

## SPORTS

Schoolcraft  
hoop season  
memorable

It was a season to remember for the Schoolcraft College men's basketball team, one which may be hard to duplicate

When a team wins 35 of 36 games, takes on all challengers and wins tough games on the road, you have to sit back in amazement

Only one bad seven-minute stretch separated the Ocelots from a National Junior College Athletic Association Division I title last week in Hutchinson, Kan



BRAD EMONS

After building a 13-point second-half lead in the semifinals Friday night against eventual national champion Dixie (Utah), the Ocelots found themselves in jail — all five starters on the bench in foul trouble

Schoolcraft's top player, Mike Williams, picked up his fourth on a dubious call with 13:07 to go. And the team's heart-and-soul, point-guard Rulon Harris, fouled out with 3:17 left. Still, the Ocelots had a chance to tie, but tournament MVP Jaime Lloreda, a 6-foot-9 center headed to LSU, blocked Javon Clark's three-point attempt from the dead corner as time expired

Dixie escaped with a 72-69 win and went on to rally in the second half to beat homestate favorite Coffeyville (Kan.) for the national championship the next night before 7,000 in the Hutchinson Sports Arena, 82-81

Schoolcraft and defending champion Wabash Valley (Ill.) were left to play for third place. And to the Ocelots' credit, they bounced back from their only blemish on the year with a resounding 111-86 win

The NJCAA Tournament is like no other. It brings 16 high caliber teams from across the country into one venue

And it's quite an extravaganza. First it draws a slew of coaches scouring for talent

Big game coaches seen last week included Roy Williams (Kansas), Steve Alford (Iowa), Jim O'Brien (Ohio State), Steve McClain (Wyoming), Rod Barnes (Mississippi) and Gary Waters (Rutgers)

The list of current and former NBA players who have played in "Hutch" is impressive as well

The community of Hutchinson gets totally behind the event with a network of volunteers, many of whom are war veterans associated with the local VFW and American Legion

So what were coaches and fans saying this year about Schoolcraft?

There may have been more athletic teams, but not many were smarter, more disciplined or better defensively. All five Ocelot starters averaged in double figures for the tournament, as well as a key reserve

This team brought their 'A' game to the table most nights

Who could forget the three tournament wins at Southern Idaho, the ripping of Flint Mott, followed by the impressive run through the conference, state and region tournaments?

Not to be forgotten was the 13-hour odyssey to Wahpeton, N.D. and a 92-82 victory before 4,000 fans at North Dakota State College of Science

The opening round NJCAA Tournament overtime victory over Allegany (Md.) was another highlight followed by a lopsided win in the quarterfinals over Itawamba (Miss.)

The 12 Schoolcraft players who traveled to Hutchinson all brought something unique different to the table

Ironically, only two players returned from last year's 32-4 team which qualified for Hutchinson — guard Javon Clark and North Farmington's Emir Medujannin

Here's a brief look at the pieces of the puzzle, which resulted in a remarkable fit and the most successful basketball season in school history

## The Starters

**Mike Williams, 6-7 forward:** Made the All-Tournament squad while averaging a double-double. Despite weighing about 190, Williams an uncanny rebounder who can score and pass. High majors are looking at him, but he may be suited better for a good mid-major. We haven't heard the last of him. Had he not sat out last year because of grades, Schoolcraft might have won the national title in 2001.

Please see EMONS, D3

## Ocelots win big, end season 35-1

BY BRAD EMONS  
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Their dreams shattered by foul trouble in Friday's NJCAA Division I semifinals, the Schoolcraft College men's basketball team was determined not to let their glorious season end on a sour note

In Saturday's consolation final, Schoolcraft finished its banner year 35-1 with a convincing 111-86 victory over defending champion Wabash Valley (Ill.) at the Hutchinson (Kan.) Sports Arena

Dixie (Utah), which ousted Schoolcraft from the winner's bracket Friday, 72-69, rallied late in the second half to win the national title against Coffeyville (Kan.), 82-81, before 7,000 fans in Hutchinson

"Our goal was to finish as high as possible," said Schoolcraft coach Carlos Briggs, whose team settled for third

## COLLEGE HOOPS

place "We didn't achieve our ultimate goal of winning a national championship, but I thought we came out tonight with same intensity, both offensively and defensively, that we've shown all season"

The Ocelots also had some incentive against Wabash, led by Kentucky signee and last year's tournament MVP Antwan Barbour

The Warriors ousted Schoolcraft in overtime during last year's quarterfinals and went on to win the coveted crown

Schoolcraft shot 67 percent in the first half (19 of 28) to take a 48-39 halftime lead as 6-foot-8 center Yaku Moton-Spruill (Westland John Glenn) and 6-foot guard Javon Clark (Detroit Cass Tech) each scored 12 points

The Ocelots maintained their lead throughout the second half, but Wabash pulled to within six, 76-70, on a three-pointer by Barbour with 10:19 to go

Schoolcraft then went on a 41-16 run to end the game in grand fashion

All five Ocelot starters scored on double figures as Clark finished with a team-high 21, hitting five of 11 from three-point range

Moton-Spruill added 18 points and seven rebounds, while Mike Williams, a 6-7 forward from Detroit City High, added his third double-double of the tourney with 17 points and 11 rebounds

Emir Medujannin (North Farmington) contributed 15 points and five assists, while point-guard Rulon Harris (Detroit Mumford) added 12 points, including four of seven shots beyond the arc. Harris also dished out five assists

Reserves Delvar Barrett (Detroit Cooley) and Ronald Dorsey (Detroit Pershing) added nine and seven points, respectively

Tony Allen, a 6-4 guard from Chicago, led Wabash with 26 points. Herman Davis finished with 17, while Barbour and C.J. Hill each contributed 16

The Warriors were missing starter Quannel Brown, a 6-5 freshman forward who suffered 34 stitches to his leg after kicking a glass window in disgust following Friday night's 71-70 semifinal loss to Coffeyville

"Schoolcraft has depth and size, it's tough to play them with a six player rotation when you normally go with seven," Wabash coach Mark Nelson said. "Quannel is a big player for us and a big rebounder for us. We had some mistakes we made inside, but I was pleased with the effort considering who

Please see OCELOTS, D5

Whalers find  
selves in OHL  
playoff holeBY BRAD MONASTIERE  
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The Plymouth Whalers burned through the Ontario Hockey League regular season, finishing with the best overall record

Apparently, the London Knights aren't impressed

The Knights took a 2-1 series lead on the Whalers with a 3-2 comeback victory Tuesday night at Plymouth's Compuware Arena in first round playoff action

Game No. 4 is scheduled for tonight in London. For the second straight game, the Knights used a big third period to rebound and win the game only this time it was on Plymouth's home ice

The Whalers held a 2-1 lead after one period, but a pair of third period goals gave the Knights the series lead. London's Kyle Piwowarczyk and Rick Nash scored 69 seconds apart midway through the third period to provide the difference. Nash scored a pair of goals in the game to lead London

The Knights made the most of their chances in the third period, scoring on two of their three shots. At the other end, London goaltender Chris Houle came up huge, stopping all 10 Plymouth shots in the third period to help secure the win

Nash's first goal at the 8:04 mark of the first period gave the Knights a 1-0 lead, but the Whalers struck

## OHL HOCKEY

back later in the period with a pair of power-play goals, by Kris Vernarsky and Chad LaRose, to give them a 2-1 lead at the first intermission. They each had a goal and an assist for the Whalers. The game featured 19 penalties, 10 committed by Plymouth, showing that the Knights are dictating the style of play through the first three games. The Whalers outshot London 23-22 in the contest

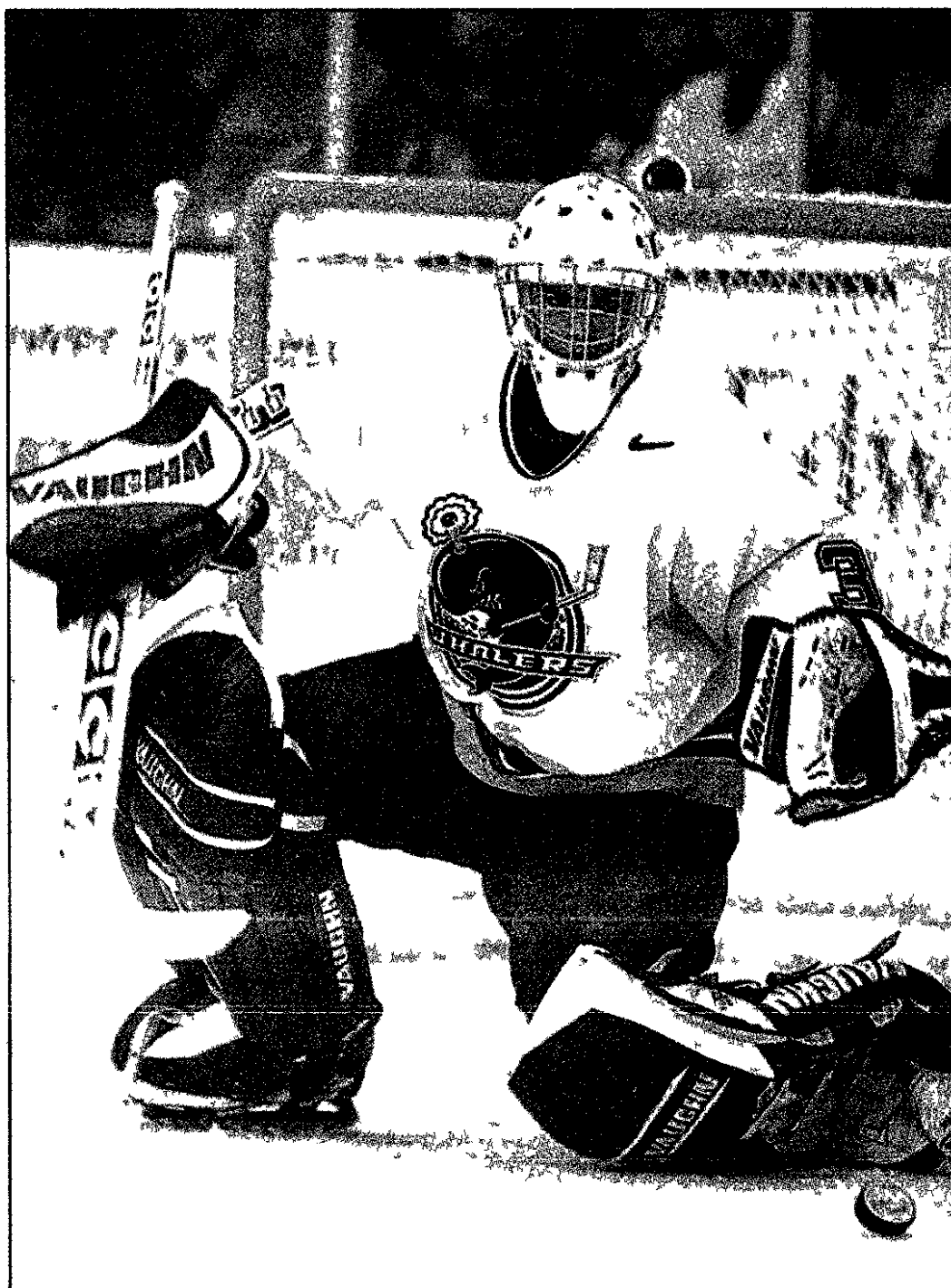
**LONDON 4, PLYMOUTH 1:** The Knights busted open a 1-1 game with three third-period goals in Sunday's Game 2 at London, knotting the series 1-1

Nash was again the offensive catalyst for the Knights, notching two goals and one assist, including two of the team's three third period goals. London picked up a pair of goals less than a minute apart halfway through the third period to break open a 1-1 game. Nash's second goal was an empty netter

Plymouth's Damian Surma scored the lone goal for his team, at the 1:57 mark of the second period

That period featured both teams wearing paths to the penalty box, with a total of 72 minutes in penalties called in that period alone

Houle again came through for the Knights, making 25 saves in the game. He stopped 46 of Plymouth's 49 shots in Games 2 and 3



STAFF PHOTO BY ELIZABETH CARNIGIE

**Puck stopper:** Plymouth Whalers goaltender Jason Bacashihua makes a save during Tuesday's playoff game against the London Knights at Compuware Arena.

## Soccer preview



**Zebra veteran:** Liz Beckert (left) returns for Wayne Memorial, which moves up from the White Division to the Red in the Michigan Mega. See Livonia-Westland girls' soccer preview on page D2

Pairs skater Danielle  
Hartsell calls it quitsBY BRAD EMONS  
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One half of the famous Westland brother-sister pairs team is retiring her blades

Danielle Hartsell, 21, is leaving the world of competitive skating, while brother Steve, 24, plans to continue with a new partner, according to their mother

"Danielle is quitting the business," Georgia Hartsell said. "She's moving to Virginia and will be attending the University of Richmond. She'll be moving there by the end of May, but first she'll finish up the teaching her basic skills classes (at the Detroit Skating Club)"

The Hartsells have endured nothing but hard luck since winning the U.S. Pairs Championship in 1999

Danielle suffered a broken kneecap during a practice fall in December of 1999, which resulted in the pair missing the entire 2000 season

The former Junior World and Junior U.S. Champions, however, bounced back to win a bronze at the 2001 U.S. Senior Championships, but Steve missed six weeks late last summer with a toe injury

Father Lawrence Hartsell then suffered a heart attack in December just prior to the U.S. Trials (Georgia now happily reports that her husband is recovering and has not smoked a cigarette in three months)

Their Olympic dream and a trip to

Salt Lake City for the Winter Games was then shattered in January at the 2002 U.S. Nationals

Steve pulled out with a torn groin muscle just prior to the long program at the Staples Center in Los Angeles after the pair were positioned in fourth place following the short program

"It's been hard for Danielle ever since she broke her kneecap," Georgia said. "She was not happy the last couple of years when she couldn't skate"

"She's ready to get on with rest of her life"

Professional offers never came their way either following the Nationals in California

"They had an agent, Michael Rosenberg, of SFX, but he retired," Georgia said. "Once he left, they just didn't feel the support"

Mrs. Hartsell said Danielle plans to teach skating in Virginia while working toward a degree in Elementary Education

"She wants to be near her boyfriend (Chris Minnis), who lives there," Georgia said. "He doesn't have anything to do with skating. Danielle met Chris when she and Steve were on a vacation in Jamaica"

Steve, meanwhile, had to take a month off of skating following the groin injury, but is ready to resume training once he finds a new partner during a scheduled camp next month in Colorado Springs

He will continue to teach lessons and

Please see HARTSELL, D5