise is few and far between so no one thinks that there is favoritism. This becomes the rule and it is very unfair to the kid."

Once Gavin reached high school, he was prepared to start playing that level of ball. He had been on many school travel teams and played a lot of AAU ball as well. He came out gunning and his first and only freshmen team game he had 26 points and 12 assist. From then on he was a starter on Junior Varsity. Jeff was still helping with different teams he played on and he was coaching his daughter's travel teams. Jeff helped out as an

assistant coach with JV girls, but as his daughter's interest changed he changed his focus to working with Gavin.

In the fall of Gavin's sophomore year, the varsity boys' basketball coaching job was posted, and Jeff threw his name in the hat. Again this is a move that Jeff said would live to regret.

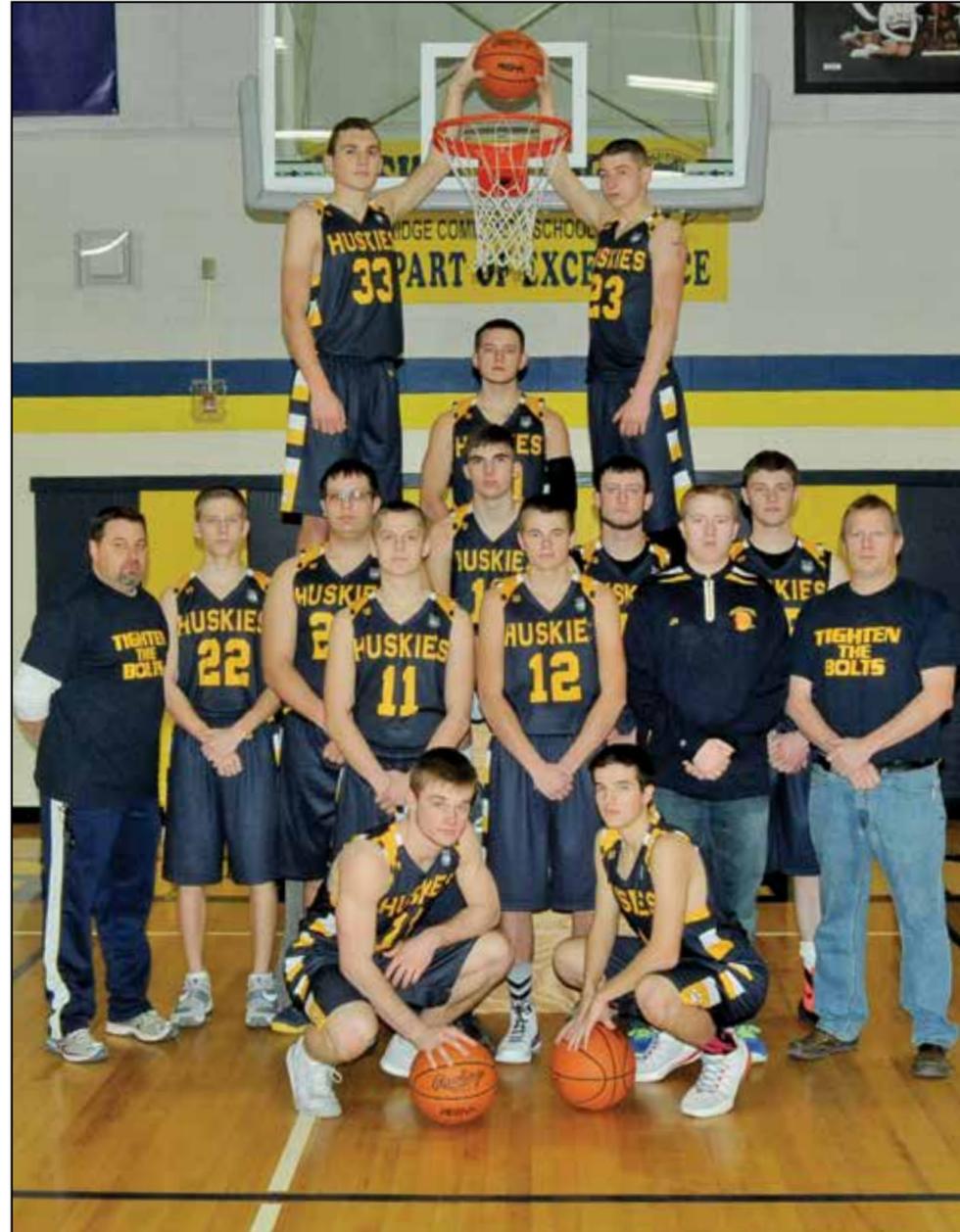
"Don't get me wrong, I love it and I am honored that Breckenridge Community Schools gives me the opportunity to represent my alma mater as the head varsity coach," he said. "But this is where things really got tough for Gavin and me". Gavin was one of the top players in the school, and by this point he was practicing hundreds of shots per day. He would spend hours in the driveway, the Alma College rec center, Morey Courts and anytime someone would open the high school gym, he was there. But that's not enough when you're the coach's kid. You see, no matter how much he could prove his worth, some would still say the only reason he made the varsity squad was because Jeff was his dad.

The senior-heavy team was reluctant to buy into the new program at first, but the season went pretty well all things considered. They were a very athletic bunch of guys and they were all pretty good basketball players. As the season progressed and the two sophomores became scoring leaders, they realized that athleticism doesn't necessarily equate to great basketball skill sets; you could tell which players put in the extra time. Watching the games it should have been clear that Gavin earned a spot, but that coach's kid thing seemed to always be looming overhead.

By his junior year, Jeff considered resigning so Gavin could stand on his own and remove the coach/kid presumption. Gavin and Jeff talked about the pros and cons and they decided to roll with it fearing that two coaching changes in two years would only end in disaster to the program. Breckenridge had a really good team with a not so good record 6-14. The team lost eight games by three points or less and it was a struggle and a disappointment.

Heading into this season, Jeff decided that they were far past the point of no return and he had to continue. They had been through the ringer enough already so why not keep going. "By now I was getting a lot of support from the school administration and our athletic director, and I was receiving some good feedback from the younger player's parents," said Jeff. Gavin was averaging about 30 hours a week in the gym and it was obvious to his peers that he has worked for his spot. Breckenridge jumped out to a 7-1 start and they knew that what they had done for all of those years is finally paying off. "I don't know where the rest of this season will go and I don't know if Gavin will play his favorite sport beyond high school," he added. But Jeff does know that whatever happens Gavin has done it on his own and he is very proud of him.

Breckenridge's boys basketball coach Jeff Ostrander provided insight into what has it been like to coach his son Gavin over the last three years in a recent conversation with Sports Scene. Ostrander shared his first person experience in the matter. (Scott Keyes, High School Sports Scene Photos)



Trusted for generations...



Since 1916, Auto-Owners and your local independent agent have been there when it matters most.

BRECKENRIDGE INSURANCE
AGENCY OF MICHIGAN
126 Eaton St. Breckenridge, MI 48615
(989) 842-3161
fax (989) 842-5570
biaofmi.com

Auto-Owners
INSURANCE
LIFE • HOME • CAR • BUSINESS

BOLAND'S
BEST ONE TIRE
BRECKENRIDGE
120 S. Pine Street
Breckenridge, MI 48615
989-842-5855
General • Cooper
Firestone • Bridgestone
Goodyear
24 Hour On The Road Service
Large Selection of Farm Tires - Semi
Light Truck - Passenger - ATV - Lawn & Garden
The Leader In
The Field

Crop Production Services
Dyna-Gro
Doug Belles
Manager
Office: (989) 842-1185
8263 N. Ransom Rd.
PO Box 157
Breckenridge, MI 48615
www.cpsagu.com

ECOWATER
Lindsay Soft Water Co.
1209 Michigan Ave. P.O. Box 401
St. Louis, MI 48880 Gladwin, MI 48624
SINCE 1925.
(989) 681-5436 (989) 426-4220
1-800-244-3464 Cell (989) 429-6576
www.ecowater.com
E-mail: waterboy@cmsinter.net
ISO 9001
KEVIN EAREGOOD
Certified Water Specialist

Committed to our Future ...
Breckenridge
Village of Breckenridge

B
Village of Breckenridge
Inspired by our Past.



Carson City-Crystal Basketball Team Making Some Noise

John Raffel Sports Scene

An impressive Mid-State Activities Conference victory over previously undefeated Breckenridge, 56-41 in mid-January for Carson City-Crystal has the Eagles thinking seriously of boys basketball title contention.

Coach Cory Schneider's team is off to a 6-3 start.

"It's going pretty good, I think we're starting to put everything together," he said. "Our only losses have been to nonconference (Fowler, Ithaca and Fulton) teams.

The Carson-City Boys basketball team is peaking at the right time as the state tournament gets underway in six weeks. The Eagles expect to be a tough out against any team during tournament time. (Submitted Photo)

John Raffel learned from those." Kaleb Barrett is leading the team in scoring with 16 points a game. Drew Stout is the top rebounder with six boards per game.

"He's had good year so far," Schneider said. "He had an injury early but he came back from that strong. He broke his pinky in practice and had to sit out a few games but he's come back in stride after the injury and has played well."

When it comes to rebounding, "Stout has been aggressive. He's done a good job blocking shots

and getting rebounds," Schneider said.

Getting defensive rebounds has been an effective aspect of the CC-Crystal attack "and stopping the other team," Schneider said. "That's a strength we've been focusing on, limiting the other team's good shots and good possessions."

Team goals for Carson City-Crystal are tied in with the league and district championships, Schneider said, "and then we'll see where it goes from there."



Hemlock Boys Basketball Hanging Tough In TVC West

Thanks to a total team effort, the Hemlock boys basketball team is hanging tough in the Tri-Valley Conference West Division. At the midpoint of the season, the Huskies were in a tie for second in the TVC West with a 5-1 league record.

Contributions from players up and down the roster have gone into Hemlock's success. Versatile senior Gabe Kanouse has been one of the team leaders for the Huskies. Kanouse has been Hemlock's leading scorers this season with high-point games of 19 points and 16 points twice.

Dawson Murphy has also turned in a number of strong games for the Huskies.

Hemlock senior Gabe Kanouse has provided an offensive spark to the Huskies this season. (Randy Miniard, High School Sports Scene Photo)

Murphy scored 14 points against Ovid-Elsie and had 10 points, five rebounds and four assists in a win against St. Charles. Murphy also provides the team with a three-point shooting threat.

Senior guard Ryan Bray is another key contributor. Bray scored a season-high 20 points against St. Charles and also turned in a double-double with 19 points and 11 rebounds against Breckenridge.

Senior Jacob Beckrow (6-foot-3) has given Hemlock strong play in the post and has been one of the team's leading rebounders. Junior Luke Liebrock is another Huskie who has given the team solid play this season.



Bridgeport's Garrett Brothers Have Bearcats Believing

Scott Keyes Sports Scene

Bridgeport has used two convincing TVC crossover wins over Ithaca and Freeland to end the first half of the season a perfect 10-0.

Now the question remains, can the Bearcats keep the momentum going for the remainder of the season and into the playoffs?

With the 1-2 combination of the Garrett brothers, Charles and Markele, Bridgeport coach Eugene Seals remains highly optimistic entering the second of the season.

"One is a slasher and the other is a shooter, and when they are both on we

are extremely hard to beat," Seals said referring to the Garrett brothers after the Bearcats 73-59 victory over Ithaca January 20.

Charles Garrett, a junior torched Ithaca for 41 points, 20 on free throws. Charles Garrett was 20 of 26 from the line. The Ithaca team was 10 of 21.

Meanwhile, Markele Garrett hit two 3-pointers, leading to a 13-0 run in the final 1:08 of the game to earn a misleading victory.

"A 3-pointer is a layup for Markele," Seals said. "Nobody is allowed at that point to take an outside shot but Markele. Those are the options."

Ithaca coach Jim Thompson was impressed with the effort of the Yellowjack-

ets even in defeat.

"It was an incredible effort ... we went toe-to-toe with an outstanding team for 30 minutes, but we needed 32," Thompson said. "It's a Tri-Valley crossover ... that's what you want. If you can get into the crossover against a Bridgeport, a Frankenmuth, a Freeland, then you've done what you've wanted to do."

Markele Garrett finished with 21 points, including six 3-pointers. Markele Garrett hit three 3-pointers in the first quarter to help give the Bearcats a 17-16 lead after one quarter.

Isaiah Hoag finished with 19 points to lead Ithaca. Lehman finished with 18 points and 17 rebounds, while Joey Bentley scored 10.

Bridgeport's Charles Garrett dropped 41 points in a recent 73-59 victory over Ithaca. (Scott Keyes, High School Sports Scene Photo)



All-State Candidate Demetri Martin Giving Big Rapid Major Boost

John Raffel Sports Scene

Demetri Martin is gaining a lot of attention from college coaches as the all-state candidate tries to gear his Big Rapids boys basketball team to another long post-season run.

One of Martin's best nights was when he exploded for 35 points and led the Cardinals (6-0, 4-0) to an 86-58 Central State Activities Association boys basketball Gold Division victory over the Hornets (2-5, 1-3).

"I think I had 36 my sophomore year against Alma," Martin said.

Big Rapids pulled away in the second half.

"We had a little bit of a pep talk in the locker room at halftime," Martin said. "We came out really flat. We had to pick up the intensity."

"Martin is the best player in our league in the last 10 years," Central coach Dan Basom said. "You have to give him credit. He made

some tough shots. We played a nice first half but backed down a little bit. I thought they came out with more energy and we didn't match that in the second half."

Martin is hoping to help the Cardinals come out with more energy and we didn't match that in the second half." Martin said. "We can't come out and play flat."

The Cardinals may not have as much starting depth as they did a year ago. They're a strong three on offense with Martin, senior Christian Hector and junior Braeden Childress. The two other starters have been sophomores Jakob Martinson and Dorian Martin, Demetri's younger brother.

It's common to make comparisons with brothers, but Dorian himself has noticed some similarities and contrasts.

"We're different," Dorian said. "He can shoot, he can dribble; he can do everything. I take it to the hole and pass the ball."

Kent Ingles, who has coached high school basketball for more than 40 years at Greenville and now Big Rapids "absolutely," believes in Martin's potential to play college basketball. He's gotten offers from Rochester College and is being touted by Division II schools including hometown Ferris. Ingles acknowledged that Division I might not be an immediate possibility for academic reasons.

"There were three or four (college coaches) here tonight," Ingles said after a recent game. "He's immediately eligible for D II. He could play D I. He just wants to play. A lot of people want to redshirt kids. But he's not a redshirt kid. He wants to play right away."

Martin played a key role in Big Rapids' run to the state semifinals last season, but has impressed Ingles even more this year.

"The thing about Demetri at the next level is he can play three different positions for you," Ingles said. "He can be the play the one, the two or three. He can play forward. He's a complete player."

ISN'T IT TIME YOUR CUSTOMERS CAN READ YOUR PUBLICATION ON THE INTERNET? Zoom Pubs 1-866-262-4449

Blake Hollenbeck Auto Sales Inc. W. M57 Greenville, MI www.Blakehollenbeckinc.com CHECK OUT OUR INVENTORY Hours: Monday and Wednesday 9 to 8 Tuesday, Thursday Friday 9-6, Saturday 9-3 Ph. (816) 754-5586 Toll Free (888) 358-7473

Tim McCormick Sales 749 W. Main Lowell, MI 49331 Phone: (616) 421-7615 Cell: (616) 717-3686 Fax (616) 897-5007 timccormick@grandautofamily.com Wittenbach GMC CERTIFIED PRE-OWNED Supporting The Red Arrows Since 1988 www.wittenbachgmc.com

GI-TEC Students Bring this coupon to ICCU's Student-Run Credit Union for a free prize! ICCU Student-Run Credit Union Branch ICCUonline.com *One prize per person

HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS SCENE KEEPING KIDS IN THE NEWS Like Us On facebook

EFAW BUILDERS COMMERCIAL & RESIDENTIAL FULL SERVICE BUILDING LICENSED & INSURED AND REMODELING Charles E. Faw Cell: (989) 763-0916 efawbuilders@msn.com

sears of Alma 1650 Wright Ave. • Alma, MI • 989-466-6688 HOMETOWN STORE sears of Greenville 301 S. Maplewood St. • Greenville, MI • 616-754-7121 FINANCING FOR EVERYONE! Lawn & Garden: CRAFTSMAN Husqvarna Appliances: Kenmore Whirlpool MAYTAG SAMSUNG LG Tools: CRAFTSMAN DEWALT BLACK & DECKER Bedding: Serta STEARNS & FOSTER Sealy Fitness Equipment • Gas & Charcoal Grills Owner Jarred Cline

BEHIND EVERY PROJECT IS A True Value WEATHERSEALER EASY-CAP ALMA Alma True Value 102 W. Superior Street Phone (989) 463-4921 CARSON CITY Barnes True Value Hardware 132 W. Main Street Phone (989) 584-6411 EDMORE Edmore True Value 418 E. Main Street Phone (989) 427-5637



Bowen Named A McDonald's All-American

Former Saginaw Standout One Of Top Players In Country

Scott Keyes Sports Scene

For as long as I can remember, Brian "Tugs" Bowen has been referred to as "The Next Big Thing" to come out of the city of Saginaw.

That's a lot of pressure to put on a person at such a young age, but Bowen relishes the pressure. Pressure drives this young man, and anyone will tell you he has ice water in his veins. It's those kind of take no-prisoner attributes that have made him into a top 15 player in the country for the Class of 2017.

A five-star player out of Saginaw Arthur Hill, Bowen moved to national basketball power La Lumiere High School in La Porte, Indiana, last season. Not only did he help lead La Lumiere to a No. 1 ranking in the country, but academically he is attending one of the most prolific prep schools in the country.

It just so happens that La Lumiere is also a giant stepping stone into the college ranks for Bowen.

He chose La Lumiere, close to Michigan City, after visiting prep schools in California, Georgia, Illinois and Florida, and joins a team that is one of the nation's best, with several high-profile recruits and a school that ranks among the nation's elite in terms of ACT scores and acceptance into high-level academic universities.

So yes, Bowen moved onto greener pastures via the prep school route. He is among a lot of recent elite talent from Michigan who have left the state to pursue prep school dreams, which turn into college dreams and possibly the NBA.

Earlier this month, Bowen along with 23 other top basketball players from around the country were selected to the prestigious McDonald's All-American game to be played in March.

Bowen was the only athlete selected to have Michigan ties.

His teammate Jaren Jackson was also selected to play in the April 14 Jordan Brand Classic All-Star game to be played at the Barclays Center in Brooklyn, N.Y.

Moving On

Bowen's decision to leave Michigan for prep school is a trend that is becoming common in the state.

The question remains: is it a bad decision, or is it personal preference?

Had he stayed, Bowen would easily be the top player in Michigan, and an All-American and likely the 2017 Mr. Basketball winner.

The same scenario happened in 2016. No players from Michigan were selected to play in the game that year, but both Josh Jackson (Kansas) and Miles Bridges (Michigan State) played in it, and are from Detroit and Flint, respectively. It is easy to say that Michigan does not have any elite talent. We do. They always choose to leave.

This has been an ongoing conversation for years in the state of Michigan: the state's best players leaving for what is perceived to be greener pastures. Jackson, Bridges and Bowen each left Michigan for better prep schools around the nation. That is the new epidemic going around the nation, and it has sucked the state of Michigan dry. And it is only going to get worse, if the powers that be do not do something about it.

But for the Jacksons, Bridges and Bowns of the world, you have the likes of Cassius Winston (Michigan State), Eric Davis (Texas) and Deonta Davis (NBA) that all stayed in Michigan and made names for themselves without taking the prep school route.

There is always an exception to the rule. But more than not, those who are good enough to leave, will do so.

Bucking the Trend

Michigan is far behind in so many areas that it's forcing some of the best players in the nation to leave, and damaging the brand of basketball in Michigan. It has even trickled down to the younger players. Terry Armstrong is one of the top sophomores in the nation. He left Flint Carman-Ainsworth for Wheeler High School in the Atlanta area last year. He eventually returned to Michigan, but who is to say that he will not try to play somewhere better again in 2017? The same concern goes for New Haven's Romeo Weems. He has potential to be a McDonald's All-American in 2019, with his top-2 ranking already. He does seem like the loyal type, but he is also the caliber of player that prep schools like to attract. Keeping those two here, and others down the line will be vital.

But for Bowen, the move has proved to be vital in his development as a player, teammate and recruit.

Standing at 6-foot-7 and weighing just under 200 pounds, Bowen, a five-star recruit a prized commodity on the high school basketball scene. He recently told Land of 10 that he's nearing his

decision.

"I think I'm going to go at the end of this month, after the Michigan State visit Jan. 29th."

The win is down to Arizona, Michigan State, Texas, North Carolina State, and Creighton. However, many presume the battle is only between UA and MSU.

Bowen talked about how UA's staff has ramped up the pressure after Lonnie Walker's decision to head to Miami.

"They were calling a lot before, but now they've picked it up really heavily," Bowen told Land of 10 about Arizona. "It's an interesting situation because you really don't know who's going to stay and who's going to go. They do have a lot of guys at my position, but if those guys go, it's a big open spot for me."

Now, Michigan State has the opportunity to lay out the red carpet for Bowen. Bowen will also have 5-star Spartans commit Jaren Jackson Jr. with him for the game on Jan. 29.

Bowen has been a top priority for Michigan State for quite some time.

Expect to have his decision made long before that. Bowen doesn't plan to wait long after his trip to East Lansing to announce.



Brian Bowen, a Saginaw native recently was named to the 2017 McDonald's All-American team along with the 2017 Jordan Brand Classic team. Bowen is expected to make his college of choice known in February. (Scott Keyes, High School Sports Scene Photos)



FIRST CONTRACTING INCORPORATED
Specializing in MSHDA multi Family Renovations
701 South Main - Ovid, MI 48866
989-834-1500

"We Care Enough To Make A Difference"
Helping people stay home with dignity and independence.
Daily Living HomeCare, Inc.
Non-Medical In-Home Services
145 E. Center St, P.O. Box 133
Ithaca, MI 48847
Kim Hodge, President Phone: (989) 875-7405
Locally Owned & Operated Fax: (989) 875-8685
www.dailylivinghomecare.com Toll Free: (800) 834-1915

Good Luck All Area Sports Teams
PROpane GAS RESIDENTIAL • FARM • INDUSTRIAL • COMMERCIAL
GAS PRODUCTION COMPANY
989-268-5079 8152 East M-46 Vestaburg 800-991-7472

GA General Agency Company
Insurance since 1915
Knowledgeable. Committed. Trusted.
(989) 773-6981 (800) 589-6982
www.ga-ins.com

ALLEY I SCREEN PRINTING & EMBROIDERY
PROMOTIONAL PRODUCTS
SCREEN PRINTING EMBROIDERY LOGO DIGITIZING ON SIGHT DESIGNER SCHOOL SPIRIT WEAR
P:(989)875-4793 F:(989)875-7148 www.alleyt.com M-TH 8-5 F 8-5:30 SAT 9-1
designs@alleyt.com 103 S Jeffrey Ave. Ithaca, MI 48847

GCCU GRATIOT COMMUNITY CENTER
Alma - (989) 463-8321
Ithaca - (989) 875-6184
gratiotcu.org

MICHIGAN PAVING & MATERIALS CO
• Binding Our Roads And Communities Together
• Serving All Your Asphalt & Emulsion Needs
Michigan Paving & Materials - Alma (989) 402-5932
Michigan Paving & Materials - Monroe (734) 241-9189
Michigan Paving & Materials - Spartan Asphalt Division .. (517) 482-9611
Michigan Paving & Materials - Jackson..... (517) 787-4200
Michigan Paving & Materials - Kalamazoo (269) 343-4659
Michigan Paving & Materials - Grand Region South (616) 459-9545
www.michiganpaving.com

Shahen CHEVROLET
Next To Celebration Cinema Lansing

Mid-Michigan's Largest Chevy Dealer!
New • Used • Finance • Service • Parts • Body Shop
SELL US YOUR CAR MID MICHIGAN'S ONLY AUTOTRADER BUYING CENTER AutoTrader.com
517-803-2568
632 American Rd. • Lansing, MI
www.shahenchvrolet.com
FIND NEW ROADS
CERTIFIED PRE-OWNED



Fowler Boys Turning In Strong Season With Young, Talented Squad

Butch Harmon Sports Scene

With the just one senior in the starting lineup, the Fowler boys basketball team is on the young side this season, but being young is not a bad thing for the Eagles, who have plenty of talented players taking the court.

Fowler starts one senior, two juniors, one sophomore and one freshman and that lineup has led the Eagles to a strong start through the first half of the season.

Fowler's Owen Simon dribbles up court in a recent game. (Submitted Photo)

"I've seen improvement in the team and there is room for even more," said Fowler coach Jason Goerge. "We're a pretty young team this year but for the most part we've played pretty well."

Fowler's lone senior on the team is a talented one in Jeremy Pung. A four-year varsity player, the 6-foot-7 Pung is averaging 18 points and 9.1 rebounds per game. Pung will be continuing his career in college at Lawrence Tech.

"Jeremy is just a super, super kid," Goerge said. "He is also one of the leaders of the team."

Lining up next to Pung is another talented 6-foot-7 forward in junior Mason Pline. Pline is averaging 13 points and 7.3 rebounds per game and is also being recruited by schools like Ferris State, Grand Valley and Cornerstone. A versatile player who missed a few weeks early in the season with a sprained ankle suffered during football season, Pline can play either the wing or in the post.

At point guard, 6-foot-1 sophomore Owen Simon is a versatile point guard that is good at running the offense and has also connected on 17 three-

point shots. "Owen is real good with the ball in his hand," Goerge said. "He has made huge strides since last year. He's a great kid and a good point guard."

Fowler's starting lineup also includes 6-foot-1 junior Dylan Antes and 6-foot-4 freshman Carter Pline giving the Eagles a lineup of all six-footers.

The Eagles are also getting strong contributions off the bench from 6-foot-2 senior Brendan Platte and junior point guard Nick Thelen.

"Brandon has been giving us solid minutes off the bench," Goerge said. "He also does a lot of the dirty work. Nick is our backup point guard and can also play on the wing. He has been doing a real good job for us."

St. Johns Boys Basketball Team Overcoming Injuries To Soar To The Top Of The CAAC Red

Jared Robert Sports Scene

Thanks to a strong senior class, the St. Johns boys basketball team has overcome injuries to take the lead in the CAAC Red near the midpoint of the conference season.

St. Johns opened league play with five straight victories and headed into the second half of the season with an 8-3 overall record as of press time. The Redwings have accomplished that despite losing a pair of key players, senior Tommy Jury and junior Jacob Dorn, for the season with injuries.

"Things have been progress-

ing great so far," said St. Johns coach John Archambault. "Considering we have lost two key players for the season."

Leading the way for the Redwings are seven returning seniors. Those seniors provided the squad with plenty of leadership.

"We are led by our seven seniors who played last year," Archambault said. "Ben and Ross Feldpausch are in their third years on varsity. They do not get rattled when we get into a close game. They understand how to finish games this year."

Ben Feldpausch brings a versatile game to the floor as he

is averaging 12 points, 3.2 assists and 2.3 steals while also adding 19 three-point shots.

Like Ben, Ross Feldpausch is also a versatile player.

"Ross Feldpausch is our most consistent player and best defensive player," Archambault said.

Caleb Paksi is also turning in a big season averaging 11 points and seven rebounds per game while Brandon Huhn has drained 18 three-point shots.

Sophomore Konner Near is also a key contributor and is averaging four steals per game.

"Konner just started playing after Christmas break," Archambault said. "He has been a great

asset to our team."

St. Johns has also been steering clear of the turnover bug.

"We have been taking care of the ball better," Archambault said. "We're not turning it over as much."

With a strong start to the season, the Redwings are looking to keep things rolling down the stretch.

"We hope to contend for the conference championship and look to improve each day in practice and each game we play," Archambault said. "We still have a really tough schedule remaining."



St. Johns boys basketball team has fought through the injury bug to sit on top of the CACC Red rankings. (Submitted Photo)

Holt's 6-10 Star Jaron Faulds Rises Into Class Of State's Elite Big Men

Dan Stickrad Sports Scene

Jaron Faulds is his own worst critic.

But it was his realization of his playing ability a couple of years ago and his own criticism that has fueled his fire to lead him to become what he is today.

Faulds, a 6-foot-10 senior center at Holt High School just south of Lansing, has developed a fine all-around game in becoming one of Michigan's top 10 senior standouts and into one of the top 15 overall players in the state by multitude of publications — regardless of grade.

"When I was a freshman and sophomore, I was more of just a rebounder and (low-post) defender, not a very good offensive player," said Faulds, one of seven Michigan seniors to be in the selection pool for the McDonald's All-American game. "I have really worked on my game the past couple of years. I have become much better at stepping out and hitting 15-, 18-footers and three-pointers. And I can attack the basket as well, try to get to the rim or (drive and dish it off). There's not much of a true center anymore — it's rare. As a big, you need to be able to play a lot of different styles."

With a 3.9 overall GPA and a weighted 4.1 GPA with college-level courses through Lansing Community College, Faulds has excelled highly in the classroom as well.

Faulds, who also plays AAU basketball with The Family,

garnered plenty of college interest in recent years, including Oakland, DePaul, Central Michigan, Toledo, Michigan, Michigan State, Iowa and Pittsburgh among countless others. He selected Columbia University of the Ivy League due to academics and future employment possibilities.

"I really want to play professionally somewhere in the world, but when the ball stops bouncing, you have to have a Plan B," offered Faulds. "There's so much opportunity in going to a school like Columbia. I knew it was the right place for me and my future. Getting a degree at an Ivy League school will open up so many more opportunities for me after basketball."

"I also really wanted to commit early, so I didn't have all of the distractions every day," added Faulds. "I can just concentrate on school and basketball right now."

With poise beyond his years, Faulds has impressed many, including his high school coach Matt Essell.

"He has come a long ways since his freshman year. There's no doubt he's one of the top 10 seniors in the state," said Essell. "He has really developed his game from being a rebounder to someone that has a complete game. He didn't necessarily command the ball when he was younger, but last year and this year he commands the ball. And he has not only developed his offensive game, but he's become a great passer and leader. He's developed a mid-range game and has become even more

aggressive on the low block and getting rebounds.

"What a smart kid, a great player — just a great young man," added Essell. "He has a great future ahead of him."

This season, Faulds has averaged around 19 points, 12 rebounds, 5.5 blocks and 4 assists per game. He averaged around 12 points, 10 rebounds and three blocks as a junior, where he garnered All-CAAC Blue Division and Associated Press Class A All-State Honorable Mention honors.

"So much of what we do goes through Jaron," added Essell. "Other teams that want to stop uses have to try to stop him first. But he has a strong cast around him. And Jaron makes those around him better."

With a possible internship on Wall Street already in the works in a couple of years, Faulds has a solid plan for his future. But in the moment, he wants to help Holt succeed in any way he can out on the hardwood.

Through Jan. 26, Holt was 8-3 and in second place in the CAAC Blue Division behind only Class A No. 3 and undefeated East Lansing.

The Rams last won a district title in 2014, Faulds' freshman season. That he would like to change.

"We want to take it one practice and one game at a time. But when the tournament comes around, we really want to win a district," said Faulds. "We want to go as far as we can. For us seniors, this is our last chance."



Holt's Jaron Faulds is taking his talents to Columbia University in the fall. (Alan Holben, High School Sports Scene Photo)

COMMERCIAL BANK
COMMUNITY...it's what we are.
Alma • Ithaca • St. Louis • Greenville
Mt. Pleasant • Middleton • Hastings • Lake Odessa
www.commercialbank.com
800-547-8531

WIDEMAN APPRAISAL SERVICE
Full Line Of Appraisals
1002 E. Center St. Ithaca, MI 48847
Office: (989) 875-4544
James J. Wideman Owner
www.widemanappraisal.com
E-mail: jim@widemanappraisal.com

Capitol Bowl **Val's PIZZA** **HOT SPOT**
Your Family Fun & Entertainment Center
Open/League/Cosmic Bowling, Parties, Arcade, Proshop
Val's - Dine In, Carryout Delivery
CB's Hot Spot - Sports Viewing, Pool, Weekend Bands/DJs
219 S. Washington St. Owosso, MI 48867 capitolbowl@yahoo.com
989-725-7717 989-725-VALS (8257)
www.capitolbowl.net Become a Facebook Fan Today!

ANDERSON CUSTOM CARPETING
Mary Anderson
Store Manager
989-681-3536
603 E. Washington St. Louis, MI 48880
Hours: M-F 8-5:30; Sat. 9-2

HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS SCENE
KEEPING KIDS IN THE NEWS
Like Us On **facebook**

Nation's Largest Trailer Dealer
Over 1,200 Trails In-Stock!
Take \$500.00 OFF Any Trailer -AND- Financing From Only \$69/mo
BECKS TrailerStore.com
1-888-499-9061

Right Here Right Now in St. Johns
PHYSICAL THERAPY close to home
Sparrow Clinton Hospital
Sparrow Clinton Hospital • St. Johns • 989.224.1575 • www.sparrowclinton.org

At Sparrow Clinton Hospital
Leading-edge Techniques + Compassionate Caregivers = Exceptional Recovery Support
• Physical Therapy • Speech & Language Therapy
• Sports Medicine • Adult, adolescent & pediatric patient support
• Occupational Therapy
We support outstanding athletes by providing Sports Medicine services on the field, court and track for the Redwings of St. Johns High School

WATERSHED TAVERN AND GRILL
Family Owned And Operated
5965 Marsh Rd • Haslett, MI 48840
Call Us For **517-999-SHED Take-Out!**

Grand Ledge Going For 11th Straight Top-10 Season

Dan Stickrad
Sports Scene

For 10 straight years, Grand Ledge has proven to be one of the state's most dominant girls gymnastics programs.

The proof is in the pudding.

The Comets have posted 10 consecutive top-10 state finals finishes and have qualified for state in 12 of the previous 15 seasons under veteran coach Duane Haring.

"We've had a great run," said Haring. "I am proud of everything we have been able to accomplish. We don't have a (gymnastics) gym right in Grand Ledge. The nearest one is Twisters over in Dimondale. But we've been blessed with a lot of very talented gymnasts over the years."

After finishing ninth at state in 2002 and second in 2003, Grand Ledge disappeared from the state scene for three years. In 2007, the Comets again qualified for the state finals to finish in the runner-up slot. From 2008 through 2013, Grand Ledge captured six straight open class state titles — an MHSAA record for consecutive state championships and overall state crowns.

Holland is second with five overall titles, while both Ludington (175-78) and Holland (194-97) have posted four straight state championships at one point.

"We've had an amazing run if you think about it," said Haring. "It's not

always easy to make it to the state meet. To be there as many years in a row as we have and to win all of those titles is amazing.

"We have won every conference title but one since I've been here," added Haring, whose squad is 3-0 atop of the Capital Area Athletic Conference. The Comets have won 13 of the past 14 league titles.

"That is something to be proud of," added Haring. "We didn't win in 2008, Holt came in and won it. But we have won just about every conference since I've been here, and we've won a bunch of regionals, too. That is a tribute to the kids and all of their hard work."

Although Grand Ledge boasted squads of 20-plus athletes a decade ago, there are only eight members on this year's team.

Seniors Afton Lafrance and Janelle Hall, juniors Samantha Hetzer and Ariana Guerrero and sophomore Maggie Mullins are the leaders of this small bunch.

"I still think we can qualify for the state again and finish in the top 10 in the state again," said Haring. "But with only eight gymnasts, we are one serious injury away from not making it. We don't have the depth like we've had in before. With a team our size, I don't expect to win a state title this year, but the goal is to (qualify) and finish as high as we can."



Grand Ledge's Rachel Hogan celebrates after winning the all-around during the 2016 Michigan High School Athletic Association finals. (Scott Keyes, High School Sports Scene Photo)

Bring this ad into any JFCU location to receive a **FREE GIFT** when you open a new account!

JOURNEY
FEDERAL CREDIT UNION
Customer like president

ST. JOHNS - FOWLER - OVID
989.224.9511
www.JourneyFCU.org

Serving Clinton, Gratiot & Shiawassee Counties

RPC
Roxlund Prestage & Company
COMMERCIAL REAL ESTATE

DAVID RAYBURN

308 Gratiot Avenue
Alma, Michigan 48801
www.rpcpas.com

Ph. (989) 463-6123
Fax (989) 463-4055
e-mail: dave.rayburn@rpcpas.com

Kingsley Insurance Group
Rich and Louanne Kingsley
800-783-0817

Alma 116 W. Superior Street Suite 1 989-463-5347
St. Johns 1000 E. Stugis St Suite 12 989-224-3505
Lansing 526 S. Creyts Rd. Suite C. 517-489-2257

— Auto / Home — **CIRCLE OF HONOR** — Boat / Umbrella —

www.KingsleyInsuranceGroup.com



Pine River DENTAL CARE

Where excellent care, the latest technology, and friendliness live

Jenna Putman, D.D.S. • Brian Putman, D.D.S.
610 N. Pine River Street • Ithaca, Michigan 48847
(989) 875-2888 www.pineriverdentalcare.com

FARM • COMMERCIAL • INDUSTRIAL • HOME

TRI-LAKES PETROLEUM, LLC
1-877-857-4567 • www.trilakesllc.com

Gasoline • Diesel Fuels

Serving Our Customers For Over 40 Years
Buy Direct And Save!
Contact: Scott Capen Cell/Text: 989-620-7527 scapen@tri-lakespc.com

Kerosene • Heating Oils



St. Charles' Kyle Tuttle is gunning for his fourth straight Division 4 bowling championship in March. If Tuttle accomplishes the feat, he will become the first bowler in any class to achieve the honor. (Submitted Photo)

Tuttle Bidding For Fourth Straight State Bowling Title

John Raffel
Sports Scene

Kyle Tuttle would love being 4-for-4 when it comes to Division 4 state bowling titles.

But a neck injury sustained in a car accident may have some ramifications that would make the St. Charles bowler face tougher odds to get the fourth title.

So far though, Tuttle seems to be on his way to serious title contention.

"It could be going better," said Tuttle, who is at 208. "It's probably about the same from previous years. I've never really averaged a whole lot. I wouldn't say I've improved at all. I'm just

trying to get ready for tournaments."

Tuttle said he was in the car accident two months ago and had to take off five weeks of bowling.

"I've been trying to catch up for lost time," he said. "I sprained my neck, kind of a whiplash deal. I'm pretty good now."

Will he be ready to go by tournament time?

"I'm planning on it," Tuttle answered, while adding the accident slowed him down "a little bit."

His attitude this season remains the same as it was the last three when he took first: "It's either first or last, kind of,"

he said.

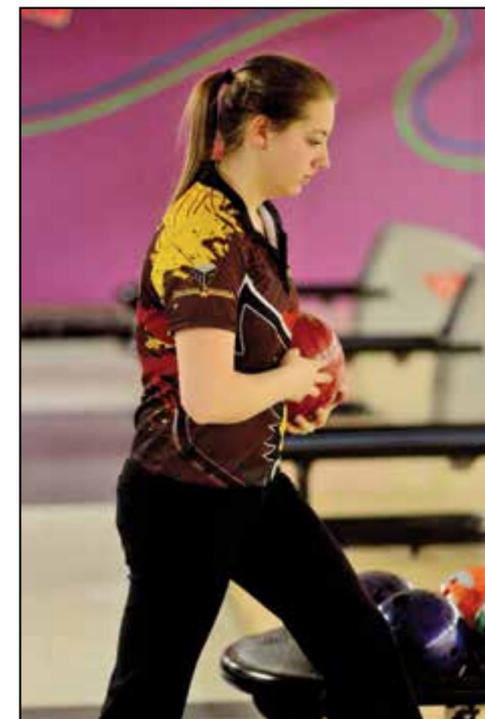
As for any type of pressure, "it's just more of a pressure on myself to do good," Tuttle said.

Meanwhile, the St. Charles team has gone 8-0 in its conference and Tuttle has been happy with the squad's performance.

"We're in pretty good shape," he said. "We finished second last year in the state finals, so we're looking to make a run at it again."

Second has been the highest St. Charles has finished as a team in Tuttle's high school years.

After high school, Tuttle indicated if he were to bowl, it would be at Saginaw Valley State University.



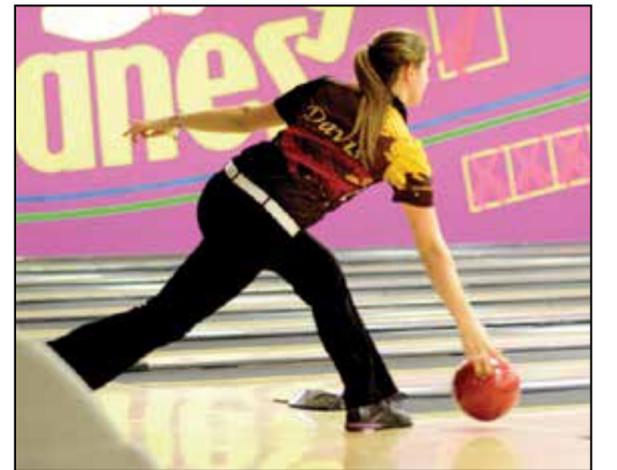
Davison's Taylor Davis Making Strong Bid For Third Straight D1 Bowling Title

Davison senior bowler Taylor Davis lived every bowler's dream as she rolled a 300 game for the second time in her career.

Davis rolled the 300 game in Davison's 29-1 win against Mt. Pleasant. Davis also rolled a 250 against the Oilers to end the match with a 550 series, the second-highest series ever by a high school girl in the state of Michigan.

At last season's individual state finals, Davis rolled a 300 game en route to winning the Division 1 individual championship. Davis was the fourth girl in state history to roll a 300 game during the singles portion of the state finals. She also helped Davison to the team state title last year.

Davis, who has won six Michigan Junior Masters Association championships during her bowling career, will be attending Arkansas State University next year. A two-time individual state champion, she is looking for her third individual state championship this season.



Davison's Taylor Davis is looking to become a three time Division 1 individual state champion as she leads her team the finals in March. (Scott Keyes, High School Sports Scene Photo)

Serving The Entire Great Lakes Region

TRI-LAKES PETROLEUM, LLC
1-877-857-4567 • www.trilakesllc.com

Consignment Programs • Equipment

Contacts

- Lois Neitzke.....Cell/Text: 248-789-7046 ineitzke@tri-lakespc.com
- Hassan Bazzi.....Cell/Text: 313-802-7600 hbazzi@tri-lakespc.com
- Gary Downing.....Cell/Text: 517-231-2234 gdowning@tri-lakespc.com

Financing • Flexible Branding Programs

NORTHERN REPORT

Beaverton Continues To Be Cream Of Crop In Jack Pine

Scott Salowich
Sports Scene

With the league's leading scorer Carter Johnston doing most of the heavy lifting, the Beaverton boys' basketball team rolled through the first half of the Jack Pine conference season undefeated and with an impressive overall record of 9-1.

The Beavers opened the second half of the conference campaign with a 49-33 victory over Harrison to stay atop the standings at 7-0.

Johnston scored 23 of those and held a 27 pointer per game average.

Meridian has emerged as the main challenger to Beaverton's title hopes.

The Mustangs lost to the Beavers 43-

37 way back on Dec. 16, but won their first three games in January to finish the first half at 5-1 and alone in second place.

Meridian smacked third-place Clare (4-2) 62-34 and even won a non-league battle with Midland Dow 48-41 on Jan. 24 that was significant in that Dow handed Beaverton its only loss of the season back before the holiday break.

Lucas Leuder has been averaging 11 points per game for the Mustangs and teammate Taylor Woodcock is right up there with him at about 10.

Clare has been getting 16 points per game from Tyler Smith in the early going.

Roscommon went 3-2 in its first five league games, led by Kaleb Keipert and his 17 points per game average.

Cameron Sidelko is scoring 13 per game for Houghton Lake, which went 3-4 for openers.

Farwell started off 1-4, with Scotty Lucia pouring in 16 per game.

Gladwin oped up 1-5, led by Max Wentworth with an average of 10.

Harrison was winless in its first six league games, but the Hornets led Beaverton at halftime of their most recent meeting and are getting eight points per game from Joel Coughlin.

GIRLS BASKETBALL

Gladwin won four Jack Pine Conference games before the Christmas break and the first three after it to stay alone atop the standings with a 7-0 record.

The Flying G's nipped arch rival Beaverton 40-38 on Jan. 23 to take a two-game lead over the Beavers and Clare, who were tied for second at 5-2.

The loss to Gladwin was the second in a row for the Beavers, who fell to Houghton Lake 43-35 on Jan. 19.

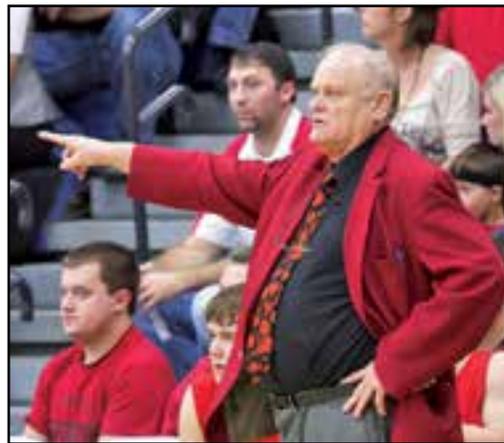
The win lifted the Bobcats to 3-3 in the league.

Clare won its first three league games after the break, including a tight 44-41 decision at Harrison on Jan. 19. Harrison emerged with a record of 3-4.

Farwell and Roscommon were both 2-5 after the first seven league games, while Meridian dropped its first seven.

Gladwin has been led by Peyton Rellinger with 11 points per game and Carley Hickey with 10.

Beaverton's Ali Aldrich is having another big year, averaging 16 points and the same can be said for Clare's Natalee Kunse and her own 16 points per game



Beaverton coach Roy Johnston

average.

Elle Coughlin has been in double figures consistently for Harrison, averaging 11 per game and Karleigh Zmikly is averaging 10 for Meridian.

Gladwin Bowls 'Em Over At Meadow Lanes

Scott Salowich
Sports Scene

The house was packed at Meadow Lanes on Jan. 21, and the home team did not disappoint.

The Gladwin girls' bowling team ran its record to 4-0 in the Jack Pine Conference with a 29-1 victory over Clare in yet another dominating performance.

"We've got three seniors who are all talented bowlers and I think we have a great chance to win the regionals and make some noise in the state tournament," said Flying G's Coach Kent Crawford.

Kasidy Easlick finished fourth in the state singles tournament last year and she isn't even leading the team this year, even though she carries a shiny 174 average and is being recruited by Alma College.

Carley VanTiem leads the team and

the league with an eye-popping 193 average and she rolled a 279 in a meet at Harrison recently, which was the highest game ever by a girl in the Jack Pine Conference.

VanTiem has committed to bowl for Madonna University next year.

Allison Hager averages 145 and is bound for Concordia's squad.

The seniors aren't the only ones making news. Sophomore Mackenzie Weston is second only to VanTiem in average in the league with a 179.

"We do a little bit of coaching," said Crawford. "But these kids already have a knowledge of how to throw the ball and what to do with it. We anticipated a big season, and the kids are pulling together and living up to our expectations."

Meridian beat Harrison 24-6 at Meadow Lanes and also emerged with a 4-0 record.

Brittany Altman leads the Mustangs with a 174 average and Emma Vandongen is also in the top six in the league with a 165.

Beaverton blitzed Roscommon 29-1 and Farwell topped Houghton Lake 27-3, which left the winners tied for second place at 3-1.

Hallie Brink averages 162 to lead the Beavers and Farwell is led by Jaedalin Wilson with a 143.

Harrison and Clare each emerged with records of 1-3. Natalie Lewandowski has a nice 177 average for the Hornets, while the Pioneers are led by Jenna Betts at 162.

Gladwin's boys also emerged alone in first place with a 4-0 record, but the competition is much tighter on that side of the alley.

The Flying G's beat Clare 15.5-14.5 to stay undefeated.

Crawford's crew has lost senior Aaron Weston to a knee injury, but the underclassmen have been able to pick up the slack.

"We've got a young team," he said. "But these guys have been doing really well at every tournament. When somebody doesn't do as well as he should, somebody else steps up to the plate and comes through when we need it."

Junior Austin Castillo averages 191 to lead Gladwin, followed by sophomore Ryan Day at 184. Jake Pryor averages 192 for the Clare squad that gave the Flying G's a battle before falling to 1-3 in the standings.

Meridian was undefeated heading into the event, but lost a 17-13 decision to Harrison.

"We bowled 100 pins over our average," said Mustangs coach Kyle Lipp. "But Harrison just bowled better. I'm not happy about losing, but I really can't complain. Harrison just did a really good job against us."

Cole Ordiway has a 203 average to lead Meridian, which fell into a second-place tie with Beaverton at 3-1. The Beavers bombed Roscommon 28-2 and boast two of the top three bowlers in the league with Madonna-bound Chase Castro averaging 207 and Brandon Cergul running just behind Ordiway at 201.

Harrison evened its record at 2-2, good for a tie with Farwell in the standings after the Eagles lost to Houghton Lake 18-12.



Carley VanTiem (2017) Gladwin and Chase Castro (2017) Beaverton will both be bowling for Madonna University in Livonia in the fall. (Submitted Photo)

Lorne Bush leads the Hornets with a 184, while Cody Ison has a 178 for Farwell.

Houghton Lake's win was good for a tie with Clare at 1-3. Luke Rieger averages 175 for the Bobcats.

Roscommon fell to 0-4 and is led by Seth Seibert at 157.

TRUSTWORTHY
FOR 100 YEARS

trust-wor-thy_{sub}
able to be relied on
as honest or truthful.

To Auto-Owners Insurance and your local independent agent, being trustworthy means that we will be there when you need us most - just like we have been for 100 years.

SCHUMACHER INSURANCE AGENCY
215 Ross Street
Beaverton, MI 48612
989.435.7715

404 N. McEwan
Clare, MI 48617
989.386.3387

schumacherinsurance.com

LIFE • HOME • CAR • BUSINESS **Auto-Owners INSURANCE**

MEADOWLANES
BOWLING & BANQUET

Glow Ball - Fridays & Saturdays

Book Your Christmas Parties Today!

430 W. Fifth St. - Gladwin
989-426-7671

www.bowlmeadowlanes.com

Bonham
HEATING AND AIR CONDITIONING INC.
Serving Gladwin Area Since 1981

bryant Heating & Cooling Systems
WHATEVER IT TAKES.

- Industrial • Residential
- Commercial
- Service
- Geothermal Systems
- Design • Installation

Satisfaction Guaranteed!

989-426-2151
2441 W. M-61
Gladwin, MI 48624

Visit Our Website At:
www.bonhamheating.com

KRAPOHL

Ford LINCOLN

Serving You Since 1950

MT. PLEASANT 772-2991 • 1-800-772-5974

Central Michigan's Service Leader!

www.krapohlford.com

Cliff Anderson Jim Cole Ray Garver Casey Gott Tom Shafer

Kim Laurenz Tony Marshall Mike Croll John Lerg Greg Noyes