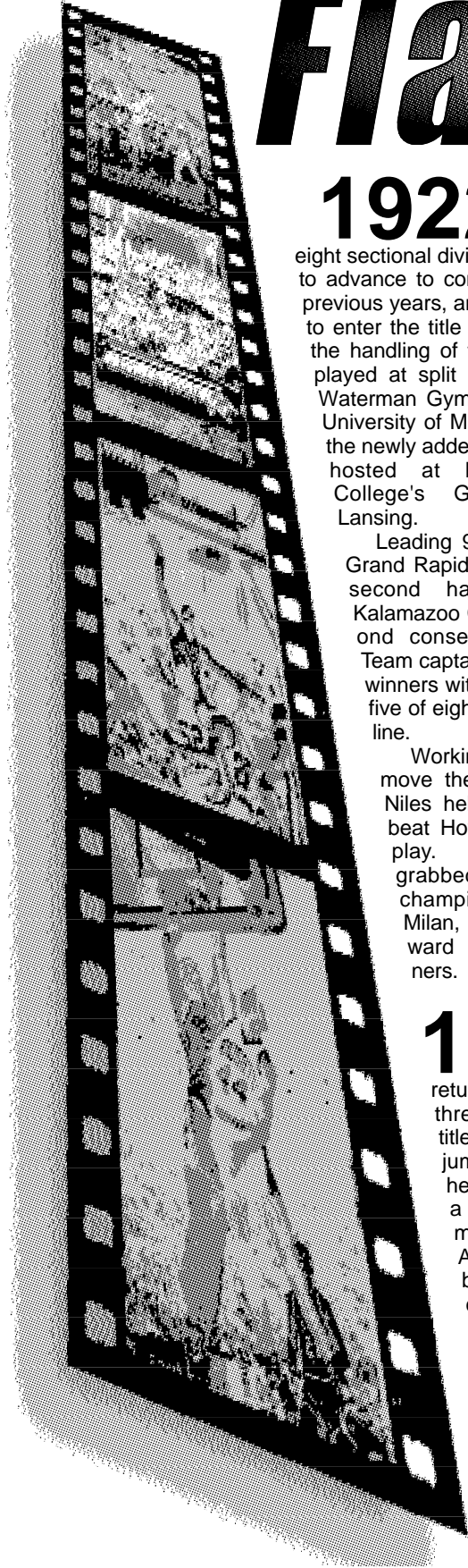


Finals Flashbacks



1922 For the first time in tournament history, only winners of the state's eight sectional division tournaments were allowed to advance to compete for the state crown. In previous years, any interested team was allowed to enter the title fray, creating much disarray in the handling of the event. The contests were played at split sites, with Class A staged at Waterman Gymnasium on the campus of the University of Michigan, while the Class B and the newly added Class C tourney were hosted at Michigan Agricultural College's Gymnasium in East Lansing.

Leading 9-6 at the intermission, Grand Rapids Union dominated the second half of play, routing Kalamazoo Central 27-9 for its second consecutive **Class A** title. Team captain "Red" Cherry, led the winners with nine points, including five of eight shooting from the foul line.

Working a short floor pass to move the ball down the court, Niles held a off a late rally to beat Howell 22-14 in **Class B** play. Holly High School grabbed the first **Class C** championship by downing Milan, 19-16. Diminutive forward Hartz paced the winners.

1932 The greater Kalamazoo area returned from East Lansing with three MHSAA Lower Peninsula titles in tow. Kalamazoo Central jumped out to an early lead then held off Lansing Central, 26-24, in a bitterly contested **Class A** title matchup at Demonstration Hall. A free throw by Hughes and a bucket by Ward Brundage capped the victory for Kalamazoo. With the win, Coach Gene Thomas became the first and only coach in Michigan tournament history to win prep titles in two states. Thomas led Marion High School to the Indiana title in 1926.

Mt Pleasant crushed

Niles in **Class B**, 24-6, before a crowd of nearly 5,000. Paced by center King Lewis, the Oil City squad opened a solid 9-2 lead at the half, and then ran away with the contest in the third quarter. Lewis ended the day with six field goals for a game-high 12 points to help Mt. Pleasant end the year 18-0.

Kalamazoo St. Augustine and Coach Harve Freeman garnered an unprecedented third consecutive title, however, the 10-5 win over East Lansing in **Class C** action did not come easy.

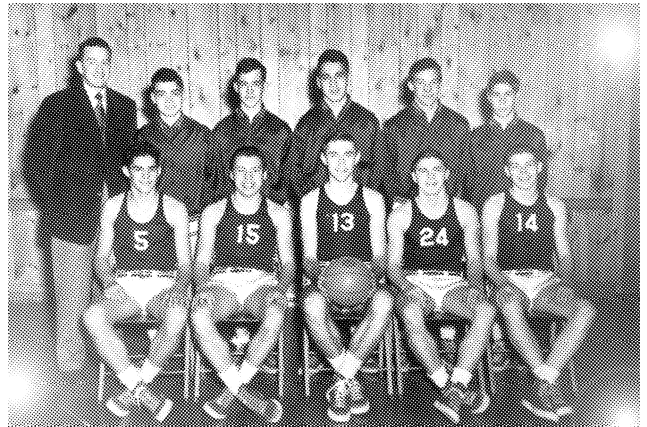


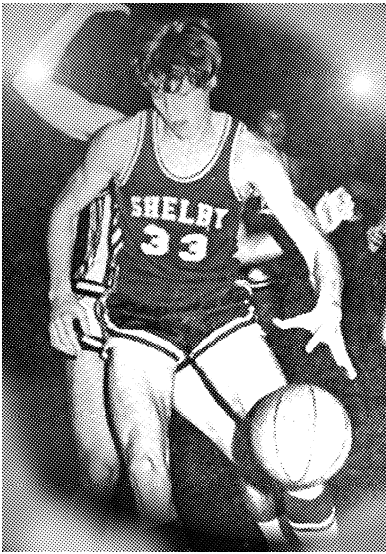
Photo courtesy of Harold Anderson

Nahma 1952

Trailing for three periods of play, the "greencladmen" did not pick up their first field goal until the final frame, when junior Leroy Muth's bucket gave St. Augustine the lead, 4-3, with under six minutes to play. Muth added two more field goals within the next two minutes, as the winners' famed "rotary attack" kicked into high gear.

Francis Pellegrom, a student at Western Michigan Teacher's College, coached Portage to the **Class D** crown. Only a 10-grade school at the time, Portage emerged from a field of 250 Class D schools to defeat an outstanding team from Dickson Brethren, 24-19. Matched in height, Portage opened up a 12-2 lead early in the second quarter. Lowell Matteson scored his fifth field goal in the final minute of play to seal the win.

Beginning in 1932, Michigan's **Upper Peninsula** held a separate basketball tournament, crowning champions in Class B, C and D. This arrangement continued through the 1947 season. Ishpeming won the first of five titles under Coach Clairmont "C.C." Watson by defeating Escanaba, 17-14, in **Class B**. Lake Linden topped Escanaba St. Joseph, 24-17, for **Class C** honors. In **Class D**,



MHSAA File Photo

PAUL GRIFIN

Palmer upended Daggett, 30-24. In 1941, a fourth bracket was added to the U.P. tourney – Class E, comprised of schools with a student body numbering 75 or less.

1942

At Jenison Field House in East Lansing, Saginaw's speedy Tony Pabalís pumped in 18 points as the Trojans defeated Muskegon, 27-24, in overtime for **Class A** laurels. Saginaw trailed, 18-17, at the end of three to set the stage for a wild finish. A bucket by Larry Savage, who converted following a stolen pass, gave Saginaw a 23-21 lead with just over a minute to play, but a field goal by Muskegon's Paul Bard as the gun sounded pushed the game to overtime. Pabalís and Stewart Francke each contributed a basket for the Trojans in the extra frame to secure the victory.

In **Class B**, Niles conquered Ecorse, 50-30, as Dillard Crocker scored 14 of his game-high 20 points in the first half. John Ghindia netted 11 to lead the Red Raiders' attack.

Decatur picked up its 26th straight victory with a 31-20 win over Flint St. Mary in the **Class C** game. Leading 21-20 after three periods, Decatur held St. Mary scoreless in the final frame to seal the win.

In the opening game of the Finals, Leland downed Whitehall, 18-13, for **Class D** honors. Ken Knudsen notched eight points for Leland in this low scoring contest.

In **Upper Peninsula** championship play at Marquette, Iron River thumped Hancock, 41-30, as 6-6 center "Botch" Zykowski collected 11 points in the **Class B** showdown.

Crystal Falls earned its fifth consecutive **Class C** trophy with a 37-29 win over Norway. The Trojans posted a 14-2 scoring advantage in the third period to guarantee the win. Center Albert "Mink" Sartori led the winners with 15 points.

Marana registered 21 markers as Hermansville rolled to the **Class D** crown with a 51-27 triumph over Pequaming.

Palmer repeated as **Class E** titlists with a 37-31 come-from-behind thriller over previously unbeaten Bergland. Trailing by five points at the end of the third, Palmer roared back behind the play of S. Trehwella and Andelin. The duo combined for 25 points as the team posted its 32nd consecutive win, spanning two years.

1952

Highland Park earned its first-ever MHSAA **Class A** crown, edging Saginaw Arthur Hill, 43-42, at Jenison Field House. A record crowd of 22,953 attended the split sessions. Led by George Duncan and George Lee, the Polar Bears opened up a 9-0 advantage in the opening minutes, but Arthur Hill recovered in the second quarter, and a pair of baskets scored within the final three seconds of play by John Adams gave the Lumberjacks a 23-22 lead at the half. The Polar Bears quickly regained the lead at the outset of the third quarter, 28-23 on buckets by Duncan and Lee.

Undeclared in two seasons, Detroit St. Andrew escaped unscathed from the **Class B** championships to post its 48th straight victory with a 41-38 triumph over a tough Grand Blanc squad. With 11 lead changes and five ties in the first half of play, the favored Flyers found themselves in a relentless battle. Leading 23-22 at the half, St. Andrew opened up a 38-31 lead at the end of three quarters behind the play of Ron Nadolski, Ed Flut and all-stater Frank Tanana. Grand Blanc bounced back and pulled within three, but drew no closer. St. Andrews won **Class C** honors in 1951. Tanana and Flut led the Flyers with 11 and 10 points, respectively. St. Andrew coach Nap Ross missed the contest as he left the team ten days previous to join the Cleveland Indians' minor league training camp.

Averaging 31.6 point per game, St. Louis' Fred Corbus established a new tournament scoring mark as the Crimson Tide trounced Algonac, 53-34, in **Class C**. A 6-4 all-state center, Corbus shattered the mark with 30 points, leading St. Louis to its 24th consecutive victory and first MHSAA title. The total topped the previous high of 28 by Rusty Swaney of East Grand Rapids in the 1950 title game.

After 23 years at the helm, Fowler coach Marion Piggott was rewarded with the **Class D** crown as his Eagles cruised past Copemish, 55-20. Fowler had reached the Finals in 1950 and the Semifinals in 1951, losing to Brimley, the eventual champion in both seasons. Center Alan Thelen topped the team with 14 points in the first half and finished with 22. Teammate George Fox, (who coached Lansing Everett to the **Class A** crown 25 years later) added 13.

In **Class E** play at Crystal Falls, Nahma climaxed its finest season

ever, whipping Marenisco, 64-44. With the win, the Arrows concluded the first undefeated season in school history, earning the school's first-ever basketball crown under Coach Harold "Babe" Anderson. Wendell Roddy and Paul Thibault each tallied 18 points for Nahma.

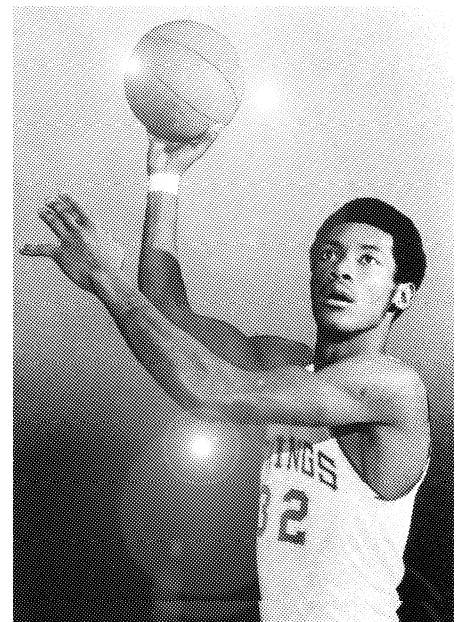
1962

Saginaw's Ernie Thompson cemented a place in the Finals record book, leading the Trojans to their first title in 20 years, a 69-58 triumph over Benton Harbor in **Class A**. Thompson, a 6-4 center for the top-rated and undefeated Saginaw squad, grabbed 27 rebounds and pumped in 42 points to establish Finals records in both categories. Thompson hit 15-of-27 shots from the field and added 12-of-20 from the free throw stripe to top the previous mark of 35, set by Mel Peterson of Stephenson.

Led by Ken Wilburn's 26 points, perennial power River Rouge crushed East Grand Rapids, 69-36, for its second consecutive title in **Class B** and fifth in nine years (see "Legends of the Game" story on page 4 for more on River Rouge).

In a rematch of the 1959 title game, Muskegon Christian dominated Kalamazoo Christian, 79-54, for the **Class C** crown. Rick Duistermar netted 24 points for the victorious Warriors, while teammate Don Poel kicked in 23. Rivals in the old Four C Conference, the teams split a pair of regular-season games. With the victory, Muskegon Christian avenged a 63-59 loss to the Comets in the 1959 Final.

Flint St. Mary's earned its first title with a 60-52 win over Brimley in **Class D**. Don Trevorror scored eight of his game-high 22 points in the second stanza as the parochials opened up a 34-21 halftime lead. The Bays rallied for 21 points in the third, closing the gap to 49-42, but missed 10 straight shots in the fourth quarter.



TONY FURLOW

Photo courtesy of the Flint Journal

1972

In **Class A**, a capacity crowd of 12,500 at Jenison Field House witnessed a thrilling come-from-behind, 74-71 victory by Flint Northern in a classic confrontation with Saginaw Valley Conference opponent Pontiac Central. Coach Bill Frieder's top-ranked Vikings, who had trailed by nine in the third quarter, delivered a knockout punch to their league rivals with six straight points in the final minute of the game. A basket by Northern's Terry Furlow with 54 seconds left tied the game at 69. Two free throws by Dennis Johnson and a bucket by sub Ray Bridges gave Northern a 73-69 lead with 29 seconds to go to seal it. Wayman Britt led Northern with 24 points with Furlow and Jones each contributing 15.

River Rouge wrapped up its 12th MHSAA title with a stunning 65-64 win over Muskegon Heights in a replay of the 1971 **Class B** title game. Leighton Molton finished with 24 points for Rouge while Don Myles paced Heights with 15 points.

Shelby, led by future NBA ballplayer Paul Griffin, earned its second straight title with a 71-61 win over Saginaw St. Stephen. With the win, Shelby became the first **Class C** squad to repeat since Lansing St. Mary turned the trick in 1937 and 1938. Griffin finished with 23 points, 21 rebounds and five blocked shots for the Tigers.

Upper Peninsula representative Ewen-Trout Creek completed a successful 550-mile trip to East Lansing by downing Flint Holy Rosary, 74-62, for the **Class D** title. The Panthers, who made the trip by plane, finished with a 26-0 mark. Gary Fors scored 26 points and pulled down 15 rebounds while senior guard Bob Bessen added 21 points.

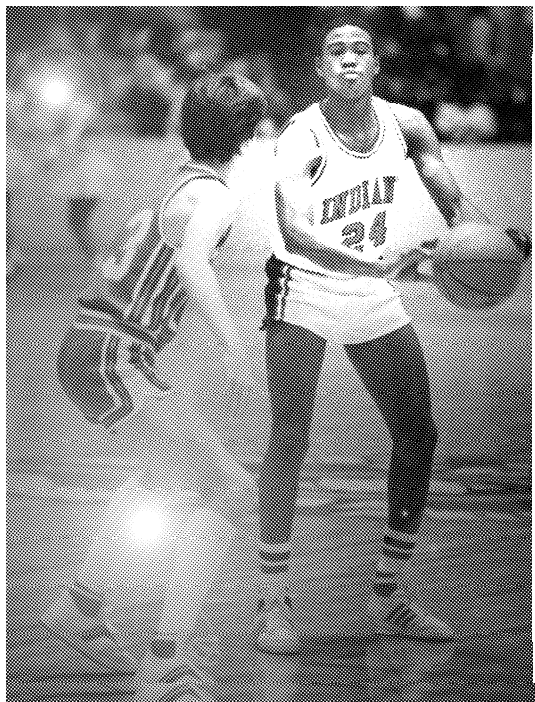


Photo courtesy of the Flint Journal

1982

In the **Class A** Final staged at University of Michigan's Crisler Arena, high school legend Antoine "The Judge" Joubert, connected on 17-of-33 shots to lead all scorers with 35 points, but received little help from his teammates as Flint Central crushed Detroit Southwestern, 79-60. Four players from Flint finished in double figures, led by junior Darryl Johnson's 25 points and Mark Harris' 14. The city of Flint's all-time scoring leader with nearly 1,350 points, Harris also dished out 14 assists in the contest.

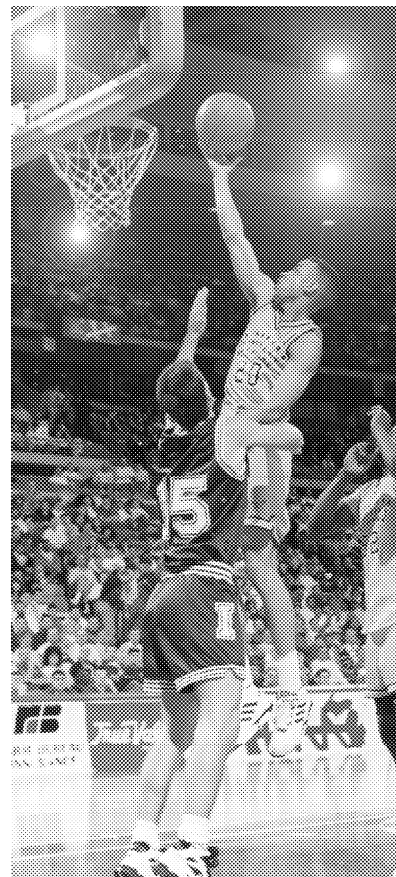
Okemos halted Detroit DeLaSalle's 56-year quest for its first MHSAA crown in any sport, defeating the Pilots, 60-57, before a sellout crowd of 13,609. The win gave the Chieftains their second straight title in **Class B**. Mark Abraham led Okemos with 18 points. DeLaSalle's leading scorer Bob McGinnis missed the entire second quarter after picking up his third personal foul with 2:45 left in the opening frame. McGinnis returned for the second half, to lead the team with 17 points. Following the school year, the parochial moved to a new facility in Warren.

Orchard Lake St. Mary's opened up a 40-24 halftime lead, then cruised to the **Class C** crown with a 76-48 thrashing of Reed City. Chris Howze scored 27 points and grabbed 12 rebounds, while Hiram Harris added 23 points to lead the Eaglets to the win.

According to Michigan high school historian Dick Kishpaugh, Ewen-Trout Creek could have won **Class D** in any other year, but the squad had the misfortune of running up against one of the finest high school teams ever assembled in the state. Covert's five seniors, led by John Wilhite, were still running full speed at the end of the game and probably could have kept it up for another 20 minutes, beating Ewen-Trout Creek, 105-94. Wilhite finished with 38 points, including six electrifying slam dunks. Ewen-Trout Creek's Dave Besonen shared the scoring lead, hitting 16-of-29 from the floor and six from the charity stripe. A total of eight players finished in double figures in scoring.

1992

At the Palace of Auburn Hills, Detroit Pershing ripped Benton Harbor, 74-42. It was the sixth straight win in the **Class A** finale by a Detroit Public League school, and the first title for the Doughboys since 1970, when renowned coach Will Robinson led Pershing to an upset win over Pontiac Central in his final prep contest. Shawn Hill and Carlos



BRIAN TOLBERT

Gary Shook, Otsego

Williams led Pershing with 18 and 17 points, respectively.

Led by junior Sheddric Murrell, sophomore Chester Surles and 6-7 freshman Terrance Roberson, top-ranked Saginaw Buena Vista rolled to the **Class B** title, 54-44, over Grandville Calvin Christian. Buena Vista missed 12 of its first 13 shots, but bounced back to a 27-22 lead at the half. Murrell finished with 24 for the winners.

In **Class C**, Detroit St. Martin dePorres slipped past Ishpeming, 55-43, behind 18 points from senior guard Brian Tolbert. Ishpeming rallied to within four, 44-40, with 5:20 remaining, but two quick buckets by Jason Kimbrough upped the margin to eight. That allowed dePorres to kick into a ball-control offense and hold on for the win. It was the fourth title for veteran coach Ed Rachal.

In **Class D**, Muskegon Western Michigan Christian's Randy Prince scored 17 of his game-high 25 points in the first half as the Warriors rolled to a 38-18 halftime lead and an easy 64-47 win over Sand Creek.

— Ron Pesch

Ron Pesch is the historian for the MHSAA. To submit story ideas and potential statistical records, write to Pesch at 1317 Lakeshore Drive, Muskegon, MI 49441.