

National tourney next stop for Schoolcraft men

BY BRAD EMONS
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There was no meltdown Sunday for the Schoolcraft College men's basketball team — quite the contrary.

Coming off Thursday's emotionally-charged, 87-84 win over No. 7-ranked Vincennes (Ind.), the Ocelots secured their first trip ever to the National Junior College Athletic Association Division I Tournament with a resounding 93-68, home-court victory over Gogebic.

Schoolcraft, the Region 12 champion and winner of 18 straight, will take a 21-2 record into Tuesday's first-round matchup in Hutchinson, Kan. against Western Nebraska.

Region 13 champion Gogebic, faced with an 11-hour bus ride back to Ironwood of the Upper Peninsula, finishes the year at 21-9.

"Give our kids credit, they didn't have a letdown after Vincennes, they've stayed focused all year," Schoolcraft coach Carl

los Briggs said. "I'm happy for the kids because the reason most of these kids came to Schoolcraft was a chance to get to 'Hutch' and get that opportunity to play in a national tournament."

"If we hadn't gotten there, I would have felt like I let these kids down."

Although Gogebic shot 53.3 percent in the first half (16 of 30), the Samoans found themselves down by 14 at intermission, 55-41.

"That team scared me because they can hit the three-ball," Briggs said.

But the Ocelots were simply more athletic, dominating the backboards and holding Gogebic to seven of 32 shooting in the second half (21.6 percent).

"We gave into their pressure, they got layups off turnovers and a lot of putbacks," Gogebic coach Deka Routhenau said. "We had to work so hard. It was a physical game, and we just lost our legs in the second half. We also didn't have an inside game to get us through."

As Vincennes had nobody to

COLLEGE BASKETBALL	
Michigan Community College	James Driscoll, Henry Ford: Damon Allison, Oakland; Antoine Wilcox, Meon.
ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION	Couch of Year: Carlos Briggs, Schoolcraft.
Men's BASKETBALL TEAMS	ALL-MACCIA TEAM
Michigan Community Conference	First team: Sam Hoskin, Schoolcraft College; Alvaro Evans, Flint Mott; Derrick Bird, Schoolcraft; Jeremy Denha, St. Clair; Justin Chapman, Alpena.
Second team: Lamar Rice, Flint	Second team: Lamar Rice, Flint
Mott; Ryan Bennett, Wayne County; Randy Royal, Henry Ford; Dave McClellan, Schoolcraft; Josh Walker, Alpena.	Third team: Marcus Clark, Wayne County; Davy Mason, Henry Ford.
Team of the Year: Carlos Briggs, Schoolcraft.	ALL-REGION 12
	Schoolcraft: Sam Hoskin (MVP); second team: Derrick Bird (first-team); Dan McClellan (third-team); Coach of Year: Carlos Briggs, Schoolcraft.

stop Schoolcraft's center Sam Hoskin, who led all scorers with a game-high 26 points, Gogebic could not contain the 6-foot-8, 260-pounder from Redford Bishop Borgess High.

Doing equal damage was 6-4 forward Dwight Windom, who finished with 19 points on a perfect 9-of-9 from the free throw line and 5-of-5 from the field.

"Dwight is active, he can run all day long," Briggs said. "Our kids are well-conditioned and maybe the traveling had an effect on them (Gogebic)."

Forward Keanan Weir, who has come on strong down the stretch, added 14 points. Meanwhile, guard Derrick Bird tallied all of his 11 in the first half and reserve guard Mike Peek came

off the bench to contribute nine points.

"That's a good team," Routhenau said of the Ocelots. "They deserve to go to 'Hutch.'"

Brad Evans, a 6-8 forward from Appleton, Wis., led the Samoans with 14 points, including four from three-point range. Point guard Ben Fordham, a native of Flint, added 13.

"We got most of our guys from schools, like Clark, D. size schools, guys who play hard and play together," Routhenau said.

"In my 20 years here, this is the biggest surprise I've ever had. I didn't think we'd win 10 games this year, but they shoot so well, play so well together and play so hard that I believe I got the most out of them."

Schoolcraft shot 38-of-67 from the floor (53 percent) and committed 17 turnovers (to Gogebic's 22).

After Gogebic closed to within nine, 55-46, on a basket by Fordham with 18:46 in the second half, Schoolcraft went on a 38-14 run to close out the game.

"We didn't know much about

them (Gogebic), but we knew they had some shooters and their point-guard (Fordham) was their best player, we knew if we controlled him, we could control the game," said Schoolcraft point-guard Dave McClellan, who finished with six points and seven assists. "The first half we felt we should have been up by more. We just had to get more aggressive."

"How do the Ocelots feel about going to Hutchinson?"

"We're ready to go," McGlown said. "Now that we're in it, we have a chance to win it."

And for Briggs, the former Schoolcraft standout who came back from Texas and has taken a last-place program to a 10-21 record in just four years?

"I'm happy for guys like Mike Peek, who has been struggling here for three years," Briggs said. "He could have gone back home and played for Cincinnati State. He could have left, but he stayed and now he's going to 'Hutch.'"

"We didn't know much about

we played people that quick during the year, we probably would have won this ballgame."

The two teams cooled off in the third quarter, combining for just 12 points. Central recorded five points and was held scoreless during the quarter's last 4:25 as Northern took a 48-44 lead into the final period.

Vikings center Mark Bortz concluded a tremendous senior season with 13 points and 10 rebounds.

Abram, a 6-foot-5 junior, scored 18 points. Derrick Ponder chipped in 14 and Morgan 13.

Huskies eliminate WLAA champions from prep tournament

BY CHRIS MAYER
STAFF WRITER

Walled Lake Central did just about everything necessary to defeat Pontiac Northern. The only area where the Vikings fell short was on the scoreboard.

Central's boys basketball season came to an end Tuesday at Macomb Dakota High School. The Vikings found themselves in a position to win with two minutes remaining, but the Huskies made enough play down the stretch to end a 51-58 Class A regional semifinal victory.

Second-year head coach Bob

BASKETBALL

Shoemaker guided the Vikings to a 22-2 season that featured Western Lakes Activities Association regular-season and tournament titles and a Class A district championship.

"I'm as proud of them as any group I've had," Shoemaker said. "They really did a tremendous job. And they're not only good players, they're good kids. They've represented Walled Lake Central as well as you can."

Northern, which advanced to Friday's regional final against the Clarkston-Pontiac Northern winner, held a 52-49 lead over Central with six minutes remaining. And then things got interesting.

Central senior forward Jon Auer (six points, seven rebounds) fouled out with 5:14 left, and Northern promptly went into a delay. Shoemaker kept his team in a zone until the two-minute mark with the score still 52-49.

"I figured get the game down to two minutes and we've got a helluva shot," Shoemaker

explained. "That's a three-point game with two minutes to go. That's tremendous. That's a chance to win the ballgame."

"We had a chance. The kids really played their hearts out, but you hate to see them lose, but they are a great group."

The Vikings closed within 54-52 with 1:34 to go on Chris Hart's three-pointer from the right corner, but Northern countered with four consecutive Lester Abram free throws to up its advantage to 58-52 with 31.1 seconds remaining.

Kevin Olson's triple with 20.7

seconds to go made it 58-55, but Ohio State-bound senior guard Ricky Morgan and Dominique Hardiman sank free throws to seal the outcome.

The Vikings' ability to handle Northern's press, battle the Huskies on the boards and hit the three-pointer gave them the opportunity to win. Central sank 10 treys, six by senior guard Steve Horn, who finished with a game-high 23 points.

"I thought we did a good job," Shoemaker said. "Probably a big factor was we weren't used to playing people that quick. Had

we played people that quick during the year, we probably would have won this ballgame."

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