

# Shead captures 'D' North title

BY LARRY MAHONEY  
BDN STAFF

BANGOR — The Shead High School girls basketball team from Eastport parlayed a dominant performance on the boards and a highly effective 3-2 zone into their first Class D North championship since 1999 by virtue of a hard-fought 44-37 win over Central Aroostook of Mars Hill on Saturday morning.

## GIRLS BASKETBALL

Senior guard Cierra Seeley had 14 points and grabbed five rebounds, and sophomore forward Cassidy Wilder came off the bench to score 11 points and pull down a game-high 12 rebounds to lead third seed Shead past the fourth-seeded Panthers.

The taller Tigers out-rebounded Central Aroostook 44-24 and advanced to Saturday's state final against South champ Rangeley at the Augusta Civic Center.

"This was probably the best game we've played all year," said junior guard Katelyn Mitchell, who had six points, 11 rebounds and three steals.

"Rebounding wins games and that's what we did today," said senior guard Holly Preston. "We played a very solid 3-2 zone, and they couldn't score on it — just like the other teams we've played lately."

Shead limited its oppo-



Shead's Cierra Seeley brings the ball up the court against Central Aroostook guard Molly Anthony during the Class D North championship game at the Cross Insurance Center in Bangor on Saturday. Shead won 44-37.

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nents to 31.3 points per game in its three tournament wins.

"The key to every game is our defense," said Seeley.

Preston contributed eight points, all in the second half, and a game-high six assists while also doing excellent job handling the ball against the Panther press, as did Seeley.

Brooke Robinson chipped in six rebounds and three assists to go with her two points, and Hannah Link collared five rebounds in approximately five minutes of playing time for 15-6 Shead.

Senior guard and 1,000-point scorer Karli Levesque scored 14 points and grabbed 10 rebounds for 14-7 Central Aroostook and freshman guard Ashlee Harris had 12 points, five rebounds and two

steals. Kassidy Levesque, Karli's sophomore sister, had six points and two steals and Molly Anthony finished with five rebounds and two assists along with two points.

"They're the best team we've played," said Karli Levesque. "They had a lot of height and they were quicker getting to rebounds. They worked hard on defense. You have to give them props."

Central Aroostook scored the game's first five points, but Seeley had all seven points in a 7-2 run that tied it.

Shead took the lead for good with a 12-4 run to close out the first half, which gave the Tigers a 22-15 halftime lead.

Wilder had nine of the 12 points.

"We work on rebounding a lot in practice," said Wilder, who had four of her rebounds in the second quarter.

Preston came alive in the third quarter, scoring six points to help Shead build the lead to 36-22.

"I didn't score in the first half, but my team took over and played great. As soon as I got my first points in the second half, it got me going," said Preston.

The Panthers never quit and cut the lead to seven on a Cassidy Levesque steal and layup with 1:30 left, but they couldn't get any closer.

"We knew they would rebound well because they had a lot of size, but I was amazed at how well they shot," said Central Aroostook coach Cody Tompkins who tried a variety of defenses against them. "Seeley and Preston are very good players. They attacked the rim all day. [Wilder] is pretty aggressive and [Link] is very good. I wish we had rebounded better and did a little bit better offensively but I'm really proud of our girls."

"Our bigs really showed up today," said Shead coach Corey Sullivan. "Defensively, we tried to make it hard for [Karli Levesque] to catch an easy pass while she was running back and forth through the paint, and we extended our 3-2 by a foot beyond the three-point arc to make sure we got our hands in the face of their outside shooters."



Easton's Drew Sotomayor puts up a shot as Southern Aroostook's Luis Morales (left) tries for a block during the Class D North championship game at the Cross Insurance Center in Bangor on Saturday. Easton won 57-52 in overtime.

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# Easton boys oust S. Aroostook for 'D' north crown

## Bears to face Valley for state title

BY RYAN MCLAUGHLIN  
BDN STAFF

BANGOR — Adversity can strike at any time over the course of a championship battle. It's how a team handles those challenges that shows the true mettle of a champion.

The Easton boys basketball team got a few tastes of those challenges on Saturday **BOYS BASKETBALL** but the Bears relied on their faith in each other and other powers in search of their first regional championship in 36 years.

Coach Manny Martinez's club withstood every punch Southern Aroostook threw, and scored the first eight points of overtime en route to a thrilling 57-52 Class D North regional championship victory over the gritty Warriors from Dyer Brook at the Cross Insurance Center.

Martinez, whose top-ranked Bears improved to 19-2 and will play in next Saturday's state championship against South champ Valley of Bingham at the Augusta Civic Center, is no stranger to this moment, having been on a few state championship-winning teams as a player at nearby Central Aroostook.

"I think I enjoy watching the kids enjoy it [more]," Martinez said. "I'm so proud of how far they've come. It's a constant reminder if you work hard you'll be successful."

Southern Aroostook, seeking its first trip to a state championship game since 1991, finishes the season 16-5.

Easton appeared to have control early in the fourth quarter after starting the period on a 9-2 run, but Southern Aroostook sharpshooter Jackson Mathers came to life after being held without a field goal in the first half.

Mathers' deep 3-pointer helped spear an 11-2 Southern Aroostook surge to close regulation, a run that Martinez was fearing.

"He almost [took it away from us]," Martinez said of Mathers. "Southern Aroostook is a quality opponent."

A pair of free throws by the Warriors' Tyler Batchelder with 8.7 seconds left tied it at 48, and a player-control foul on Easton's Jacob Flewelling sealed the tie and sent the game into overtime.

But the Bears were in a similar situation in a semifinal win over Washburn on Thursday, and Martinez took advantage of the situation to settle his team back down.

"I told the kids, 'hey guys, in life, anything that you want any success it comes with hard work,'" Martinez said. "They really took that to heart and went out and got it done."

Boy, did they ever. Logan Halvorson started overtime with a one-handed shot that bounced around the rim and in, giving the Bears the lead for good and giving Martinez a flashback to his dramatic one-handed floater in the 2008 state championship game.

"I just thought it was open, so I shot it and it bounced in," Halvorson said.

The Bears would never relinquish the lead in overtime, holding the Warriors to one field goal and hitting seven of nine free throws in the extra session.

"We knew it was going to be a tough game because they've got real talented players," Halvorson said.

The Bears relied on a balanced offensive attack, with Jordan Doody leading the way with 20 points, while Flewelling had 12, Drew Sotomayor 10 and Halvorson 10.

Doody also had nine rebounds and Flewelling eight boards.

"We've been working so hard this season. Everybody has," Halvorson said.

Another thing Martinez and his players have relied on all season was their faith in a higher power, and it has led them to the promised land.

"I just want to give credit to God, and the kids give credit to God all day. I'm so proud of that," Martinez said.

Mathers finished with 17 points, including 15 in the second half, to pace Southern Aroostook, Tyler Batchelder added 13.



Ellsworth players celebrate after defeating Orono for the Class B North championship Saturday at the Cross Insurance Center in Bangor.

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# Ellsworth

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dunk by Imao Woldring that prompted an Ellsworth timeout with 6:54 left in the first half.

"I told them to get back to where we started," said Austin. "It was all individual stuff and we had to get back to playing as a team offensively and defensively also

because we were giving up too many hoops."

Jackson Coutts scored on a one-on-one move to give Orono a 16-13 edge with 6:25 left in the second quarter, but Ellsworth ran off the final 15 points of the half to build a 28-16 lead.

Cooper Henderson started the decisive surge with a jumper from the key and Kyle Golding scored on a drive before St. Peter took over, first with a steal and length-of-the-court drive past the 6-foot-7 Woldring, then a

follow-up of his own miss and a baseline jumper.

After Golding made 1 of 2 from the free-throw line, St. Peter drove the baseline for a dunk of his own and scored again from the low post to cap off his 14-point, six-rebound first half.

"We just got a couple steals and a couple of baskets and momentum started to shift," said St. Peter. "We knew we didn't want to lose this game and we were able to turn it around

there and had fun from then on."

Orono, which reached the Class C regional final a year ago before moving up to Class B as part of the statewide expansion from four to five classes, never got within single digits after the break.

"They outplayed us," said Orono coach Jason Coleman. "They're the hottest team right now and they have a good chance to win it all next week. They're all seniors so this is their time. We're all juniors."

# Houlton

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"We were confusing them. We mixed our defense up a lot," said Bouchard.

Hermon came out of the locker room with a defensive answer of its own for the Shires' sophomore star, double-teaming Bouchard on the low block, but Houlton was able to counter with its depth.

Natalie Hill, who was the Shires' other double-figures scorer with 15 points, burned the Hawks on several backdoor layups to help fuel Houlton's 16-9 third-quarter run which put the game away. Hill had six third-quarter points.

The Hawks would only make one field goal in the fourth quarter.

"Kolleen is our bread and butter on offense, but we've got some other girls who can put the ball in the hoop as well," said Graham.

That's the thing, you can't key in on one of us," Bouchard added. "We've got a lot of weapons, which is good."

The Shires did a phenomenal job of limiting Her-



The Houlton girls show off their championship award after defeating Hermon in the Class B North championship game Saturday at the Cross Insurance Center in Bangor. The Shiretowners will play Class B South champions Gray-New Gloucester for state title Friday night.

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mon's high-low offense, which had burned Presque Isle in the semifinals.

"I guess the biggest thing that concerned me with Hermon was how well they've been playing down the stretch," Graham said.

"Their high-low game against Presque Isle was spectacular so our goal was to take that away."

Erin Higgins paced coach Chris Cameron's Hermon club with 11 points.

"We had some lapses that

we haven't had over the last few games," Cameron said. "I give a lot of credit to Houlton. They're a great team, very well coached. They're battle-tested. Today, they showed why."

Aspen Flewelling added eight points for the Shires.



Easton players celebrate their 57-52 overtime win against Southern Aroostook in the Class D North championship game Saturday at the Cross Insurance Center in Bangor.

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