

# Finals Flashbacks

## 1977

Farmington Our Lady of Mercy (now known as Farmington Hills Mercy) finally emerged victorious after finishing runner-up in each of the previous three years. The Marlins rallied from 12 points back to defeat Detroit Mumford, 63-52, in the Class A Final at MSU's Jenison Fieldhouse in East Lansing. Mercy had defeated Mumford in the city championship contest earlier in the year. Trailing 27-15 with just over five minutes to play in the second quarter, the Marlins switched to the press and cut the lead to three points, 34-31, at the half. All five of Mercy's players contributed points in the third quarter as the team grabbed a 47-42 lead entering the final frame. Katie McNamara ended the day with 21 points and 10 rebounds to lead all scorers. Mumford's Debra Walker totaled 18 points, while teammate Michelle Grier added 17 points.

Sophomore Terri Soullier netted six straight buckets in the second quarter and finished with a game-high 26 points to lead Harper Woods Bishop Gallagher to a 50-31 victory over Okemos in Class B. Soullier finished with 12 rebounds and five steals. Dree Look, the only other player in double figures, led the Chieftains with 12 points.

Plagued with early fouls, Carrollton bowed to DeWitt, 51-36, in the Class C contest. DeWitt hit six free throws and jumped out to a 16-8 lead in the first quarter of play as a pair of Cavalier starters were forced to the bench with foul trouble, and the Panthers never looked back. Sophomore Kelly Robinson led the winners with 15 rebounds and 21 points, including 9-of-12 shooting from the free-throw line. Freshman Laura Collison scored 11 for the Cavaliers.

Lynnette Royer scored 24 points, including 8-of-12 shooting from the field in the first



photo courtesy of Carrollton High School

***Rita Peterson of Carrollton drives past DeWitt's Elizabeth Willard in the 1977 Class C Final, a 51-36 DeWitt victory.***

half, to lead Rock Mid-Peninsula to the Class D crown over previously unbeaten North Adams, 56-40. A 5-3 guard, Royer had played at Perkins High School before a merger with Rock created Mid-Peninsula at the beginning of the school year. The senior finished her varsity career with 1,469 points, ranking third on the MHSAA all-time list at the time. Kay Drake led North Adams with 19 points, while Becky Hull added 10.

## 1982

Farmington Our Lady of Mercy ended Flint Northern's four-year championship reign with a 61-58 win in Class A, built upon a stunning fourth-quarter rally at University of Detroit's Calihan Hall. Trailing by 19 at the end of three, Mercy used a full-court, trapping press to get back in the game, cutting the margin to four points with three minutes left. A Vickie Prince free throw put Northern ahead by five, 58-53, but the Vikings turned the ball over on their next four possessions. Amy DeMattia then scored six of her 13 points to put Mercy ahead for the first time in the contest, 59-58, with 1:14 remaining. Free throws by Annette Ruggiero and Mary Rosowski iced the game for the Marlins. Sarah Basford scored 20 to lead the victors. Evette Ott topped Northern with 18 points.

Heather Hogan scored a season-high 23 points as Manistee defeated Fenton, 43-29, for the Class B

title. The victory was bittersweet for Manistee coach Mike Munro. A Fenton graduate, Munro learned much about the game as a "gym rat" watching the style of Fenton's coach, LeRoy Decker. "I really have mixed emotions about beating LeRoy," he said. "The man deserves the state championship."

Defensively, Manistee's Louise Stapleton held Fenton all-stater Maria Reynolds to a total of eight points.

Carrollton captured its second straight Class C crown, and its third title in four years with a 60-32 defeat of White Cloud (See "Legends of the Game" article, page 6). Vonnie Thompson led the winners with 22 points and six assists, while Sue Mayes added 18 points. Teresa Harvatich paced the Indians with 18 points.

Leland defeated Portland St. Patrick, 54-41, in Class D. It was the third consecutive crown for Leland and Coach Larry Glass, a former head coach of the boys cage squad at Northwestern University. St. Patrick pulled to within five points early in the fourth period before the Comets went on an 11-0 run to seal the victory. Shawne Brow scored 16 points, Stephanie

Chambers 13 and Brenda Kelly added 11 for the winners. Karen Kramer netted 18 and Laurie Leik tallied 13 to lead St. Patrick.

# 1987

Trailing by 20 with two minutes to play in the third quarter, Detroit Cass Tech rallied to defeat Saginaw, 52-51, in the Class A Final at Grand Valley State University in Allendale. The Technicians held the defending champions scoreless over the final 4:16, while scoring the final nine points to grab the title. LaTonya Tate finished with 20 points, including the game-winning three-point field goal with 1:43 remaining. Sheronda Mayo added 14 points, including eight in the fourth quarter. Sentaria Johnson finished with a career-high 20 points for Saginaw.

Flint Beecher defeated Frankenmuth, 49-34, for the Class B crown. Senior Marie Williams scored 17 points, including six in the third quarter to bust open the game for the Buccaneers. Poor shooting took its toll on the Eagles, who had knocked off Grand Rapids Christian in a Semifinal thriller.

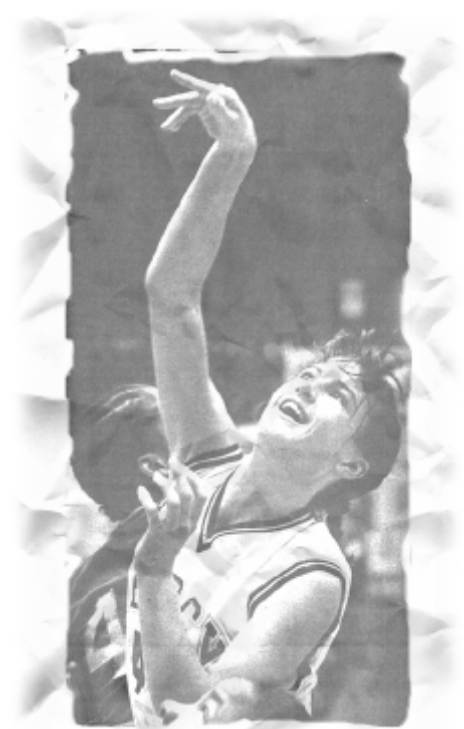
Frankenmuth hit only 29 percent of its shots in the first half, and 33 percent in the entire game. Lynn Pavlicek notched nine points for the Eagles.

Detroit St. Martin dePorres, led by the outstanding defense of guards Natasha Porter and Tuonisia Turner, grabbed its first-ever girls basketball title with a 73-50 thrashing of top-ranked St. Joseph Lake Michigan Catholic in Class C. Dana Joubert (first cousin to prep legend Antoine) led the Eagles with 27 points and 14 rebounds. Maureen Nelligan paced the Lakers with 19 points.

Angela Frick and the Walkerville Wildcats notched a 65-59 upset victory over top-ranked Martin in Class D. The Wildcats took advantage of the recently instituted three-point shot to overcome Martin's height advantage. Frick scored 33 points, including a trey that put the Wildcats ahead to stay, 50-47. Teammate Angie Bond hit 3-of-6 from beyond the three-point arc. Julie Davis tallied 31 for the Clippers.

# 1992

Leading 20-10 in the second quarter, Birmingham Marian went 22 consecutive possessions without scoring, but still came away with a 39-27 victory over Flint



Randy Borst, Farmington Observer

**Amy DeMattia scored three straight baskets down the stretch in the 1982 Class A Final vs. Flint Northern to give Farmington Mercy its first lead of the game. Mercy went on to win, 61-58.**

Northwestern in the Class A Final at Kellogg Arena in Battle Creek. Northwestern's Larecha Jones scored 10 of her 16 points to tie the game at 20 in the third before reserve guard Colleen Conway broke the Marian drought with a pair of free throws with 1:32 remaining in the period. Jones, however, responded with a bucket, and Kamena Robinson opened the fourth quarter with a layup to give the Vikings their first lead, 24-22. It was short-lived as Conway, who averaged just 2.1 points per contest, scored on another layup and was fouled. Her free throw gave Marian a 25-24 lead it never relinquished. The combined total of 66-points set an MHSAA championship game record for fewest points.

Upended in the Semifinals in 1989 by eventual champ Dearborn Divine Child, and in 1990 by Grand Rapids West Catholic, longtime Frankenmuth coach Art Pelzer finally emerged with his first MHSAA title as the Eagles downed St. Joseph, 67-54, in an exciting Class B game. With the win, Frankenmuth ended the year 27-0. The opening two quarters featured outstanding play, with nine lead changes and four ties before Frankenmuth took a 32-23 advantage at the half by scoring the final 11 points. Sophomore Ann Lemire posted a triple double with 17 points, 11 rebounds

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John Johnson, Okemos

**Flint Beecher's Carlotta Craven (41) and Frankenmuth's Laura Butman battle for a rebound during the 1987 Class B Final, won by Beecher, 49-34.**

and 10 assists, while senior Jaami McClellan scored 25 points. Kim Knuth led the Bears with 27 points including 7-for-7 shooting from the free-throw line.

Once-beaten Carrollton used quickness and seven three-pointers en route to a 63-41 victory over Elk Rapids. Four Cavaliers scored in double figures, led by Gina Humpert with 16 points. Carrollton's single loss was against Class B champ Frankenmuth.

Auburn Hills Oakland Christian grabbed a slim 22-21 lead at the half, then pressured its way to a 53-36 win over Grand Rapids Covenant Christian for the Class D crown. The Lancers forced 29 turnovers by Covenant Christian. Laurie Ales led the winners with 24 points and nine rebounds. Jamie Englesma scored 12 for the Chargers.

# 1997

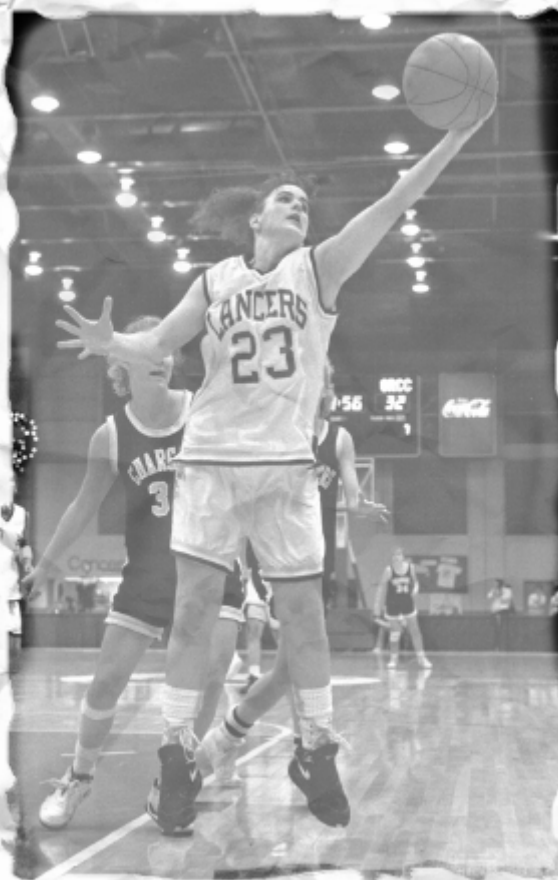
At Rose Arena on the Central Michigan University campus in Mt. Pleasant, Grand Rapids Christian capped a perfect 28-0 season with a thrilling 58-56 win over defending Class A champ Birmingham Marian. It was sweet revenge for Christian, which fell to the Mustangs in the Semifinals by a point in 1996. Leading 51-38 with 2:48

left in the third period, the Eagles watched their 13-point lead evaporate as Marian went on a 16-0 run for a 54-51 advantage with 3:30 to play. Two free throws by Christian's Amanda Vriese at the 2:40 mark, cut the lead to one. A pair of missed shots by the Mustangs gave the Eagles a shot at redemption, and with 31 seconds remaining, 5-4 senior guard Brianne Gallert sank a driving layup – her only field goal of the game – for a 55-54 Christian lead. Fouled on the shot, she missed the free throw but nailed two additional chances from the charity stripe three seconds later, giving the Eagles a 57-54 lead. A free throw by Mandy VanDenBosch with nine seconds left sealed the win. Jenny Newsone scored 20 points to lead the Eagles. Breean Walas topped Marian with 18.

Sporting a roster filled with underclassmen, Detroit Country Day defeated Saginaw Swan Valley, 41-35 in Class B. Junior center Jennifer Thomas notched 15 points and dominated the paint with 14 boards for the Yellowjackets. Trailing 23-20 at the half, Country Day took control in the opening minutes of the fourth quarter capped by a trey from Katie Blazewski and a jumper by Casey Keys. The buckets opened up a 34-26 lead from which Swan Valley never recovered.

Redford Bishop Borgess snagged its third crown in five years, overpowering Hancock, 54-21 in Class C action. The Spartans built a 29-8 lead at the half as center Karen Merchant scored eight of her game-high 16 points.

Merchant and Aiysha Smith added 10 rebounds apiece. Elizabeth Pietila led Hancock with eight points and five caroms.



Gary Shook, Otsego

***Auburn Hills Oakland Christian's Laurie Ales pulls down a rebound during the 1992 Class D Final. Ales scored a game-high 24 points to lead the Lancers to a 53-36 win over Grand Rapids Covenant Christian.***

Julie Becker's layup with 11 seconds to play broke a 37-37 deadlock and gave Harper Woods Bishop Gallagher a 39-37 win over Rapid River in the Class D Final. It was the first girls basketball title for the school since 1977, when the Lancers downed Okemos for Class B honors.

Trailing 31-23 at the 6:10 mark of the third quarter, Bishop Gallagher went on an 8-0 run, including six points from senior Otema Ansong to knot the game at 31-31. Ansong added four points down the stretch to finish with a game-high 18 points despite picking up her fourth foul early in the second half. Mari Hall's layup with 4:57 to play gave Rapid River a 37-35 lead, but the Rockets were held scoreless the rest of the way. Junior Sara Boyer got off a shot at the buzzer from 25 feet out near the top of key that fell short. Andi Wilbee finished with 11 for Rapids River, while Boyer contributed eight.

– Ron Pesch



Gary Shook, Otsego

***Harper Woods Bishop Gallagher's Otema Ansong scored 18 points in the the Lancers' 39-37 Class D Final win over Rapid River in 1997.***