

# Hoopsters are all in the family

By Steve Kowalski  
staff writer

The Troy Athens gym was empty and unusually quiet one night earlier this month when Katie Beagan and Jenny Clinton gathered to talk basketball with their Uncle Joe.

Familiar surroundings, but on this night they were only there to discuss the sport, not play it.

Imagine that.

If you spend any time at all with these three, it's hard to imagine them getting together and not playing basketball.

The last time they saw each other was at a family barbecue. And if you're a Beagan or a Clinton, that also means a pick-up basketball game on a crowded driveway.

Even Uncle Joe Clinton, the Athens girls basketball coach who admits to being a "hack," gets involved. Katie Beagan, the leading scorer for Birmingham Seaholm, and Jenny Clinton, one of the all-time assist leaders at Farmington Hills Mercy, are two of the old standbys.

There are all sorts of standbys, for that matter, including sisters, brothers, aunts and uncles.

When do they ever eat?

"When the burgers are done and everyone is sitting around telling stories, somebody throws out a basketball and we've got a five-on-five game with another five or 10 ready to take on the winners," said Joe, in his 14th-year coaching Athens. "Next thing you know it's night three and it's like, 'Let's turn the flood lights on.'"

## CLINTON AND BEAGAN ARE HOUSEHOLD NAMES

For the better part of the last decade, girls named Clinton and Beagan

have made headlines playing high school basketball.

Katie's older sisters, Molly and Suzy, played for Seaholm between 1987-87, while Colleen Clinton was a letter winner at Mercy 1985-87. There are no more Beagan girls but Mercy coach Larry Baker is anticipating the arrival of Maggie Clinton, currently an eighth grader at Farmington Our Lady of Sorrows grade school.

Suzy Beagan, a 1988 Seaholm graduate, plays at Indiana Tech University where she averaged 10 points and three assists per game last year as a freshman.

Baker coached Suzy Beagan one summer at a basketball camp and sees similarities in the family on and off the court.

"The thing that strikes me about the family members is how well-rounded they are," Baker said. "They love basketball but it takes a healthy place in their lives. Basketball is of high interest to the family but it's only one dimension of their personalities. Suzy has a very good demeanor about her and I'm real impressed with Joe."

Joe has won three Metro Suburban Activities Association (MSAA) titles and two district crowns in 14 years at Athens, but he's had trouble against his nieces. Seaholm defeated Athens the last two years and he feels fortunate the Red Hawks haven't played Mercy — typically one of the area's stronger teams — during the regular season.

"Suzy and Katie have had big games against their Uncle Joe and have kind of stuffed us," said Joe, a 1970 graduate of Eastern Michigan where he played football. "So much for respect of their elders. The bottom line is they've always been com-

petitive. They've always had a basketball or glove in their hand."

## STARTING AT CYO LEVEL

The girls have come a long way since their grade school days when they began playing in the Catholic Youth Organization (CYO).

The Beagans attended Holy Name Grade School in Birmingham before enrolling at Seaholm, while the Clintons went to Sorrows before high school.

"I can tell how much they've progressed," said Tom Beagan, who coached his daughters in the sixth grade at Holy Name. "When they were little I would shoot left handed and could beat them. Now I shoot right handed and still can't beat them."

The girls' fathers played major roles in getting them started in the CYO.

Dan Clinton coached his daughters in the sixth grade at Sorrows, while Molly Duggan, their aunt, coached the Clintons in seventh and eighth grade.

The hard work has paid off.

Jenny, who averages eight points, 4.7 assists, 2.6 steals and five rebounds per game, is ranked among the Top 25 players in the state in more than one poll. A president of the national honor society at Mercy, she is being recruited by several Division I schools.

Katie, who averages about 12 points per game for Seaholm, hopes to study engineering at the University of Michigan or Western Michigan University.

They haven't played against each other in high school, but their teams met several times in the CYO.

"It was tough (playing Jenny's teams)," recalls Katie, laughing. "I

can remember my mom always saying, 'Jenny Clinton's out there to win, she's not out there to make friends.'"

"It was fun," says Jenny. Guess whose team usually won?

## THEIR BIGGEST FAN?

Undoubtedly, the girls most supportive fan is Peg Clinton, their grandmother.

Mrs. Clinton, who last winter was named the No. 1 Fan at Our Lady of Sorrows, tries to make all the games. Even if it means she can attend only half of one game and a half of another on the same night.

"She gets pretty intense and doesn't sit on her hands," said Joe Clinton, her son. "There are nights when she'll make the first half of a game at Seaholm, come over to Lathrup to watch a game and try to catch the closing moments of a Mercy game."

"I love it," said Peg. "My husband (Joe Sr.) was a coach (at St. Cecilia's and St. Leo's) so I grew up with it. I'm just so happy they're involved and all enjoy it. I can't think of a better place for them to be. It doesn't matter how good they are — but they are good."

She also watches her grandsons.

Tim Beagan is an eighth grade basketball player at Holy Name and 7-year-old John Clinton, Jenny's brother, was the youngest player this summer in the Gus Macker 3-on-3 tournament in Belding. One of John's teammates was his brother Joe. 9

These guys have an advantage most boys don't.

"They can tell their friends they learned from their sisters," said Tom Beagan. "It's usually the other way around."



STEPHEN CANTRELL/staff photographer

Jenny Clinton (right) of Mercy High School comes from a basketball-playing family that includes Birmingham Seaholm player and cousin Katie Beagan and uncle Joe Clinton, the girls coach at Troy Athens.



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# Raiders repel Rockets



RAYMOND DONST/Staff photographer

Eve Clarr does a reverse layup for North during the team's 63-40 victory over John Glenn Tuesday. The Raiders, 9-2 overall, lead the Lakes Division with a 5-0 record.

With the one-two offensive punch of Eve Clarr and Kim Gurecki, all North Farmington needed in Tuesday's girls basketball game against visiting Westland John Glenn was a bit of defense.

The Raiders got it from just about everyone, limiting the Rockets to 16 first-half points in a 63-40 rout.

North coach Greg Capling singled out the defense played by Carla Chelard and Ginger Donoghue as the Raiders improved to 9-2 overall, 5-0 in the Western Lakes Activities Association's Lakes Division. "I'm pleased with their effort," said Capling, "and with the whole team."

Clarr riddled Glenn's defense for 26 points. Gurecki added 14 points and seven assists. Vicki Seamons contributed eight rebounds.

North led 15-7 after one quarter and 37-16 at the half. Glenn (4-7 overall, 2-3 in the Lakes) got 10 points apiece from Jennifer Massey and Shawaren Lee.

REGINA 34, MERCY 32: Free throws spelled the difference Tuesday at Harper Woods Regina, and the outcome wasn't a happy one for Farmington Hills Mercy.

The Marlins led 26-20 entering the final quarter, but the discrepancy in foul shooting cost them. Regina made 10-of-15 from the line, including both ends of a one-and-one with seven seconds left by sophomore forward Carrie Francis, which proved to be the difference.

Mercy, by comparison, attempted just four foul shots in the game, making one, and did not get to the line in the second half.

Carrie Walton paced the Marlins with 12 points. Jenny Clinton added six. Francis' 13 points was best for Rego, which improved to 8-4 overall and to 3-2 in the Catholic League's Central Division.

Mercy slipped to 6-6 overall, 2-3 in the division.

CHURCHILL 49, HARRISON 32: A 28-point first half was too much for Farmington Hills Harrison to handle Tuesday against visiting Livonia Churchill.

The Hawks (2-7 overall, 0-5 in the WLAA's Western Division) trailed 12-7 after one quarter and 28-13 at the half. Andrea Najarian's 17 points paced Harrison.

"They came out in the first half and beat us," said Harrison coach Jim Neve, "and we beat them in the second half."

Chrissy Daly and Jenny Willems netted 14 points apiece for Churchill (2-7 overall, 1-4 in the Western).

SALEM 55, FARMINGTON 34: The first and fourth quarters provided Plymouth Salem with all the cushion it needed Tuesday against visiting Farmington.

The Rocks improved to 5-6 overall and stayed in the hunt for the WLAA's Lakes Division title with a 4-1 mark, trailing only North Farmington (which is 5-0 in the division). Farmington slipped to 3-8 overall, 1-4 in the Lakes.

Salem raced to an 18-4 lead after one quarter. The Rocks trimmed the deficit slightly over the next two quarters, outpointing the Rocks 23-20 to pull to within 38-27. But Salem led the victory with a 17-7 final-quarter surge. The Rocks outscored Farmington 35-11 in the first and fourth periods.

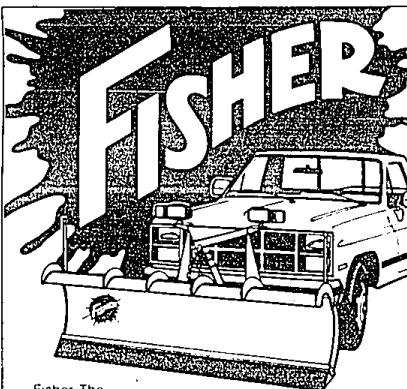
Sarah Ruete led the winners with 18 points. Yolanda Jackson added eight. Erica Hatcher was best for the Falcons with eight points and eight boards.

# Cancer Myth #4

"Cancer is contagious."

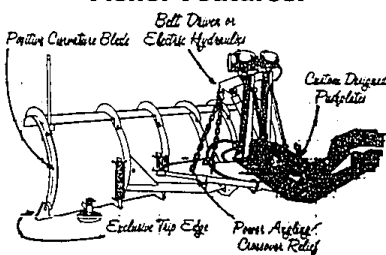
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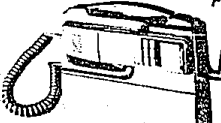
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