

York outlasts Lawrence to win ‘A’ girls title

BY ERNIE CLARK
BDN STAFF

PORTLAND — The 509th and final win of Rick Clark’s 34-year coaching career surely was one of the most dramatic.

GIRLS BASKETBALL

Clark’s York High School girls basketball team capped off an unbeaten season Saturday afternoon, outlasting defending champion Lawrence of Fairfield 58-57 in a battle of unbeaten for the Class A state title at the Cross Insurance Arena.

“I told the girls at the start it would be a nice storybook ending,” said Clark, who announced last summer that he would retire from coaching after this season. “Fairy tales don’t always end the way you want them to, but this one did.”

That fairy tale ending did not come without ultimate struggle, as a game that featured eight lead changes in its opening five minutes alone came down to the final seconds.

Senior forward Chloe Smedley, who scored a game-high 23 points on 10-of-14 shooting from the field, hit a jumper from the left elbow to give York a 56-55 lead with 59 seconds remaining.

The Wildcats got the ball back after a Lawrence turnover, and after a timeout they worked time off the clock along the perimeter before Lilian Posternak spotted Miss Basketball fi-

nalist Shannon Todd alone under the basket.

Todd, held to six points in the game, converted the layup to make it a three-point game with 19 seconds left.

Lawrence’s Camryn Caldwell missed a 3-point try, but Bulldogs’ Miss Basketball finalist Nia Irving grabbed the offensive rebound and missed once before scoring to cut the gap to one just before the buzzer sounded.

“It was one of those games, they hit a three and we hit a two,” said Lawrence coach John Donato. “You couldn’t have asked for a better-played game on both sides.”

Mia Briggs added nine points, eight rebounds and four assists for York, which won its first state title since winning the Class B crown in 2010. Madigan Cogger also scored nine points, including a key 3-pointer that helped the Wildcats erase a four-point deficit midway through the final period.

Senior guard Dominique Lewis led Lawrence with 19 points while Irving, who sat out a stretch of 7 minutes, 51 seconds midway through the second half after drawing her third and fourth fouls within a 13-second span, finished with 14 points and 11 rebounds.

But even when Irving was on the court, Lawrence struggled to get her the ball in position to score as York used Todd, Smedley and Briggs to plug up the interi-



TROY R. BENNETT | BDN

Lawrence High School forward Molly Folsom looks for the hoop while guarded by York’s Chloe Smedley in the Class A state final on Saturday at the Cross Insurance Arena in Portland.

or passing lanes, initially with a player-to-player defense but later with a 2-3 zone after Todd and Smedley got into foul trouble.

Irving managed just eight field-goal attempts in the game while shooting 2 of 5 from the line.

“We made some mistakes feeding the post, that was the big thing,” said Donato. “I think that was be-

cause the stage was big and we’re young and not used to it.”

This game may have been the first state final in Maine high school basketball history featuring two coaches with more than 500 career victories in Donato (535 wins entering the contest) and Clark (508).

But it wasn’t the first time they had matched wits on

the sidelines. Donato’s Houlton team defeated York 52-43 in the 1986 Class B girls state final.

York (22-0) trailed 20-12 after a 3-pointer by Lawrence’s Morgan Boudreau in the opening seconds of the second quarter but rallied for a 32-30 halftime edge on a last-second jumper by Cogger.

York moved out to a 39-32 lead just after Irving went to

the bench with four fouls early in the third period, but Lewis scored seven points as Lawrence (21-1) outscored the Wildcats 16-5 over the next six minutes to take a 48-44 lead into the fourth quarter.

“I knew we could do it,” said Smedley. “I knew if we stayed positive and had trust in our team we could pull this off and we did.”

C Girls

Continued from Page B4

throw with 1:22 left extended the lead.

Kennedy and Reynolds added a free throw apiece to sew it up.

“They had an amazing offense in the second half. Kelli Kennedy went off,” said Boothbay Region sophomore forward Brown. “We just couldn’t get our shots to fall. It was a bad game to have that happen in.”

The Seahawk starters were, on the average, four inches taller than their Narragagus counterparts.

But the more experienced Knights used their tenacity and superior quickness to

outrebound the Seahawks 29-15.

“We knew it would come down to rebounding and boxing out. We also had to limit our turnovers. Our girls played their hearts out and that’s what won the game,” said Thompson who used three different zones to try to combat Boothbay Region’s inside game.

Reynolds said the Seahawks hadn’t taken a lot of outside shots in the C South tournament so they could concentrate more on shutting down their inside game.

“Our guards are really fast and they’re great defenders,” said Reynolds referring to the 5-foot-2 Reynolds and Madison Leighton.



AMBER WATERMAN

George Stevens Academy’s Jarrod Chase attempts to get the ball away from Wayne’s Will Nelligan in the first half of the Class C state championship on Saturday night at the Augusta Civic Center. Nelligan retained control of the ball.

C Boys

Continued from Page B4

quarter, but Beckett Slayton (13 points) was able to corral a loose ball in the far corner off a scramble and nail a 3-pointer to help the Eagles regain momentum.

George Stevens would open the final period on a 9-2 run, culminated by a conventional 3-point play by Nick Szwec which essentially put the game away.

Waynflete got no closer than 10 in the final minutes.

“The real play of the game was the scramble where Beckett Slayton caught the ball, shot the 3 and made it,” said Carter. “That was a huge play. That was a scrapy play.”

The Flyers did an admi-

nable job in the second half of using their zone to run more defenders at Schildroth, but he showed exceptional basketball awareness and court vision in setting up post players such as Jarrod Chase (10 points), Mattson and Szwec.

“I would hate to play us,” Schildroth said. “If someone’s having an off night there’s someone else to step up.”

Carter is optimistic that Saturday launched the start of a new basketball dynasty in Hancock County.

“It’s really awesome because people who were here tonight I haven’t seen in 20 years,” said Carter. “It just brings everyone together. It’s a great feeling.”

Milo Belleau led three Flyers in double figures with 13 points. Will Nelligan added 11 and Yai Deng had 10.

A Boys

Continued from Page B4

blocked shots and also scored 10 points, while Wulbrecht had 14 points and seven rebounds.

Oceanside never did get untracked offensively save for consecutive 3-pointers early in the fourth quarter by Nick Mazurek, Riley Sprague and Sam Atwood. The Mariners made just 22 percent (10 of 45) of their field-goal attempts, with Sprague the team’s leading scorer with six points while Hendricks, Atwood and Nate Raye each scored five apiece.

“They’re a great team, they deserved to win,” said Oceanside coach Matt Breen. “They played much better than we did tonight. They made all the right reads and we probably should have come in with a better game plan.”

Oceanside never led but was within 4-3 on a 3-pointer by Hendricks 83 seconds into the game before Falmouth took charge with 13 unanswered points.



TROY R. BENNETT | BDN

Oceanside High School senior guard Keenan Hendricks dribbles toward the hoop against Falmouth’s Thomas Coyne in the Class A basketball state final on Saturday at the Cross Insurance Arena in Portland.

A Colin Coyne 3-pointer, layups by Wulbrecht and Skop and a Thomas Coyne drive made it 13-3 and prompted an Oceanside timeout before Skop closed out the opening period by following in his own miss to make it 15-3.

A 15-foot jumper by

Walsh extended the margin to 14 points before Oceanside scored again, and Falmouth wasn’t threatened the rest of the day.

“We knew that if we didn’t get off to a good start it would make for a long night for us,” said Breen. “We talked about

that and talked about being relaxed and about getting some easy shots to go before we started stepping out to the 3-point line.

“We weren’t able to do that and they had a quick run and it was 9-3 and after that you’re in their hands.”

Gorham girls, Portland boys capture crowns

SUN JOURNAL

PORTLAND — For much of the game, the Edward Little girls basketball team was within striking distance Saturday night.

HIGH SCHOOL BASKETBALL

But as the game wore on, Gorham had more solutions and Edward Little had less answers.

The Rams turned a narrow lead into a double-digit advantage in the third quarter and EL couldn’t keep pace. Though EL rallied in the fourth, Gorham pulled away for a 46-36 win in the first Class AA state-title game at the Cross Insurance Arena.

“We thought we might score in the 36 to 44 range and we were trying to hold

them in that same range,” EL coach Craig Jipson said. “That’s about what it was.”

Gorham hit its first five shots of the third quarter and that changed the game. EL was down by four to start the quarter, but when the Rams started hitting, EL couldn’t match Gorham’s proficiency. The Rams had the lead up to as much as 33-21. Though EL got within 35-30 entering the fourth and were within one early in the final quarter, the Rams finished the game off with 12 straight points.

Gorham’s Emily Esposito, a junior guard, finished with 22 points and eight rebounds. She had eight in the final quarter to deliver the Rams (21-0) to the finish. Mackenzie Holmes added 10 points,

while Danasia Fennie added three points, nine rebounds and a solid defensive effort on EL’s Emily Jacques.

Jacques led the Red Edies (16-5) with 15 points. Jordyn Reynolds had eight, while Piper Norcross chipped in seven.

In the boys final, Portland survived double overtime to shoo away age-old, next-door rival South Portland, 52-50.

Amir Moss fashioned the fourth and final lead change of the second extra session, slashing to a short jumper. Joe Esposito hit two free throws with 32.7 seconds left to provide the final cushion.

Portland (20-1) missed the front end of a one-and-one with 6.6 seconds remaining. South Portland pushed the ball up the

court, resulting in a scramble for the ball and a collision between the Red Riots’ Riley Hasson and two of the Bulldogs.

A foul was called on the play, but Hasson was too dazed to attempt the free throws. Deandre White sank the front half of the double bonus with two-tenths of a second on the clock, then intentionally floated the second one off the front of the rim.

South Portland (12-10) couldn’t tip the rebound for a bid at the tie as time expired.

Moss had 27 points and 11 rebounds to lead Portland and Griffin Foley added 11 points.

Ruay Bol paced the Riots with 14 points and nine rebounds. Matt Pelletier and Jack Fiorini each produced 12.

D Boys

Continued from Page B4

blowout,” said Martinez. “We just wanted to do our best to defend and box out and rebound.”

The Bears attempted to use a box and one in attempting to contain the 6-foot-4 Laweryson, but the Cavs had other players

such as Miller (16 points) and Cates (11) to chip in as Valley slowly pulled away in the second half.

“His height advantage really” bothered us, Martinez said of Laweryson.

Easton’s Jacob Flewelling kept his team in striking distance in the second half, during which he scored 12 of his game-high 20 points, but the Bears struggled to get stops consistently.

Valley would hit its free throws down the stretch to pull away, and Laweryson, who will head to the University of Maine on a baseball scholarship this fall, capped it off with a thunderous dunk that could’ve been heard back in Bingham.

“It was just an open opportunity,” Laweryson said. “I saw there was nobody in the paint so why not?”

Hartwell, who won four gold balls as a player at Valley, was happy with the composure his team exhibited throughout the afternoon.

“I can give them my experiences,” he said, “I tell the guys when you get in these moments it’s about staying poised and composed.”

Drew Sotomayor and Logan Halvorson had nine points apiece for Easton.