



"Twas the hour back from Tigertown and all through the house, not a newspaper was shuffled just scattered about.

But staring right in the face when I entered was a vision I just couldn't believe.

Churchill High, the school that always wins when I pick it to lose, had won one of the toughest basketball districts in the state over Bentley, Redford Union, Plymouth and Stevenson.

I found this hard to believe and at first thought maybe I had amassed too much sun in Lakeland, Fla., but a second glance and a phone call confirmed it.

Churchill, in only its third year of varsity competition, had won its first state tournament game ever over Bentley and then proceeded to rip two teams that sported a combined record of 32-3.

The 18-5 Chargers successfully defending their first Western Six cage crown with a 46-45 win over Harrison and now have their first district trophy.

How did Churchill Coach Pat Montagano react to his team's showing?

"It was just super!" said Montagano whose Chargers finished 9-9 in their first year of varsity competition and 12-5 last season. "The kids went after everyone and came out like champs!"

"I took that district trophy home, set it on the table and just sat there with it all night never fell asleep, just tried to figure out what had happened.

"I just couldn't believe it!"

"The kids were confident and looking for each other and we took everyone on the boards. Phil Damaska, Jim Foster and Don Braun just played super!"

"I knew we had an inside shot at the district and playing on our home court had to help."

Churchill stands 12-3 on its court for the season and 6-2 on the road.

Now comes the regional test for Churchill, a team that you have to believe in at this point.

The Franklin regional features Walled Lake Central, Franklin, Detroit Murray Wright and the "glass slipper" Chargers.

The Chargers match talents with Walled Lake Central tonight (Wednesday) at 8 p.m.

Central (Randy McLean and Co.) is nothing new to Montagano and his crew.

Churchill fell to Central at Walled Lake on Jan. 12, 64-54, when the Chargers ran out of gas. But on Feb. 16, Churchill upended Walled Lake on its home court, 68-59.

"If we can hold McLean to 30 points and get Imhoff to foul out, we will be all right," added Montagano. "When we are right, it is going to take a team with four 'basketball players' to beat us."

Montagano believes that if Churchill can get by Central, he could be carrying home another trophy, one that would be only three games away from a state championship.

Churchill's basketball season has to be a complement to a football team that finished with a perfect 9-0.

"This has to show the caliber of our senior class," said Montagano. "How can you subtract from a 9-0 football season or a current 18-5 basketball season?"

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Raider Swimmers Win League Championship

Records are made to be broken and the Northwest Suburban Conference swimmers took it to heart and smashed seven of 11 marks in the league meet at North Farmington High.

North Farmington took it all a little closer to heart and captured first place with 354 points. Thurston was a distant second at 221 followed by Garden City East with 207.

Franklin placed fourth with 192, John Glenn took fifth at 111 and Oak Park was last with only 18 points.

The North crew coached by Pat Dethle was 5-0 in league dual meets with GC East next best at 4-1 and Thurston third at 3-2. North was 14-3 overall.

Of the seven records broken, the Raiders from North took care of four times with both relays setting the pace.

North's 200 medley relay squad of Mike Gasser, Tom Gasser, Jordan Hatch and Munro won with a time of 1:48.4, breaking the mark of 1:48.7 set by a Franklin foursome in '71.

The Raider foursome of John Griswold, Paul Peterson, Bill Gilmour and Bill Ankele smashed the '72 mark of Franklin of 3:34.2 with a 400 yard freestyle relay time of 3:25.1.

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