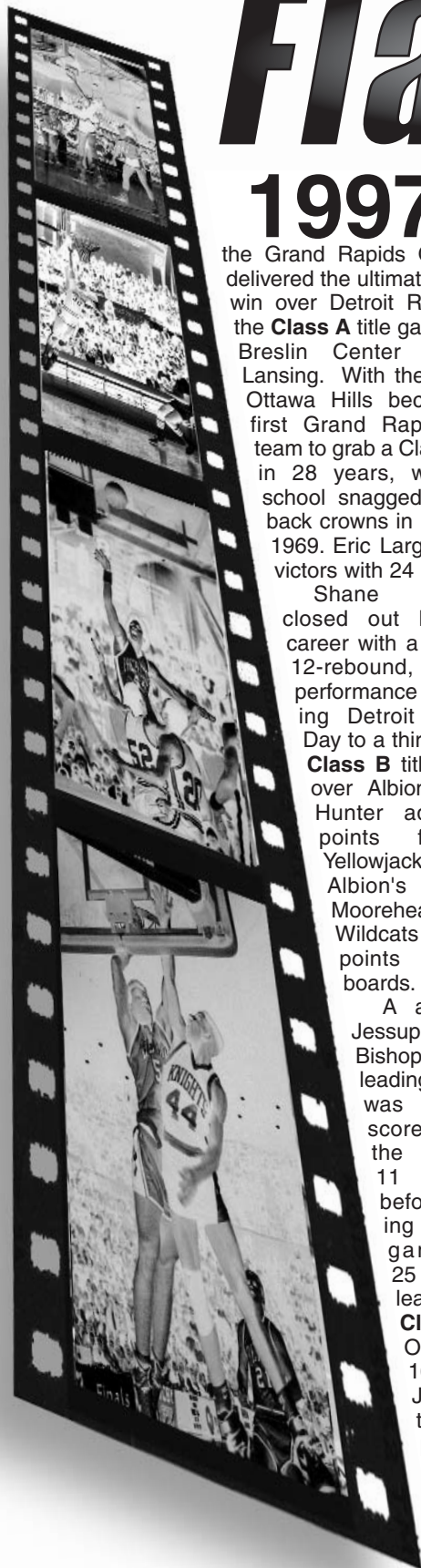


Finals Flashbacks



1997

Led by Jim Eaddy, a 68-year-old coach in his last game prior to retirement, the Grand Rapids Ottawa Hills basketball team delivered the ultimate going-away gift with a 68-51 win over Detroit Redford in the **Class A** title game at the Breslin Center in East Lansing. With the win, the Ottawa Hills became the first Grand Rapids area team to grab a Class A title in 28 years, when the school snagged back-to-back crowns in 1968 and 1969. Eric Large led the victors with 24 points.

Shane Battier closed out his prep career with a 24-point, 12-rebound, 5-block performance in leading Detroit Country Day to a third straight **Class B** title, 71-64, over Albion. Javin Hunter added 22 points for the Yellowjackets, while Albion's Jason Moorehead led the Wildcats with 29 points and 10 boards.

Aaron Jessup, Redford Bishop Borgess' leading gunner, was held scoreless for the opening 11 minutes, before igniting for a game-high 25 points to lead Bishop Borgess to a 64-42 **Class C** title win over Three Oaks River Valley. Trailing 18-16 after one period of play, Jessup scored nine of his team's 11 second-quarter points, but the team still trailed 30-27 at the break. The junior forward opened the second half with five unanswered points as Bishop Borgess went on a 13-0 run to take

control of the contest. Teammate Sam Hoskins added 15 for the Spartans. Zac Robertson paced River Valley with 12, eight on free throws.

Detroit East Catholic senior guard Andrew Mitchell opened the day's festivities with a buzzer-beating three-point bucket to lift the Chargers to a 63-60 win over defending champion Wyoming Trinity Christian in a classic **Class D** matchup.

"When the game's on the line, he's pure money," said East Catholic coach Dave Soules, who picked up his eighth MHSAA championship trophy. "I've never had anyone who has handled pressure like he has."

Mitchell finished with 36 points, overshadowing a stellar 25-point performance by Tri-unity sophomore guard Bryan Foltice.



1987

Detroit Cooley stunned a previously unbeaten Detroit Southwestern squad with an 82-77 overtime victory before 13,482 at Ann Arbor's Crisler Arena in **Class A**. Cooley had lost twice to the Prospectors earlier in the year, including a 35-point defeat in the Detroit Public School League title game. In the MHSAA title contest, Cooley led by eight entering the fourth quarter, but Doyle Callahan's put-back at the buzzer tied the game at 71 apiece. Southwestern's James Hunter scored the first points of overtime, but Cooley did not fold. Rafeal Peterson responded with a basket, and the Cardinals rolled to victory. It was the sixth consecutive defeat in the Class A Finals for the Prospectors. Callahan ended with 26 points for the Southwestern, while sophomore Michael Talley's 23 paced Cooley.

Juniors Ernest Stewart and Aaron McFadden scored 12 points apiece as Flint Beecher grabbed his second **Class B** crown in three consecutive Finals visits with a 41-32 win over Alma. Dave Modders led the Panthers with eight points.

Runner-up in 1986, Saginaw Nouvel coasted to a 72-59 win over Benzie Central in **Class C**. Corey Ward led Nouvel with 19 points, all in the second half. Guard Rex VanDuzen poured in 20 for the Huskies.



K. Dozier, Detroit Free Press

In **Class D**, McBain Northern Michigan Christian ended the year as the state's only unbeaten squad, with a 56-46 victory over the Snowbirds of Gaylord St. Mary. Bryan Eisenga led the winners with 16, while Mike Heuker added 14. Jay Martin tallied 14 for St. Mary.

1977 A crowd of 13,609 fans packed Crisler Arena to watch Earvin "Magic" Johnson and No. 1 Lansing Everett defeat Kevin Smith and Birmingham Brother Rice in overtime, 62-56, to win the **Class A** crown. When Johnson picked up his third and fourth fouls within a 10-second span early in the fourth quarter, it appeared the game was headed for an early end as Brother Rice built a 43-36 lead on six straight free throws by Smith. Instead, Johnson buckled down and exploded for six points of his own to close the gap. Tied at 47 inside a minute to play, Everett grabbed a 49-47 lead as Paul Dawson put back a Johnson miss with three seconds left. However, Smith hustled the inbound pass down court and scored on a shot launched from just past mid-court to tie the score at 49 as time expired.

In overtime, the Vikings built a 56-49 lead before Johnson fouled out with 1:06 remaining. Thanks to the free throw shooting of Jamie Huffman, a transfer from Homer HS who finished with 14 points, Everett hung on for the victory. "Magic" ended with 34 points and 14 rebounds, pushing his prep career scoring mark total to 2,012. Smith played an outstanding game for the Warriors, finishing with 25 points, including 11-of-13 free throws.

Dearborn Divine Child's Tom Wing held

Grandville all-stater Vince Vogg to 10 points as the Falcons downed the Bulldogs, 49-45, in **Class B**. Randy Palmitier led Grandville with 17 points, while Wing finished with 12 and teammate Dave Blazo added 11.

Steve Jones dropped in 19 points and snagged 20 boards as Redford St. Mary defeated Saginaw Sts. Peter and Paul, 61-47, for the **Class C** championship. David Bland led the Crusaders with 12, while Cass Wilson and Mike Bishop each contributed 10.

Geof Kotila scored five points in the final 38 seconds, including a pair of free throws with a single tick left on the clock, as Maple City Glen Lake upset top-ranked Detroit East Catholic, 70-68, in **Class D**. Kotila finished with 27 points. Teammate Rick Bailleurgeon ended with 12 points, to close out his prep career with 2,144 points. At the time, the total ranked second on the MHSAA career scoring list, 66 points behind Richie Jordan's 2,210. Ted Anderson scored 22 points, Terry Triplett 20, and Donell Williams 19 for the Chargers.

1967 The Detroit Public School League won its first basketball crown since 1930 as Detroit Pershing defeated Flint Central, 90-66, in **Class A**. The PSL had opted out of competition in the MHSAA basketball tournaments for 30 years, before returning to the fold in 1961. Flint Central focused on shutting down Pershing's Spencer Haywood, double- and triple-teaming the future NBA legend. That left junior sensation Ralph Simpson (another future NBA star) free to run the floor. Simpson notched a then-tournament record 43 points as the Doughboys rolled. Haywood was held to five field goals in the contest, but delivered on 14-of-18 free throws for 24 points. More importantly, he grabbed a game-high 17 rebounds. Tim Bograkos finished with 27 points for Flint Central.

In **Class B**, Menominee returned the crown to the Upper Peninsula for the first time in 10 years with a 63-59 triumph over Willow Run. A strong zone defense by the U.P. squad forced the Flyers to the outside, where they hit only 29 percent of their shots. Junior Pat Miller finished with 28 points to pace the winners. John Thomas finished with 22 points for Willow Run.

Mt. Pleasant Sacred Heart won its first MHSAA title in four visits to the dance, with a 66-53 win over a scrappy Detroit All-Saints squad in **Class C**. Sacred Heart took advantage of its height advantage as inside men Mark Simons, Mike Hackett and Mick Natzel combined for 45 points to lead the attack and cap a perfect 25-0 season.

Stan Grayson finished with 18 points for the All-Saints.

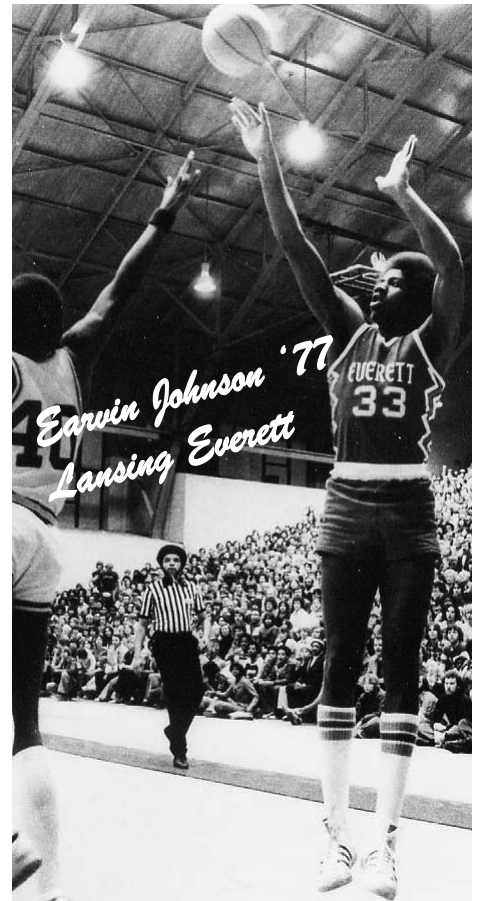
John Sperla scored 29 points while teammate Bob Boudreau added 20 to lead Flint St. Matthew to a 75-67 victory over

Ewen in **Class D**. Bob Franti led the Bulldogs with 24 points. St. Matthew also ended the year undefeated in both basketball and football.

1957 At Jenison Field House, defending champion Muskegon Heights defeated a strong Detroit Austin Catholic squad, 61-49, for the **Class A** trophy. Ed Burton ended his prep career at Heights with 25 points, while teammate Ronnie Robinson finished with 21 (See Legends of the Game article on page 6).

After winning three titles in the 1956 tournament, Michigan's Upper Peninsula returned to East Lansing to reclaim two of the MHSAA's cage crowns. In **Class B**, Negaunee escaped with a 68-66 win over an underdog squad from Harper Woods. The Pioneers pulled to within a single point on two occasions late in the contest, but could not finish the upset. Joe Lucci led the winners with 21 points, while Ron Scott scored 26 for Harper Woods.

Meanwhile in **Class D**, U.P. and statewide powerhouse Chassell notched its 39th consecutive victory with a 58-50 win over Stevensville. Tom Peters scored five from the field, and added 10 free throws for a game high 20 points. The Panthers' winning streak, which began on Feb. 1, 1956, would extend through three MHSAA basketball tournaments before ending with a



MHSAA File Photo

38-36 loss to the Ewen Bulldogs in the opening contest of the 1958-59 season. The total of 65 consecutive victories remains an MHSAA record.

Lakeview High of Montcalm County mounted a strong second-half rally to defeat Kalamazoo Christian, 76-68, in the **Class C** title game. Trailing 45-34 at the intermission, Lakeview switched to a full court press to cut into Christian's lead. Fouled on a basket with 4:51 remaining, the Wildcats' Harold Gorby converted the free throw for a 70-68 Lakeview lead. The Wildcats continued to press, and shut down 6-6 Christian center Jim Verbridge and the rest of the Comet offense for the remaining minutes. Verbridge hit nine field goals for 18 points in the first half and finished with 26.

In **Class E** action at Escanaba, Hermansville tripped up Michigamme, 77-51, as Coach Don Hill's Redskins ended the year 21-1.

1947 A record crowd of 12,832 turned out to witness the MHSAA Finals at Michigan State's Jenison Field House. In **Class A**, Flint Northern posted its fifth title in 15 years with a 48-38 win over Dearborn. Joe Wargo led the winners with 14 points. Guard Dave Sebring scored nine of his 12 points for the Pioneers in the first half.

Paced by Jack Joynt and Bob Shults, Alma landed a 32-20 win over Fremont in the **Class B** Lower Peninsula title game. Neil Johnson led the Packers with eight points.

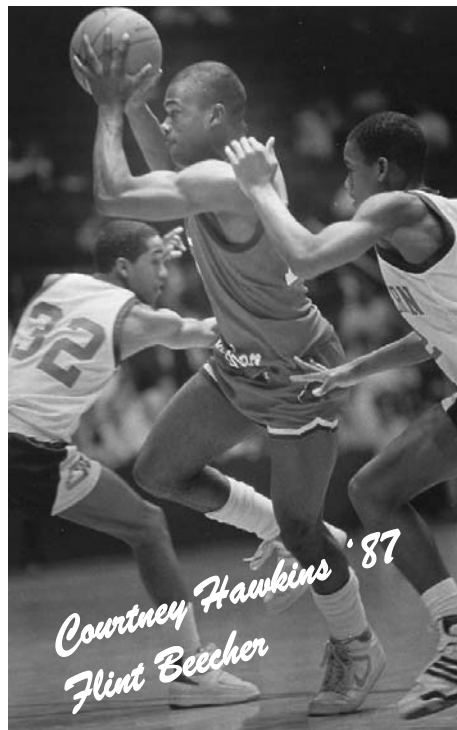
In **Class C**, Art McColgan scored his 500th point of the year as Saginaw Sts. Peter and Paul defeated Ewart, 39-29. The trip to East Lansing was a return engagement for the Saginaw squad. One year previous, it was defeated by Manton in a 33-32 thriller. McColgan finished with 15 points leading all scorers. Leo Boyd (once the MHSAA leader in all-time football coaching victories with 291) added seven. Dale Carmichael and Hugh Adams ended the game with 12 and 11 points for Ewart.

Baroda downed Haslett, 42-32, for the **Class D** Lower Peninsula championship. Floyd Schedler scored 19 points, including the game's first seven, to lead the winners. Dallas Canfield kept Haslett in the contest, scoring 13 second-half points to finish with 16. Earlier in the year, Baroda moved its games to the high school gym at Bridgman, a town three miles away, after its home floor was lost in an explosion. The move brought the Bulldogs some luck, as Bridgman won the 1936 **Class D** crown.

In the Upper Peninsula tournament, Bessemer downed Lake Linden, 46-45, in a **Class B** thriller at Marquette. Norway grabbed the U.P. **Class C** crown with a 55-54 win over Gwinn in overtime at Iron

Mountain. In **Class D** at Iron Mountain, Johnson of Greenland scored 26 points, including 11 field goals to lead his team past Vulcan, 63-48. The Vikings of Bergland came from behind to defeat Perkins in the **Class E** game at Marquette, 40-37. Bill Friedle scored nine, and John Strancel and Bob VanSlyke each adding seven points apiece for Vikings.

1937 Muskegon ended the year as the only new MHSAA champion, with a 31-27 **Class A** win over Holland. Played at Flint's spacious Industrial Mutual Association Auditorium which had opened in 1929, Bob MacIntyre scored 11 and Charles Vanderlinde eight points for the Big Reds, while Jim Grisson



Tom Cheek, Flint Journal

scored all of Holland's second-half points to lead the Dutchmen with 14. Muskegon finished the season 18-0.

Bob Osterman, Detroit St. Theresa's 6-4 center, scored 11 first-half points and finished with 16 as the Pirates rolled to their second consecutive **Class B** crown with a 45-25 win over Marshall. Jack Sweeny ended the game with 11 points for the winners.

Bob Wines finished with 15 points, including 13 in the first half as Lansing St. Mary's took the **Class C** crown with a 32-15 victory over St. Clair.

Stevensville earned its third crown in a row in **Class D** with a 21-18 win over a tough squad from Horton in a rematch of the 1936 title game. Stevensville sealed the victory with five seconds remaining in the

contest when a technical foul was assessed against Horton for excessive timeouts.

In the Upper Peninsula Finals, Ironwood, playing on its home floor, defeated Ishpeming, 17-15, in a thriller in **Class B**. Newberry downed Crystal Falls, 24-16, in **Class C**, and Trout Creek trounced Trenary, 42-20, in **Class D**.

1927 Clair Helmer and Bill McCall starred for the Big Reds as Muskegon downed Battle Creek, 32-24, in the **Class A** championship hosted at Detroit Central High School. Ray Priest, who finished with 12 points on six field goals, led the Battle Creek squad throughout. Trailing 15-12 at the half, Muskegon rallied to a 22-20 lead at the end of the third, then shutdown its opponent's offense in the final frame. McCall finished with 11 points, while Helmer added nine.

In **Class B** played at Detroit Northwestern High School, Grand Haven overwhelmed Howell, 28-7. Henry Dirske and Steve Sluka paced the winners with 10 and eight points.

Outstanding defense was the key as Reed City held Shelby scoreless from the field en route to a 16-5 win in **Class C** at Northwestern High School. Reed City guards Johnson and Pratt continually frustrated Shelby, breaking up passed regularly. Buerge led Reed City offensively with nine points. The game remains the only Final in which a team has finished with zero field goals.

At Central High School, St. Anne's of Alpena grabbed the **Class D** crown with a 27-25 victory over U.P. finalist Gwinn. Herman Samp led St. Anne's with seven field goals, to finish with an impressive total of 23 in his final three tournament contests.

1917 In the first annual interscholastic tournament to be staged at the University of Michigan's Waterman Gym in Ann Arbor, Detroit Northwestern defeated Jackson, 24-21. Northwestern center Henderson scored four baskets in the final moments of the contest to overcome a two-point deficit. Mitchell led Jackson with four field goals and three free throws.

A total of 38 high school squads entered the tourney that ran for three consecutive days. Broken down into to divisions by tournament officials, the final contest consisted of the respective division champions. Eligibility of those entered was decided according to Michigan Interscholastic Athletic Association rules – a forerunner of the current MHSAA.

— Ron Pesch
MHSAA Historian