

A Day for the Stars

Ohio girls 'Cruz' to easy victory

By JIM ELLIOTT
Assistant Sports Editor

St. Clairsville's Kayla Pickana and Shenandoah's Molly Cruz proved to be the brightest stars on a stage full of them as they each scored 17 points to lead the Ohio squad to a 93-61 rout of West Virginia during the Samuel A. Mumley OVAC All-Star Girls' Basketball Classic on Sunday on the campus of Ohio University Eastern.

For Cruz, it was business as usual, as she was a few days removed from being the East's leading scorer in the District 12 All-Star game, but for Pickana, it was special.

Coming off a senior season that was delayed by injuries sustained in a car accident, Pickana missed out on a lot of post-season awards that surely would have come her way. With that, she used Sunday's game to help remind people she was the kind of player who'd scored more than 1,000 points by the time her junior season ended.

"It was a lot of fun," said Pickana, who was a perfect 7 of 7 from the field. "(Tying for game-high points honors) isn't what I was thinking about, but it's a big honor. We basically went out to have fun and tried to be equal."

The Ohio duo left plenty of strong impressions.

"My hat goes off to them," West Virginia assistant coach Rocky Bragg said. "To stand out among two teams full of all-stars says a lot about you as a player. The goal was to try to create an environment where the girls could show their talents and they did."

Ohio head coach Brad Linebeck had a method to his madness, sending out players in sets of five much like a hockey line change. Cruz went out with the first five. Pickana came out with the second.

"We tried to balance them up," he said. "We wanted to mix and match skills. Our kids came out ready to play."

They did it with Cruz, who hit four 3-pointers, and Pickana, who nailed a pair of them, leading the way.

Cruz also won a 3-point shooting contest at halftime as the hardware continued to pile up.

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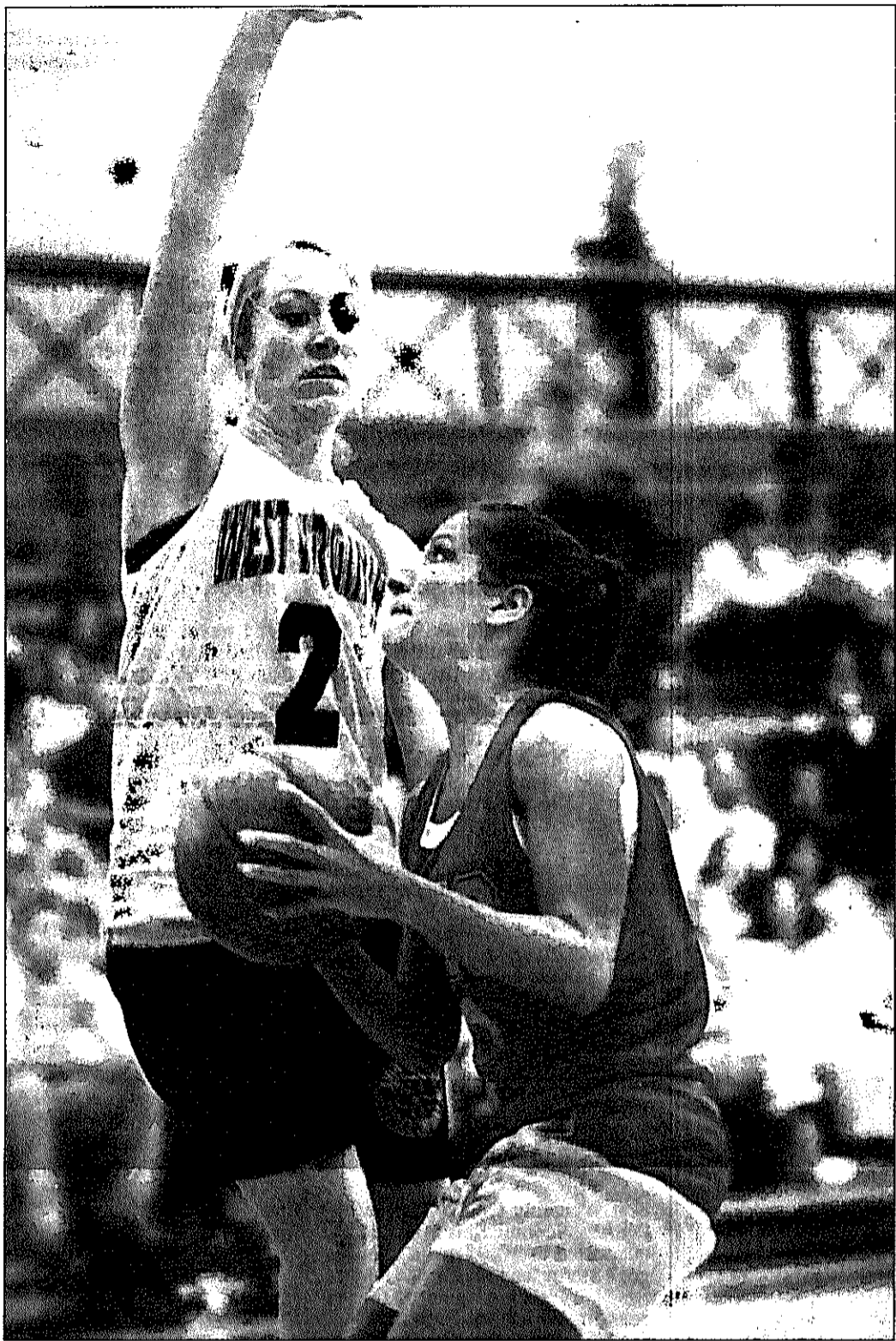


Photo by Joel Joseph

West Virginia's Lauren Magers defends as Ohio's Allie Dellatorre prepares to shoot during action of the Samuel A. Mumley OVAC All-Star Girls' Basketball Classic on Sunday.

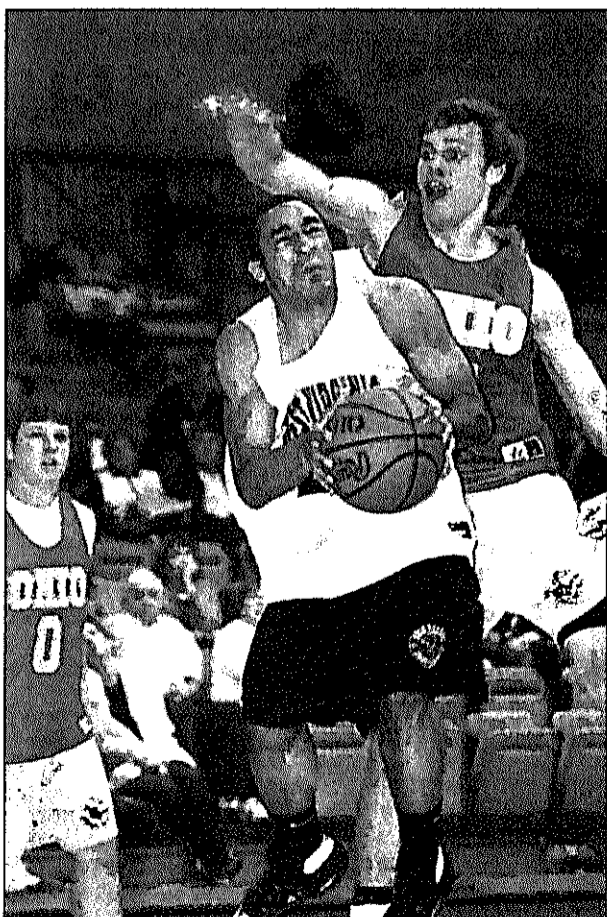


Photo by Joel Joseph

Wheeling Central's Nick Moore goes up for a shot in front of Ohio's Justin Linscott during action Sunday. Looking on is Ohio's Tyler Engle (0).

Ohio Boys Hold Off West Virginia

Hodkinson, Vogel key 101-96 victory

By RICK DeLUCA
For The Intelligencer

An exciting 2006-2007 season was winding down to a close. Local seniors were playing their final prep game and even some coaches were saying goodbye.

Not without a little excitement first.

Fourteen players scored for the Ohio all-stars, three scored in double figures and all but two collected at least one rebound and the Buckeyes had leads of 12 in the second half and 11 in the first.

Then again, West Virginia had no plans of being a pushover, considering the Mountaineers had 13 players score, four in double figures and like the Ohio teams, all but two pulled a missed shot off the boards.

West Virginia also wiped out that 11-point lead and nearly erased the 12-point deficit. In the end, it was the foul-shooting of Harrison Central's Ben Hodkinson and a big bucket off a rebound by Steubenville's Dan Vogel that sealed a 101-96 Ohio victory in the annual Samuel L. Mumley OVAC All-Star Boys' Basketball Classic on the campus

of Ohio University Eastern.

Ohio opened with an 8-0 lead, but quickly found a game opponent as the Mountaineers rallied to knot the score at 8-8. The Buckeyes were leaders by 41-39 at the intermission, before a second half that saw the winners take big leads only to half the Mountaineers rally with some great shooting from beyond the arc.

Ohio head coach Donnie Madzia's victory from the bench was a just reward for the young Harrison Central coach who was coming off a pair of remarkable seasons at the Cadiz-based school. Madzia just recently announced that he was stepping down from his coaching post with the Huskies.

"I'll be coaching in the North-South game on the 22nd," the Ohio coach pointed out after the game. "And Ben Hodkinson will be playing for me and that will be a very big honor for me."

"Coaching in the North-South game is a great honor. It is the most prestigious game in the state of Ohio and that will be my last game."

"This makes for the perfect ending," Madzia said about coaching in the OVAC All-Star game and the Ohio North-South game.

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2007

Ohio

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"I've been in the deepest part of the valley, and now I feel like I'm at the top of the mountain. It's been a heckuva ride and it's really nice to finish out a winner.

"It's not a retirement. It's a stepping away."

"You try to divide it into three equal teams and then try to play everyone as much as you can," he said, referring to handling the talent on his Ohio team on Sunday. "You want to win, but you want to have fun.

"You read about these kids all year and you get a chance to coach them and get close to them for a couple days. It's a special day to me.

"It was a very good game. West Virginia didn't back down. They started to hit all those 3s. They shot the ball exceptional well and that allowed them to stay in there the entire game. But Ben Hodkinson stayed in the game and made the foul shots for me like he did all year round."

After being deadlocked at 8-all, Ohio opened another big lead with an 11-2 run that included seven points from Buckeye Trail's Jason Thompson and four from Cambridge's Justin Linscott giving Ohio a 19-10 lead.

West Virginia bounced back with consecutive 3-pointers from Tyler's Justin Lowe and Bishop Donahue's A. J. Gordon. The teams were knotted again at 25-all before Wheeling Park's Mike Lake and Wheeling Central's Nick Moore scored to give the Mountaineers a 29-25 lead.

Throughout the remainder of the first half, there were five more lead changes before Zanesville's Kodey Haddox nailed a three and St. Clairsville's Adam Gay added a deuce that provided the difference in Ohio's 41-39 half-time lead.

Both teams came out firing in the second half and the teams stayed within a couple through much of the second half until Ohio put together a 15-4 run that extended a slim 56-55 lead into a 71-59 gap, the game's biggest.

Barnesville's Randy Hunter and Martins Ferry's Ryan Mirich keyed the outburst as they combined for nine points.

Scoring by Bishop Donahue's Ken Barrows, Magnolia's Jones McEldowney, Park's Chie Bryan and Moore enabled the West Virginians to narrow the margin to 73-67. But Ohio was relentless bouncing back behind Mirich. Shenandoah's Seth Lumpkins and Linscott to extend to another double digit lead at 81-70.

It wasn't until late in the contest that West Virginia started to erase another 11-point Ohio leads before Vogel and Hodkinson converted their late-game winners.

Game Notes

Wheeling Central's Brian Yahn may be ready for the big time, at least the Slam Dunk big time. Yahn easily captured the Slam Dunk Contest at half-time with a pair of slams that brought the crowd to its feet. His first came on a Michael Jordan-like leap from the foul line and the second he went over another player seated just in front of the rim ... Awards were aplenty Sunday as the OVAC honored some of its finest during brief intermissions. Ernie Cicone was presented the Thomas E. Rataiczak Score/Timer Award. St. Clairsville's Mickey Blatnik was handed the Rich Saffield Girls' Coaching Award. ... Former Wheeling Park coach Sam Andy was given the Earl Haberfield Boys' Coaching Award. The Robert Dawson Basketball Official Award went to Gene Joseph and the Bob Burton Distinguished Service Award went to River's Gard Curtis. ... A brief moment of silence was held in honor of the passing of two fine individuals who played a major part in OVAC basketball, Earl Haberfield, a former coach, and Joe Bechtel, a long-time scorekeeper at Wheeling Central.

Ohio 101, West Virginia 96

O — Engle 2 0-0 4; Gay 1 0-0 2; Wells 1 0-0 2; Hodkinson 1 5-6 7; Wines 0 0-0 0; Haddox 3 2-2 9; Vogel 3 0-0 6; Thompson 3 0-0 7; Linscott 5 4-4 15; Hunter 3 1-1 8; Tolzda 1 0-2 2; Lumpkins 5 0-1 10; Mirich 3 4-5 10; Hilt 4 0-0 9; Quillen 3 3-3 9. Totals: 38-76 19-24 101.

W — Defibaugh 5 3-4 15; Lowe 2 0-0 5; McEldowney 3 3-4 10; Miller 0 0-0 0; Reitter 0 0-0 0; Gordon 3 0-0 8; Popicg 3 3-3 12; Lake 4 0-1 9; Moore 3 4-6 10; Jones 2 0-1 4; Bryan 3 2-2 8; Taffan 1 1-2 3; Yahn 1 1-2 4; Barrows 1 0-0 2; Gryskovich 3 0-0 6. Totals: 34-85 17-23 96.

3-Point goals: Engle, Haddox, Thompson, Linscott, Hunter, Hilt, Popicg 3, Defibaugh 2, Gordon 2, Lowe, McEldowney, Lake, Yahn.

Cruz

(Continued from Page 15)

"It speaks volumes for the amount of work they've put in," Linebeck said. "To be in an environment like this and still stand out says a lot about them as individuals and the coaching they've received."

The outcome was never in doubt. The Ohio girls had nearly built a double-digit lead before their first scheduled substitution, which was roughly 5 minutes into the game. They led 42-26 at the half, with Cruz already in double figures with 12 points. Pickana had seven at the half.

Ohio's lead reached 30 midway through the second half on a jumper by Buckeye Local's Mara Bowman, before it ultimately pushed it to 38 with 4:39 left on a basket by Bridgeport's Darcy Grandstaff. That helped Linebeck concentrate on trying to get everyone in the scoring column.

"Any time you're up by a large margin, it's easy to coach," he said.

Mount de Chantal's Rita Stefan scored 10 of her team-leading 12 points in the second half. She was the only West Virginia player to reach double

figures. Cameron's Lacey Tustin and Linsly's Sara Mueller each had eight, while Wheeling Central's Emily Bosley had six.

"The score doesn't reflect how much talent we have," Bragg said. "Every player here is talented, one of the top players on their team."

Stefan and high school teammate Emma Shalaway were the only players to hit 3-pointers for West Virginia, while Ohio finished with 10. Bowman finished with eight points for Ohio, while Beaver Local's Mallory Yajko had seven and Martins Ferry's Amber Skvaraka, Zanesville's Tara Harris, Barnesville's Bethany Wayble, and Grandstaff each added six.

OVAC All-Star Girls Game

Ohio 93, West Virginia 61

W — Tustin 3-6 2-5 8, Shalaway 2-4 0-0 5, Magers 0-3 0-0 0, Coteman 1-3 0-0 2, Mueller 4-9 0-2 8, Stefan 4-8 3-4 12, Bosley 3-5 0-1 6, Flatley 1-6 0-0 2, Gialluco 1-2 0-0 2, Lesho 2-3 0-0 4, McGlumphy 1-3 0-0 2, Tonacchio 1-4 0-0 2, Benavides 0-4 2-2 2, Schmitt 1-3 0-0 2, Flowers 2-8 0-2 4. Totals 26-71 7-15 61.

O — Watson 2-3 1-2 5, Skvaraka 2-3 1-3 6, Dellatorre 1-4 1-3 3, Sanders 0-5 0-0 0, Cruz 6-10 1-1 17, Bowman 4-6 0-0 8, Pickana 7-7 1-4 17, Stewart 0-1 1-2 1, Dunfee 2-3 0-0 4, Yajko 3-8 1-2 7, Harris 2-8 1-2 6, Nicola 1-6 2-2 5, Wayble 1-4 4-4 6, Brunoni 0-3 2-4 2, Grandstaff 3-6 0-0 6. Totals: 31-76 16-29 93.

Halftime Score: 42-26. 3-Point Goals: Shalaway, Stefan; Skvaraka, Cruz 4, Pickana 2, Harris, Nicola.

HIGH SCHOOL BASKETBALL

All-Stars Set to Shine

Samuel A. Mumley OVAC Classic tips off today on OUE campus

Curtis to Be Honored For Years of Service

By RICK THORP
Staff Writer

Gard Curtis' life has been all about service. Service to his family. Service to his church. And service to hundreds of young men whom he has touched through the sport of basketball.

So who better to receive this year's Bob Burton Distinguished Service Award than Curtis, who has served as an assistant boys' basketball coach for River High School for all but five of the past 39 seasons.

"I was surprised about receiving the award," said Curtis, who will be presented with the honor at today's Samuel A. Mumley All-Star Basketball Classic at Ohio University Eastern.

"Like I wrote to Tom (Bechtel, game director), there are people more deserving of this.

"I am very grateful for the fact I was selected. I appreciate the work the OVAC does and the opportunities they give the athletes. They do a lot for the athletes."

Curtis will be one of five men receiving special awards at today's classic, which tips off at 3 p.m. with the girls' contest, followed by the boys' game at 5 p.m.

Former Wheeling Park High School boys' basketball coach Sam Andy will be lauded with the Earl Haberfield OVAC Basketball Coaches' Award, while current St. Clairsville High School girls' mentor Mickey Blatnik will receive the Rich Saffield Girls' Coaches' Award.

Current Steubenville Catholic High School timer Ernie Cicone will be given the Thomas E. Rataiczak Scorekeeper/Timer Award, while longtime basketball official Gene Joseph will be presented with the Robert Dawson Basketball Officials' Award.

Curtis attended Bethel High School in Monroe County from 1954-58 and played for the legendary Richard "Dick" Potts.

The highlight of his high school career came in 1957 when the Blackhawks advanced to the Ohio Class A finals where they lost by one point.

What was amazing about that team, which finished 27-2, was the fact there were just 13 boys in Grades 9-12 and all but one was on the basketball team.

"I was about the sixth man on that team," Curtis recalled. "The community really backed us that season. We'd win and everyone would call their neighbors and we'd have a big feed at the high school."

Following high school, Curtis attended Glenville State College, where he graduated in 1962.

Upon graduation he returned to the Ohio Valley and started coaching at Clarington Junior High School at Potts' urging. In 1968, Curtis rejoined his former coach as an assistant at River High School, a post he would have for the next 23 seasons.

"There's an old expression that says you coach the way you were coached," Curtis said. "Coach Potts was my coach and when I came to River I started coaching for him and it was a little different than the player-coach relationship we previously had.

"We didn't always agree on everything but he was a super person and I don't know anyone I respected more than Coach Potts."

Curtis and Potts remained together on the bench until Potts' career ended in 1991. During that time, Curtis had several opportunities to move into a head coaching job but he was content to stay with Potts.

"I always enjoyed what I was doing," Curtis said. "I always felt I was there to serve and I thoroughly enjoyed myself.

"I had a big family and as far as moving, I was concerned about that. I was always happy as an assistant."

After Potts' career ended, Curtis remained as a teacher in the district and eventually retired in 1997 after 35 years of service.

In 1996, Curtis returned to the River sideline, this time as a volunteer varsity assistant for Mark Romick. It's a position he still holds.

"We were talking one day and (Mark) wanted to know if I wanted to come back," Curtis recalled. "I said I would, only if I could make a difference."

Curtis has had no problem adapting to the many changes basketball has seen during the past half-century. In fact, he said coaching now keeps him young at heart.

"Now, it's developed into a physical game," Curtis said. "You have to be stronger now



Photo by Joel Joseph

Pictured is the 2007 West Virginia boys' squad for the OVAC All-Star Basketball Classic. Front row, from left, are Tanner Deffbaugh (John Marshall), Justin Lowe (Tyler), Jonas McEl-downey (Magnolia), Logan Miller (Valley), Jimmy Reitter (Brooke), A.J. Gordon (Bishop Donahue) and Eli Popicg (Wheeling Central). Standing, from left, are assistant coach Michael Jebbla (Wheeling Park), Mike Lake (Wheeling Park), Nick Moore (Wheeling Central), Ryan Jones (Cameron), Chic Bryan (Wheeling Park), head coach Mel Stephens (Wheeling Central), Jordan Taflan (Weir), Brian Yahn (Wheeling Central), Ken Barrows (Bishop Donahue) and Matt Gryskevich (Weir).



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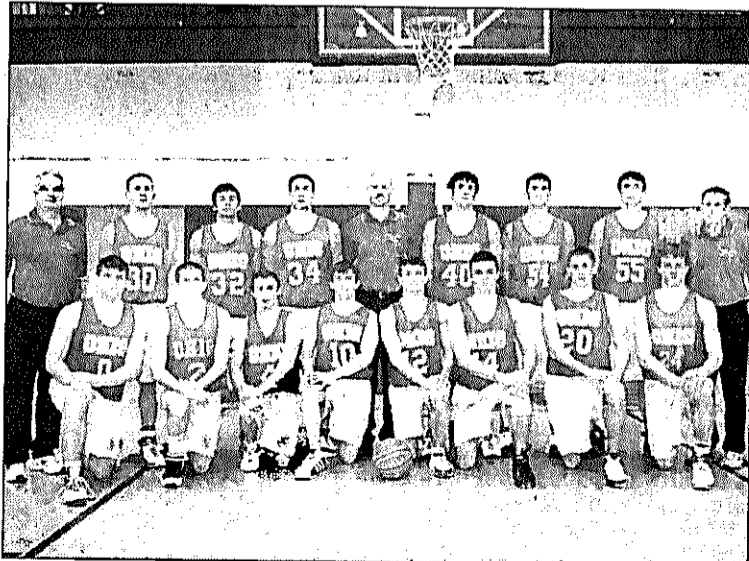


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Curtis has had no problem adapting to the many changes basketball has seen during the past half-century. In fact, he said coaching now keeps him young at heart.

"Now, it's developed into a physical game," Curtis said. "You have to be stronger now because there is more contact."

"The offenses and defenses are more complex now but the one factor that remains the same is the player. We've had some good players, but more importantly, a lot of good young men."

"That's the game as far as I'm concerned. It's a tremendous feeling because I follow them and I know what they're doing. When they come back, that's what makes it all worthwhile."

When he's not coaching, Curtis spends time with his wife of 42 years, Nancy, his two sons, two daughters and 12 grandchildren.

He also works as a lay speaker for the United Methodist Church, something he's done for 46 years.



Michael Jeddih (Wheeling Park), Mike Luke (Wheeling Park), Nick Moore (Wheeling Central), Ryan Jones (Cameron), Chie Bryan (Wheeling Park), head coach Mel Stephens (Wheeling Central), Jordan Taflan (Weir), Brian Yahn (Wheeling Central), Ken Barrows (Bishop Donahue) and Matt Gryskevich (Weir).



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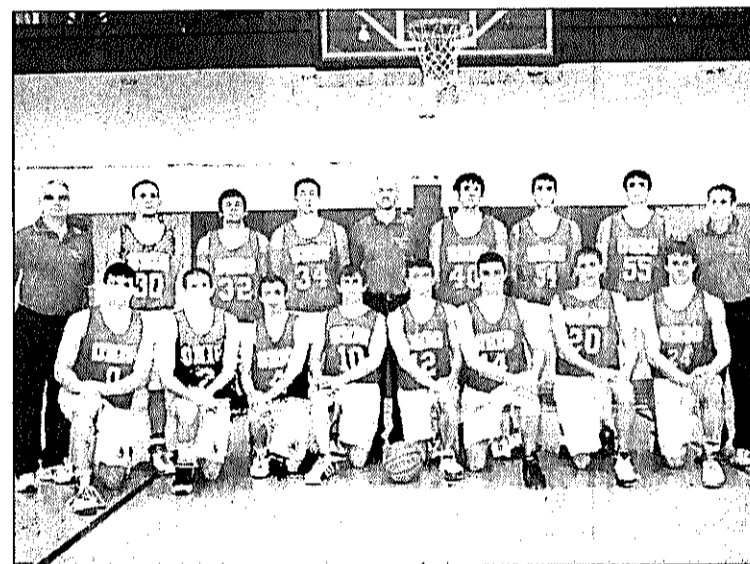


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Pictured is the 2007 Ohio girls squad for the OVAC All-Star Basketball Classic. Front row, from left, are Mara Bowman (Buckeye Local), Erin Nicola (St. John), Courtney Stewart (Shadyside), Maggie Brunoni (Frontier), Mallory Yajko (Beaver Local), Bethany Wayble (Barnesville), Kayla Pickana (St. Clairsville) and Allie Delatorre (Steubenville Catholic). Standing, from left, are assistant coach Tina Yates (Shadyside), Amber Skavarka (Martins Ferry), Darcy Grandstaff (Bridgeport), Stacey Dunfee (Union Local), head coach Brad Lineback (Buckeye Trail), Molly Cruz (Shenandoah), Tara Harris (Zanesville), Catherine Sanders (Edison) and assistant coach Phil Casinelli. Absent was Liz Watson (Buckeye Trail).

Ohio girls roster deep with talented personnel

By **SETH STASKEY**
Times Leader Sports Editor

The Ohio stars are set to shine. They will be on display brightly on Sunday at Ohio University-Eastern's Health and Physical Education Building when the annual Samuel A. Mumley OVAC All-Star Classic unfolds.

The girls game tips off at 3 p.m. and the boys is set to unfold at 5 p.m.

The Ohio girls' squad is being coached by Buckeye Trail's Brad Lineback. He's being joined on the Lady Buckeye bench by Shadyside's Tina Yates and Steubenville's Phil Casinelli.

Here is a capsule look at the players:

AMBER SKAVARKA, Martins Ferry - This 5-ft-6 Lady Rider had a strong senior year before it was cut short with an injury for head coach

Dave Reasbeck's club.

Skavarka averaged 14 points per game and finished her prep career with 502 tallies. She was a 54.9 percent foul shooter and passed out 246 assists. She's the Fery single-game record holder for three-pointers made in a career with eight bonus bombs.

AMBER SKAVARKA, Martins Ferry - the daughter of Dave and Paula Skavarka - plans on attending West Liberty State College and majoring in accounting in the

fall.

KAYLA PICKANA, St. Clairsville - This Lady Red Devils' senior came back strong from a pre-season injuries sustained in an automobile accident.

The 5-ft-6 guard surpassed the 1,000-point mark during her junior season. She finished her career with 1,186 points and posted a 82 percent clip from the foul line. She finished her playing career for Coach Mickey

Blatnik with 234 rebounds and 252 assists.

She was an all-district pick as well as a all-OVAC selection. She was special mention all-OHIO.

KAYLA - the daughter of Tim and Mary Jo Pickana - plans on majoring in broadcast journalism at either Ohio State University or Otterbein College.

MALLORY YAJKO, Beaver

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SPORTS

● OVAC

Continued from Page B1

Local - This Lady Beavers' guard was a four-year mainstay for Coach Frank Linkous' club.

The 5-ft-10 Beaver Local swing player finished her career with 1,086 points and was a 60 percent foul shooter. She had 410 rebounds and dished out 105 assists.

She was a two-time honorable mention all-OHIO pick and a two-time all-district selection. She was also a first-team all-OVAC pick.

MALLORY - the daughter of Mark and Bob Yajko - plans on attending college and attaining a degree in criminal justice, while continuing her basketball career.

ELIZABETH WATSON, Buckeye Trail - This Lady Warrior post player was a strong complement to the Trail outside game. The 5-ft-11 post was a solid contributor for Coach Brad Lineback's outfit.

Watson averaged 8.7 points a game this past season, while finishing her prep career with 464 tallies. She also had 351 rebounds and 56 career assists.

She was recognized on a bevy of post-season teams last winter. She was all-PVC, Honorable Mention all-OVAC and Honorable Mention all-district.

ELIZABETH - the daughter of Mark Watson - plans on attending the University of Akron and majoring in education.

CATHERINE SANDERS, Edison - This Lady Wildcat was one of the key cogs in a highly-successful season at the Richmond-based school.

Playing under veteran head coach Ron Smyth, the 5-ft-8 forward averaged 11.2 points a game this past winter.

SANDERS also standouts on the soccer field for the Lady Wildcats where she earned first-team honors in the OVAC and district. She also earned hoop accolades from District V and the OVAC.

CATHERINE - the daughter of Jim and Traci Sanders - plans to attend college and major in Neo Natal Nursing.

ERIN NICOLA, St. John Central - This Lady Irish standout was a solid inside-outside contributor for Coach Bubba Kapral's district finalist team this past winter.

The 5-ft-6 Nicola averaged 10.3 points a game and finished her playing days with 718 markers. She was a 68 percent foul shooter and had 634 rebounds and 247 assists in her career.

Nicola was an all-District 12, all-Eastern District and all-OVAC selection for a Lady Irish club, which claimed the OVAC 1-A title again this season.

ERIN - the daughter of Nick and Gail Nicola - plans to attend Marietta or Alderson-Broadus College in the fall.

TARA HARRIS, Zanesville - This Lady Blue Devil forward capped a fine career under Libby McAndlish this season.

The 5-ft-7 forward averaged 16 points per game and finished her career with 814 points and was a 64 percent foul shooter. She had 397 rebounds and 47 career assists.

Harris was an all-conference player as well as player of the year in District 12. She was also selected to the East-West Game.

TARA - the daughter of Tommy and Terry Harris - plans on attending college and majoring in forensic psychology and playing basketball.

DARCY GRANDSTAFF, Bridgeport - This Lady Bulldog standout played a key role in the resurgence the past several years under head coach Ed Metz.

The 5-ft-9 forward averaged 7.5 points a night this past season. She closed her career with 519 tallies and was a 57.3 percent foul shooter. She had 567 rebounds.

She received the Bridgeport Will to Win Award as well as the Varsity Hustle Award. She was a honorable mention District 12 pick.

DARCY - the daughter of Jeff and Vickie Grandstaff - plans on attending Slipper Rock University and majoring in physical therapy.

ALLIE DELLATORRE, Steubenville Catholic - This Lady Crusader backcourt ace was a four-year ace for Coach Kevin Barr's program.

The 5-ft guard led the way for Catholic

Central with 15.7 points per game. She finished her playing career with 844 markers and was a 72.4 percent foul shooter.

She was also effective in rebounding and dishing the ball with 208 boards and 258 dimes. Her point total ranks her sixth all-time at Steubenville Catholic.

DELLATORRE was named to the District V team. **ALLIE** - the daughter of Ernest and Tracy Dellatorre - plans on attending John Carroll University in the fall.

MOLLY CRUZ, Shenandoah - This Lady Zep played a major role in the success in Sarahsville the past several seasons.

The 5-ft-5 Cruz scored at a 14.5 points per game clip for Coach Amber Ellison's outfit. She finished her career with 1,149 points and 576 rebounds. She also dished out 123 assists.

For her fine season, Cruz was named to the third-team all-OHIO squad. She was a first-team all-district and District 12 pick.

MOLLY - the daughter of Manuel and Nancy Cruz - plans to attend Malone College and major in nursing.

MARA BOWMAN, Buckeye Local - This versatile player had a fine senior campaign for the Lady Panthers and Coach Brian Best.

The 5-ft-9 swing averaged 11 points per game this past season and finished her career with 560 tallies. She was a 64-percent foul shooter. She closed her prep career with 348 rebounds and 174 assists.

BOWMAN was also selected to the District 5 game and is a four-year member of the all-OVAC Academic Team.

MARA - the daughter of Tammy and Bob Burlenski and Larry and Shelly Bowman - plans to attend Bethany College and major in biology and then head to medical school for optometry.

COURTNEY STEWART, Shadyside - This Lady Tiger was the floor leader for Yates' crew this past winter. She scored five points a game and finished her career with 237 markers.

STEWART - a relentless defender - also had 123 rebounds and 62 career assists.

The 5-ft-4 guard was second-team District 12.

COURTNEY - the daughter of Tracy and Lorrie Stewart - plans on attending Ohio University to major in business.

STACEY DUNFEE, Union Local - This Lady Jets' guard had a very solid year playing for first-year coach Marci Bonar.

The 5-ft-5 dynamo averaged 16.6 points a game for UL. She finished her career with 832 points and 895 rebounds. She also passed out 201 assists.

DUNFEE was a honorable mention District 12 pick.

STACEY - the daughter of Jim and Sue Dunfee - plans on attending West Liberty State College to major in audiology.

BETHANY WAYBLE, Barnesville - This Lady Shamrock guard was a mainstay at both ends of the floor for Coach Nick Saffield's club.

The 5-ft-3 guard scored 8.9 points per game this past season and finished her career with 342 tallies. She also had 142 rebounds and 77 career assists.

She was honorable mention all-Eastern District and second-team District 12.

BETHANY - the daughter of Linda Woodland - plans on attending Alderson-Broadus College and majoring in pre-pharmacy.

MAGGIE BRUNONI, Frontier - This Lady Cougar standout was a solid inside-outside player for the New Matamorris-based school.

The 5-ft-10 forward averaged 8.3 points a game and finished her career with 842 tallies. She also shot 61 percent from the foul line, while collaring 655 rebounds and passing out 100 assists.

BRUNONI was a honorable mention all-OHIO pick and also a second-team Eastern District selection.

MAGGIE - the daughter of Mike and Carolyn Flowers - plans on attending Ohio University.

Staskey can be reached at sstaskey@timesleaderonline.com

OVAC All-Stars set to shine today

By RICH GIBSON
Times Leader Sports Writer

The Ohio Valley showcases many of its brightest stars this afternoon when the annual Samuel L. Mumley OVAC All-Star Basketball Classic unfolds on the campus of Ohio University-Eastern.

A doubleheader format begins at

3 p.m. with the Ohio and West Virginia girls' stars vying. At approximately 5:00, the Buckeye and Mountaineer boys' squads square off.

The Mumley Classic is one of the prep season's most anticipated events and is named after the late Sam Mumley, former Executive Secretary of the bi-state conference

and a champion supporter and high school athletics during an exemplary administrative career.

In addition to today's game action, the OVAC is honoring several integral personnel who have dramatically impacted the quality of boys and girls prep athletics her in the Ohio Valley.

Those being recognized include:

former Wheeling Park boys' hoop boss Sam Andy; long-time girls' varsity coach Mickey Blatnik of St. Clairsville; Steubenville Central's Ernie Cicone, the Crusaders' outstanding Scorer-timekeeper; and River High's Gard Curtis who receives the OVAC's prestigious Distinguished Service Award.

See, OVAC, Page C4

OVAC All-Star Game

Who: Ohio vs. West Virginia.
When: April 1, 3 and 5 p.m.
Where: OUE Health and Physical Education Center.
Tickets: On sale at local Kroger's or available at the door.

● OVAC

Continued from Page C1

Also being honored for a superb career and recognized among the finest in his profession is Gene Joseph, recipient of the conference's annual Official's Award.

Coaches for today's girls' all-star clash are Ohio mentors Brad Lineback (Buckeye Trail), Tina Yates (Shadyside), and Phil Casinelli (Steubenville). West Virginia side girls coaches include: Kathy Roten (Linsly), Erica Hall (Brooke) and Rocky Bragg (Weirton Madonna).

Players competing on the Ohio roster are: Erin Nicola (Bellaire St. John's); Amber Skavarka (Martins Ferry); Courtney Stewart (Shadyside); Kayla Pickana (St. Clairsville); Bethany Wayble (Barnesville); Darcy Grandstaff (Bridgeport); Stacey Dunfee (Union Local); Mara Bowman (Buckeye Local); Liz Watson (Buckeye Trail); Alexandria Dellatore (Steubenville Central); Catherine Sanders (Edison); Molly Cruz (Shenandoah); Mallory Yajko (Beaver Local); Maggie Brunoni (Frontier); and Tara Harris (Zanesville).

Suiting up for the West

Virginia girls are: Annie Flatley (Wheeling Park); Emily Bosley and Amy Schmitt (Wheeling Central); Lauren Magers (John Marshall); Summer Flowers and Sara Mueller (Linsly); Emma Shalaway and Rita Stefan (Mt. De Chantal); Megan Gialluco (Brooke); Emily Tonacchio (Weirton); Latasha Coleman and Katie Lesho (Weirton Madonna); Samantha McGlumphy (Bishop Donahue); Lacey Tustin (Cameron); and Ashley Benavides (Oak Glen).

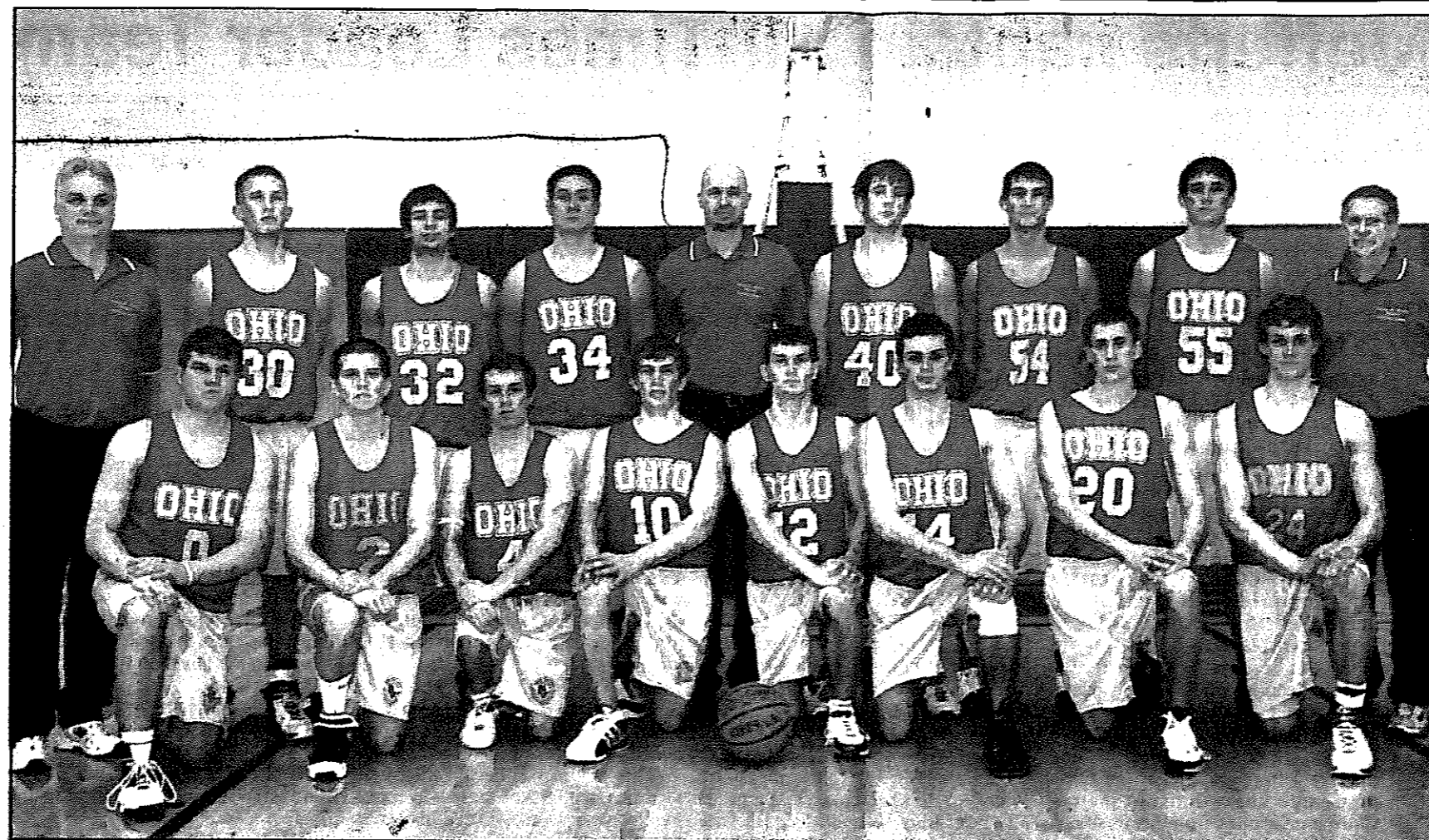
The Ohio boys' squad is under the guidance of Harrison Central's Don Madzia with assistance provided by Kim Clifford (St. Clairsville) and Greg Taylor (Monroe Central).

Representing the Buckeyes are: Jordan Wells (Monroe Central); Zach Tolzda (Beallsville); Ben Hodkinson (Harrison Central); Jordan Thompson (Buckeye Trail); Adam Gay (St. Clairsville); Ryan Mirich (Martins Ferry); Randy Hunter (Barnesville); Aaron Hilt (Edison); Dan Vogel (Steubenville); Tyler Engle (Fort Frye); Joey Wines (East Liverpool); Justin Linscott (Cambridge); J.D. Quillen (Conotton Valley); Kodey Haddox (Zanesville); and Seth Lumpkins (Shenandoah).

The West Virginia boys are coached by Mel Stephens (Wheeling Central) in addition to Wheeling Park's Michael Jebbia and Paden City's Fred King.

The Mountaineers' team includes: Chie Bryan and Mike Lake (Wheeling Park); Nick Moore, Eli Popicg and Brian Yahn (Wheeling Central); Matt Gryskevich and Jordan Taflan (Weirton); Tanner Defibaugh (John Marshall); Ken Barrows and A.J. Gordon (Bishop Donahue); Jonas McEldowney (Magnolia); Justin Lowe (Tyler Consolidated); Logan Miller (Valley); Jimmy Reitter (Brooke) and Ryan Jones (Cameron).

Gibson can be reached at rgibson@timesleaderonline.com



PICTURED IS the 2007 Ohio squad for the OVAC All-Star Basketball Classic. Front row, from left, are Tyler Engle (Fort Frye), Adam Gay (St. Clairsville), Jordan Wells (Monroe Central), Ben Hodkinson (Harrison Central), Joey Wines (East Liverpool), Kodey Haddox (Zanesville), Dan Vogel (Steubenville) and Justin Linscott (Cambridge). Standing, from left, are assistant coach Kim Clifford (St. Clairsville), Randy Hunter (Barnesville), Zach Tolzda (Beallsville), Seth Lumpkins (Shenandoah), head coach Donnie Madzia (Harrison Central), Ryan Mirich (Martins Ferry), Aaron Hilt (Edison), J.D. Quillen (Conotton Valley) and assistant coach Greg Taylor (Monroe Central). Absent was Jordan Thompson (Buckeye Trail).

T-L Photo/JOEL JOSEPH



PICTURED IS the 2007 Ohio girls squad for the OVAC All-Star Basketball Classic. Front row, from left, are Mara Bowman (Buckeye Local), Erin Nicola (St. John), Courtney Stewart (Shadyside), Molly Cruz (Shenandoah), Mallory Yajko (Beaver Local), Bethany Wayble (Barnesville), Kayla Pickana (St. Clairsville) and Allie Delatorre (Steubenville Catholic). Standing, from left, are assistant coach Tina Yates (Shadyside), Amber Skavarka (Martins Ferry), Darcy Grandstaff (Bridgeport), Stacey Dunfee (Union Local), head coach Brad Lineback (Buckeye Trail), Maggie Brunoni (Frontier), (Shenandoah), Tara Harris (Zanesville), Catherine Sanders (Edison) and assistant coach Phil Casinelli. Absent was Liz Watson (Buckeye Trail).

T-L Photo/JOEL JOSEPH

Ohio roster loaded with shooters

By **SETH STASKEY**
Times Leader Sports Editor

Selecting all-star teams is normally a tough task.

Picking the Ohio boys roster for this year's annual Samuel A. Mumley All-Star Basketball Classic was no different as Ohio Valley coaches had a lot of talent to sift through.

Harrison Central's Donnie Madzia was selected to serve as the head coach for the Buckeye boys. He's being joined on the bench by his own high school coach in Kim Clifford who is now the head coach at St. Clairsville. Also on the Ohio staff is Monroe Central's Greg Taylor.

The OVAC Game is slated for Sunday, April 1 at Ohio University-Eastern's Health and Physical Education building. The boys game tips off at 5 p.m. There will also be a dunk competition for the guys as well as several special presentations made during the course of the afternoon.

The action commences at 3 p.m. with the girls' game.

Here is a capsule look at the Ohio boys:

RANDY HUNTER, Barnesville - This Shamrock sharpshooter was a one-man wrecking crew at times for Coach Chris Pack's club this past winter.

The three-point specialist averaged close to 15 points a game for the Shamrocks. He finished his career with 591 points and shot 83.3 percent from the foul line. Hunter was charted for 77 career rebounds and he passed out 112 assists during his career.

Hunter was a first-team District 12 and Eastern District pick and served as a team captain.

Randy - the son of David and Donna Hunter - plans to attend either Muskingum College or Kent State University.

ADAM GAY, St. Clairsville - This Red Devils played an instrumental role in the Saints' run to the district final this winter.

The 5-ft-11 two guard averaged 19.7 points and finished just 20 points shy of 1,000 for his career. He also became the all-time leading career three-point shooter in Red Devil history.

Gay was a 79 percent foul shooter and finished with 158 career rebounds and 182 assists.

Gay was a first-team all-eastern district and all-OVAC pick as well as a special mention all-Ohio honoree.

Adam - the son of Brian and Margie Gay - plans to attend a four-year college.

SETH LUMPKINS, Shenandoah - This inside presence sparked the Zeps to a resurgent season and a berth in the sectional final where they bowed out to West Muskingum.

The 6-ft-3 center averaged 15.9 points and finished his career with 934 markers for Coach Dan Schwieterman. He was a 72 percent foul shooter and finished with 520 rebounds and passed out 60 assists.

As a junior, Lumpkins earned third-team all-Ohio. He was a first-team district pick this season and first-team PVC.

Seth - the son of Mr. and Mrs. Lumpkins - plans on attending college.

TYLER ENGLE, Fort Frye - This Cadet was deadly from behind the arc for Coach Dan Liedtke's club the past four years.

The 5-ft-11 guard buried enough treys to be listed as the all-time leader in OHSAA history. He posted a 17.1 points per game average this past season and finished his career as the Fort Frye all-time leader with 1,637 markers.

He also had 361 rebounds and 228 assists, while helping the Cadets to a district title as a junior and runner-up finish as a sophomore.

Engle was a first-team all-Ohio pick after being named Division III District Player of the Year this winter. He's also an all-OVAC and all-PVC selection.

Tyler - the son of Todd and Brenda



Engle - plans on attending The Ohio State University on a baseball scholarship and he'll major in physical therapy or exercise science.

KODEY HADDOX, Zanesville - This Blue Devil standout played a major role in the Devils' return to the regional tournament this winter.

The 6-ft-2 swing player was a four-year mainstay for the Coach Scott Aronhalt's outfit, averaging 14 points this season and finishing his career with 998 markers. He was also a 70 percent foul shooter.

Haddox had 326 rebounds and 158 assists. He was a third-team all-Ohioan as a junior and a special mention pick this past winter. He was first-team all-Eastern District and District 12.

Kodey - the son of Mike and Kerry Haddox - plans on attending college and then heading to law school.

AARON HILT, Edison - This standout helped turn the Wildcats' fortunes around this past winter. The 6-ft-5 swing player averaged 14.6 points this past season.

For his career, Hilt finished with 694 points, 342 rebounds and 98 assists.

He was a first-team District 5 selection as well as a honoree on the all-Eastern District team.

BEN HODKINSON, Harrison Central - This Huskie was the epitome of senior leader for Madzia's quint the past two seasons.

The 5-ft-9 point guard led the Huskies to the OVAC and Buckeye 8 titles by virtue of scoring at a 21.7 points per game clip. He finished his prep career with 1,273 points and was a 87 percent foul shooter.

Along with his scoring, Hodkinson also had 310 rebounds and 140 assists.

Hodkinson - who helped lead the Huskies to the regional tournament in 2006 - was a District 5 Division II player of the year and will also take part in the Ohio North-South Game next month. He was a first-team Eastern District pick and special mention all-Ohio.

Ben - the son of Tom and Linnah Hodkinson - plans to attend college where he'll play hoops and major in secondary education.

RYAN MIRICH, Martins Ferry - This versatile player had an exceptional final prep season for Coach Jeff Sabatino's squad.

The 6-ft-4 point forward averaged 13 points a game and finished his prep career with 380 tallies. He also had 228 rebounds and 105 assists.

Mirich was a first-team District 12 selection. He was also a standout on the football field for the Purple Riders as a tightend and nose tackle.

Mirich - who is the son of Ed and Debbie Mirich - plans on attending West Liberty to play football and major in sports management.

J.D. QUILLEN, Conotton Valley - This Rocket was one of the premier players in the area this past winter.

The 6-ft-4 pivot scored at a 20.7 points per game clip and finished his career with 1,092 points. He also shot 69 percent from the foul line and had 651 rebounds and 315 career assists.

Quillen was a first-team Eastern District pick as well as co-player of the year in District 5.

J.D. - the son of Jeff and Jannene Quillen - plans to attend college and hopefully play basketball and major in exercise science.

JORDAN THOMPSON, Buckeye Trail - This Warrior has been the heart-and-soul of Coach Dave Linn's squad the past several years.

The 6-ft-1 guard averaged 21.3 points a night for the Warriors and finished his career with 1,001 points and he shot 82 percent from the stripe. He also had 474 rebounds and 176 career assists.

Thompson was a first-team all-Eastern District pick and was third-team all-Ohio. He was also District 12 co-player of the year and all-OVAC.

Jordan - the son of Randy and Sue Thompson - plans on attending college to major in business and play basketball.

DAN VOGEL, Steubenville - This Big Red ace was a key contributor for Coach Mark Masloski's district finalist squad this past season.

The 6-ft-3 Vogel pumped in 14 points a night and finished his career with 560 markers, 287 rebounds and 30 assists.

Vogel - who played wide receiver for the back-to-back state champion Big Red football teams - was honored in hoops as a third-team all-District and District 5 All-Star Game.

Dan - the son of Dan and Wendy Vogel - plans on attending The Ohio State University to major in political science.

ZACH TOLZDA, Beallsville - This Blue Devil had a tremendous four-year run playing for his dad and coach Scooter Tolzda.

The 6-ft-1 guard averaged 30 points a game this season and finished his prep career with 1,843 points, which is the all-time best at Beallsville. He also had 317 rebounds, 162 assists and shot 65 percent from the foul line.

Tolzda was a second-team all-Ohio pick this season after being one of three Eastern District Players of the Year.

Zach - who is the son of Lou Tolzda - plans on attending college to play hoops.

JOEY WINES, East Liverpool - This Potter standout was a solid four-year performer for the Columbiana County school. This past season, he recorded 17.6 points a night.

He finished his career with 609 markers and shot 80 percent from the foul line. He also passed out 258 assists and snagged 182 rebounds.

The 6-ft guard was a first-team all-OVAC pick, District V and earned second-team all-Ohio in football.

Joey - who is the son of Keith and Liz Wines - plans on attending Ashland University to play football.

JUSTIN LINSKOTT, Cambridge - This Bobcat luminary had a solid career under the guidance of head coach Dan Vogt. The 6-ft-4 forward averaged 10.8 points per gamethis season and had 462 points in his career.

Linscott had 364 career rebounds and 36 assists. He also shot a career 57 percent from the floor.

Justin was a first-team all-ECOL, all-District 12 and second-team Eastern District selection.

Justin - who is the son of Dan and Tami Linscott - plans on attending Muskingum College.

JORDAN WELLS, Monroe Central - This Seminole leader was a mainstay for Taylor and company for four seasons.

The 5-ft-5 point guard averaged 13.6 points this season and finished his career with 989 markers. He also had 153 rebounds and 306 assists.

Wells is the all-time leader in both steals and assists for the Seminoles. He was an all-Ohio honorable mention and was named all-OVAC, PVC and Eastern District.

Jordan - the son of Phil and Terry Wells - is planning on attending college.

MF's Joseph to receive OVAC Officials' Award

By SETH STASKEY
Times Leader Sports Editor

For 25 years of life, Gene Joseph toured the State of Ohio. Not as a tourist, but as a basketball official. Then there came a time when it was just enough, so at that point Joseph retired his whistle for good. Now, the Martins Ferry native will get a chance to reflect some when he's presented the OVAC Officials Award at Sunday's OVAC All-Star Basketball Games. The girls' game tips off at 3 and the boys game at 5 p.m.

"I was really shocked when I heard I was receiving this award," Joseph said. "I am very appreciative, and I glad that they thought about me."

Joseph got into officiating through his next-door neighbor at the time, Erwin Sabatino. Sabatino had been a long-time official and convinced Joseph to get his card and start working games.

"I went with Erwin and Evan Reese for a year to almost all of the games they worked," Joseph said. "I had been around sports my entire life, but officiating was one aspect I never thought of doing, but I really got interested and I just fell in love with it."

Joseph officiated in both Ohio and West Virginia for the better part of 35 years. He served as the President of the Ohio Valley Board of Basketball Officials and he was fortunate enough to work sectionals, districts, regionals and state tournaments in both states for both boys and girls.

During one season, Joseph was afforded the opportunity to work both the boys and girls' state tournaments in the same season.

According to the officiating legend, he had several interesting battles during his time with all of the coaching legends from the Ohio Valley, including Charlie Huggins, Frank Baxter and Henry Lasasz just to name a few.

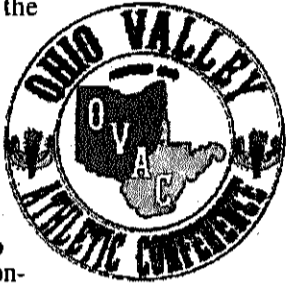
"I could tell some stories that no one would ever believe," Joseph admitted. "I really enjoyed officiating. I met a lot of good people and made friends for life. Not only here, but all over the place."

Joseph knew it was time to get out of officiating when he looked at his schedule and saw one week with trips to Indian Valley South, Cambridge and Steubenville.

"I was away from my family a lot, and it hit me and that's when I realized it was time to walk away," Joseph explained.

Joseph now works for the Wheeling Park Commission.

Gene and his wife Gayle reside in Colerain. They are the parents of three sons: Scott, Mark, Chris and a daughter Gina. They also have two grandchildren, Cole (8) and Kyle (14).



St. Clairsville's Blatnik wins Saffield Award

By SETH STASKEY
Times Leader Sports Editor

The St. Clairsville girls' basketball program has experienced a lot of success over the course of the past several years.

Leading the way has been veteran head coach Mickey Blatnik who just completed his 24th season as the Lady Red Devils' head coach.

Blatnik will be honored for his success and years of service Sunday at the OVAC All-Star Basketball Game at OUE when he receives the Rich Saffield' Girls Coach Award.

"I was very surprised when I heard I was selected (to receive this honor)," Blatnik said. "Anything that involves Sam Mumley is an honor for me."

Blatnik and Mumley go way back. Mumley was one of Blatnik's mentors as well as one of his friends.

Along with Mumley, Blatnik had several mentors that have helped to pave his coaching career.

He watched and learned from his uncle Al Blatnik and the success he had at Bridgeport. He was a student-teacher under Hank Lasasz at Buckeye and then worked at St. C. under the legendary George Strager.

"I think I had some pretty good guys to learn from," Blatnik said.

Taking what he learned from his mentors and translating it into his own program are what have helped form the Lady Red Devils into one of the area's premier programs.

The two Lady Red Devils' appearances in the regional championship game are two that Blatnik think back to often over the course of his career.

"Those two teams really stick out," Blatnik said. "These kinds of awards represent the entire program."

Blatnik - the owner of a 287-176 record - has led his Lady Red Devils to three district titles, six sectional titles. He's also four OVAC titles.

"We've had a lot of good players over the years," Blatnik admitted. "I have been really privileged to be able to coach the kids that I have coached."

For the team success has come numerous individual coaching honors for Blatnik. He's been named District 12 Coach of the Year twice and was named Coach of the Year by the Basketball Coaches Association in 2001. He's coached the OVAC All-Star Game twice and in 2005 he coached the Ohio North-South Game.

Blatnik also credits his assistant coaches for their hand in him earning this award as well as the status of the program.

OVAC All-Star Game

Who: Ohio vs. West Virginia.

When: April 1, 3 p.m.

Where: OUE Health and Physical Education Center.

Tickets: On sale at local Kroger's.

Joseph Will Be Honored

Referee earns Officials award

By SETH STASKEY
For The Intelligencer

Gene Joseph spent more than a quarter-century touring the state of Ohio as a basketball official.

The Martins Ferry native will get a chance to reflect on his journey Sunday when he's presented the OVAC Officials Award at the annual OVAC All-Star Basketball Games.

The girls' game tips off at 3 p.m. with the boys' game to follow at Ohio University Eastern.

"I was really shocked when I heard I was receiving this award," Joseph said. "I'm very appreciative and I'm glad that they thought about me."

Joseph got into officiating through his next-door neighbor at the time, Erwin Sabatino.

Sabatino had been a long-time official and convinced Joseph to get his card and start working games.

"I went with Erwin and Evan Reese for a year to almost all of the games they worked," Joseph said. "I had been around sports my entire life, but officiating was one aspect I never thought of doing. I really got interested and just fell in love with it."

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Valley Board of Basketball Officials and he was chosen to work sectionals, districts, regionals and state tournaments in both states for both boys and girls.

During one season, Joseph was afforded the opportunity to work both the boys' and girls' state tournaments in the same season.

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Joseph knew it was time to get out of officiating when he looked at his schedule and saw one week with trips to Indian Valley South, Cambridge and Steubenville.

"I was away from my family a lot, and it hit me. That's when I realized it was time to walk away," said Joseph, who now works for the Wheeling Park Commission.

Gene and his wife Gayle reside in Colerain. They are the parents of three sons - Scott, Mark and Chris - and a daughter, Gina.

They also have two grandchildren, Kyle (14) and Cole (8).

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Curtis to be honored at All-Star Game

By RICK THORP
For The Times Leader

Gard Curtis' life has been all about service. Service to his family. Service to his church. And service to hundreds of young men whom he has touched through the sport of basketball.

So who better to receive this year's Bob Burton Distinguished Service Award than Curtis, who has served as an assistant boys' basketball coach for River High School for all but five of the past 39 seasons.

"I was surprised about receiving the award," said

Curtis, who will be presented with the honor at today's Samuel A. Mumley All-Star Basketball Classic at Ohio University Eastern.

"Like I wrote to Tom (Bechtel, game director), there are people more deserving of this."

"I am very grateful for the fact I was selected. I appreciate the work the OVAC does and the opportunities they give the athletes. They do a lot for the athletes."

Curtis will be one of five men receiving special awards at today's classic, which tips off at 3 p.m. with the girls' contest, followed by the boys' game at 5 p.m.

Former Wheeling Park High School boys' basketball coach Sam Andy will be lauded with the Earl Haberfield OVAC Basketball Coaches' Award, while current St. Clairsville High School girls' mentor Mickey Blatnik will receive the Rich Saffield Girls' Coaches' Award.

Current Steubenville Catholic High School timer Ernie Cicone will be given the Thomas E. Rataiczak Scorekeeper/Timer Award, while longtime basketball official Gene Joseph will be presented with the Robert Dawson Basketball Officials' Award.

Curtis attended Bethel High School in Monroe County from 1954-58 and played for the legendary Richard "Dick" Potts.

The highlight of his high school career came in 1957 when the Blackhawks advanced to the Ohio Class A finals where they lost by one point.



What was amazing about that team, which finished 27-2, was the fact there were just 13 boys in Grades 9-12 and all but one was on the basketball team.

"I was about the sixth man on that team," Curtis recalled. "The community really backed us that season. We'd win and everyone would call their neighbors and we'd have a big feed at the high school."

Following high school, Curtis attended Glenville State College, where he graduated in 1962.

Upon graduation he returned to the Ohio Valley and started coaching at Clarington Junior High School at Potts' urging. In 1968, Curtis rejoined his former coach as an assistant at River High School, a post he would have for the next 23 seasons.

"There's an old expression that says you coach the way you were coached," Curtis said. "Coach Potts was my coach and when I came to River I started coaching for him and it was a little different than the player-coach relationship we previously had."

"We didn't always agree on everything but he was a super person and I don't know anyone I respected more than Coach Potts."

Curtis and Potts remained together on the bench until Potts' career ended in 1991. During that time, Curtis had several opportunities to move into a head coaching job but he was content to stay with Potts.

"I always enjoyed what I was doing," Curtis said. "I always felt I was there to serve and I thoroughly enjoyed myself."

"I had a big family and as far as moving, I was concerned about that. I was always happy as an assistant."

After Potts' career ended, Curtis remained as a teacher in the district and eventually retired in 1997 after 35 years of service.

In 1996, Curtis returned to the River sideline, this time as a volunteer varsity assistant for Mark Romick. It's a position he still holds.

"We were talking one day and (Mark) wanted to know if I wanted to come back," Curtis recalled. "I said I would, only if I could make a difference."

Curtis has had no problem adapting to the many changes basketball has seen during the past half-century. In fact, he said coaching now keeps him young at heart.

"Now, it's developed into a physical game," Curtis said. "You have to be stronger now because there is more contact."

"The offenses and defenses are more complex now but the one factor that remains the same is the player. We've had some good players, but more importantly, a lot of good young men."

"That's the game as far as I'm concerned. It's a tremendous feeling because I follow them and I know what they're doing. When they come back, that's what makes it all worthwhile."

When he's not coaching, Curtis spends time with his wife of 42 years, Nancy, his two sons, two daughters and 12 grandchildren.

He also works as a lay speaker for the United Methodist Church, something he's done for 46 years.

OVAC Awards Devils' Blatnik

Coach to receive Saffield honor

By SETH STASKEY
For The Intelligencer

The St. Clairsville girls' basketball program has experienced a lot of success over the past several years.

Leading the way has been veteran head coach Mickey Blatnik, who just completed his 24th season as the Lady Red Devils' head coach.

Blatnik will be honored for his success and years of service Sunday at the Sam Mumley OVAC All-Star Basketball Classic at OUE when he receives the Rich Saffield Girls' Coach Award.

"I was very surprised when I heard I was selected (to receive this honor)," Blatnik said. "Anything that involves Sam Mumley is an honor for me."

Blatnik and the late Sam Mumley go way back. Mumley was one of Blatnik's mentors as well as one of his friends.

Along with Mumley, Blatnik had several other mentors who helped to pave his coaching career.

He watched and learned from his uncle Al Blatnik and the success he had at Bridgeport. He was a student-teacher under Herk Lasasz at Buckeye and then worked at St. Clairsville under the legendary George Strager.

"I think I had some pretty

good guys to learn from," Blatnik said.

Taking what he learned from his mentors and translating it into his own style have helped form the Lady Red Devils into one of the area's premier programs.

The two Lady Red Devils' appearances in the regional championship game are two that Blatnik thinks back to often over the course of his career.

"Those two teams really stick out," Blatnik said. "These kinds of awards represent the entire program."

Blatnik, who is 287-176 (.620) at St. Clairsville, has led his Lady Red Devils to three district titles and six sectional titles. He's also won four OVAC championships.

"We've had a lot of good players over the years," Blatnik said. "I have been really privileged to be able to coach the kids that I have coached."

The team's success has led to numerous individual coaching honors for Blatnik.

He's been named District 12 Coach of the Year twice and was named Coach of the Year by the Basketball Coaches Association in 2001.

He's coached the OVAC All-Star Game twice and in 2005 he coached the Ohio North-South Game.

Blatnik also credits his assistant coaches for their part in the success of the program.

"All of these honors wouldn't be possible if it weren't for some great assistant coaches," Blatnik said.

WV hosts talented OVAC roster

By **SETH STASKEY**
Times Leader Sports Editor

The West Virginia side of the river saw two area teams advance to the state tournament.

The Mountaineers will be hoping some of that success carries over to Sunday's OVAC All-Star Game at Ohio University-Eastern.

The Mountaineers' boys roster has been finalized and the players are anxious for this weekend's game.

Wheeling Central's Mel Stephens is the Mountaineer head coach. He's joined by Paden City's Fred King and Wheeling Park's Michael Jebbia.

Here is a capsule look at the players:

JIMMY REITTER, Brooke - This Bruin enjoyed a strong senior season for his uncle Dave Reitter this past winter.

He averaged 10.7 points a game and finished his career with 448 tallies. He was a 66 percent foul shooter and had 123 rebounds and 154 assists.

The 6-ft-1 guard - who is committed to play football at the Army Academy - is a member of the National Honor Society and Bruin's Best. He's also achieved the Academic Achievement Bronze and Silver Star.

Jimmy is the son of Jim and Nanette Reitter.

KEN BARROWS, Bishop Donahue - This Bishop center was one of the key cogs in the Donahue run to the West Virginia State Final.

He averaged 12 points a game and was a 76 percent foul shooter. He finished his career with 573 points, 480 rebounds and was named player of the year in the Mason-Dixon Conference.

Barrows - the 6-ft-8 center - recorded a triple-double during the state tournament game.

Ken - the son of Laura Barrows - plans on attending college.

LOGAN MILLER, Valley - This Lumberjack was an effective player all season for Valley.

The guard scored at a 11.5 points per game clip and finished with 568 markers. He yanked down 158 rebounds and 169 assists.

Miller is a second-team Mason-Dixon performer as well as a Honorable Mention all-OVAC performer.

Logan - the son of Alan and Debbie Miller - plans on attending Fairmont State and entering pre-physical therapy.

RYAN JONES, Cameron - This Dragon was a bright spot in an otherwise down year in Cameron.

The 6-ft-1 guard averaged 15 points a game and finished his career with 901 points, 452 rebounds and 267 assists.

Jones was a first-team Mason-Dixon performer, second-team all-OVAC and Honorable Mention all-Ohio.

Ryan - the son of Marilyn Perkins and Larry Jones - plans on attending Fairmont State and majoring in engineering.

MIKE LAKE, Wheeling Park - This Patriot senior was a mainstay for Coach Michael Jebbia's squad this past winter.

The 6-ft guard averaged 14.4 points a game and shot 81 percent from the foul line.

Lake finished his prep career with 412 points, 185 rebounds and 52 career assists.

Mike - the son of Mike and Bonnie Lake - is undecided on his collegiate future.

BRIAN YAHN, Wheeling Central - This Maroon Knight played a key role for the highly-successful Maroon Knights the past couple of years.

The 6-ft-3 swing player averaged 12.6 points a game this past winter for Stephens. He also finished his career with 609 points, 206 rebounds and 62 assists.

He was nominated for the McDonald's All-American Game and was named all-tournament at the Undo's Holiday Tournament.

Brian - the son of Richard and Christine Yahn - plans on attending college.

ELI POPICG, Wheeling Central - This Maroon Knight also played a key role the past several seasons for Stephens and company.

The 6-ft-3 forward averaged more than 13 points a game this past winter.

Eli - also a standout baseball player - was named to the all-tournament team in 2005 when the Knights claimed the hardware.

Eli - the son of Stacey Popicg and Tim Popicg - plans on attending West Virginia University and majoring in accounting and finance.

JONAS MCELDOWNEY, Magnolia - This Blue Eagle was a standout for Coach Dave Tallman during their run to the West Virginia State Tournament.

The 5-ft-11 guard averaged 12.3 points a game and closed his career with 693 points. He also had 221 rebounds and 183 assists.

McEldowney is also a standout baseball player and was a member of the Blue Eagles' state championship team last spring.

Jonas - the son of April and Mike Pierce - is undecided upon his future plans.

MATT GRYSKEVICH, Weir - This Red Rider was a key inside cog for Coach Mike Granato's club last winter.

The 6-ft-5 post averaged 9.6 points a game and scored 274 points in his career. He also finished with 279 rebounds.

Gryskovich is also a standout in the classroom, having been named Academic All-OVAC and selected to the Weir High National Honor Society.

Matt - the son of Paula Gryskovich - plans on attending West Virginia University and majoring in landscape and architecture.

A.J. GORDON, Bishop Donahue - This Bishop was the perfect complement to Barrows for Coach Wise's club.

The 6-ft-3 swing averaged better than 14 points a game and was named to the all-Mason Dixon and all-Valley teams.

A.J. - the son of A.J. and Twila Gordon - plans on attending West Liberty State College.

TANNER DEFIBAUGH, John Marshall - This Monarch had a strong senior campaign for the Glen-Dale based school.

The 6-ft-3 forward averaged 14 points a game and shot 67 percent from the foul line.

Defibaugh was named to the Huntington St. Joseph's Tournament Team.

Tanner - the son of Larry and Terry Defibaugh - plans on attending college to become a teacher and wishes to further his basketball career.

JUSTIN LOWE, Tyler Consolidated - This Silver Knight was a mainstay for Coach Rick Leach's club.

The 5-ft-9 guard averaged 12.6 points a game and finished his prep career with 705 markers. He also yanked down 233 rebounds and 202 assists.

Justin - the son of Fritz and Tandra Lowe - plans to attend Gannon University and major in physician assistant studies.

CHIE BRYAN, Wheeling Park - This senior guard enjoyed a strong final season under Jebbia's watch.

The 6-ft guard averaged 12.7 points a game and finished his career with 407 markers. He also had 210 assists and 120 assists.

Chie was named Elks' Athlete of the Month for January.

Chief - the son of Kathleen Bryan - plans to attend college and play basketball.

JORDAN TAFLAN, Weir - This Red Rider guard capped a strong career with a solid senior season.

The 5-ft-11 guard averaged 8.7 points a game and finished his career with 229 points. He also had 124 assists and 81 rebounds.

Taflan - also a football standout - was named first-team all-OVAC on the gridiron and was third-team all-state.

Jordan - the son of Kris and Ron Taflan - plans on attending Robert Morris University to play football.

NICK MOORE, Wheeling Central - This Maroon Knight had a strong four years for Coach Stephens and company.

The 5-ft-10 guard averaged 12.3 points a game and finished his career with 505 tallies. He passed out 170 assists and collected 110 rebounds.

Moore was all-OVAC as a junior and was the team captain this past season.

Nick - the son of John and Brenda Moore - plans on attending college.



Ohio Roster Loaded With High Scorers

OVAC All-Star games on tap for Sunday evening

By **SETH STASKEY**
For The Intelligencer

Selecting the Ohio boys' roster for Sunday's annual Samuel A. Mumley All-Star Basketball Classic was a difficult task as the Buckeye State coaches had plenty of quality choices.

Harrison Central's Donnie Madzia is the head coach for Ohio with help from St. Clairsville head man Kim Clifford and Monroe Central coach Greg Taylor.

The boys' game will be the nightcap of Sunday's all-star twinbill at OU Eastern's Health and Physical Education building. Action starts at 3 p.m. with the girls' all-star game. The boys will follow at approximately 5 p.m.

Here's a look at the Ohio boys' roster:

RANDY HUNTER, Barnesville: This Shamrock sharpshooter was a one-man wrecking crew for coach Chris Pack's club last winter. The 3-point specialist averaged nearly 15.0 ppg. for the Shamrocks. He finished his career with 591 points and shot 83.3 percent from the foul line.

Hunter was a first-team District 12 and Eastern District pick and served as a team captain.

Randy is the son of David and Donna Hunter.

ADAM GAY, St. Clairsville: This Red Devils ace played an instrumental role in St. Clairsville's run to the district final. The 5-foot-11 two-guard averaged 19.7 points and finished with 980 career points, setting the school's career record for 3-point goals.

Gay was a first-team all-eastern district and all-OVAC pick as well as a special mention all-OHIO honoree.

Adam is the son of Brian and Margie Gay.

SETH LUMPKINS, Shenandoah: His inside presence sparked the Zeps to a berth in the sectional final where they bowed out to West Muskingum.

The 6-3 center averaged 15.9 points and finished his career with 934 points for coach Dan Schwieterman. He was a 72-percent foul shooter and finished with 520 rebounds and handed out 60 assists.

As a junior, Lumpkins earned third-team all-OHIO. He was a first-team all-district pick this season and first-team all-PVC.

TYLER ENGLE, Fort Frye: This 5-11 guard buried enough treys to be listed as the all-time leader in Ohio high school history. He scored 17.1 ppg. as a senior and finished his career as Fort Frye's all-time leader with 1,637 points.

Engle also helped the Cadets to a district title as a junior and runner-up finish as a sophomore.

He was a first-team all-OHIO pick after being named Division III District Player of the Year. He also earned all-OVAC and all-PVC honors.

The son of Todd and Brenda Engle, Tyler has accepted a baseball scholarship to Ohio State.

KODEY HADDOX, Zanesville: This Blue Devils standout played a major role in the Devils' return to the regional tournament.

The 6-2 swingman was a four-year regular for coach Scott Aronhalt's outfit. He averaged 14.0 ppg. this season and scored 998 points during his career.

Haddox was a third-team all-OHIO as a junior and a special mention pick this past winter. He was first-team all-Eastern District and District 12.

Kodey is the son of Mike and Kerry Haddox.

AARON HILT, Edison: This 6-5 swingman scored at a 14.6 ppg. pace last winter.

Hilt finished his career with 694 points, 342 rebounds and 98 assists.

He was a first-team District 5 selection as well as a honoree on the all-Eastern District team.

BEN HODKINSON, Harrison Central: This Husky was the unquestioned leader of Madzia's unit the past two seasons.

The 5-9 point guard led the Huskies to OVAC and Buckeye 8 titles as a senior with a 21.7 ppg. scoring average. An 87-percent foul

shooter, he scored 1,273 points during his high school career.

Hodkinson, who helped lead the Huskies to sectional and district titles in his junior season, was the District 5 Division II Player of the Year this season and was chosen to play in next month's Ohio North-South Game. He was a first-team all-district pick and special mention all-OHIO.

Ben is the son of Tom and Linnah Hodkinson.

RYAN MIRICH, Martins Ferry: This versatile senior had an exceptional final prep season for coach Jeff Sabatino's squad.

The 6-4 point/forward averaged 13 points a game and finished his prep career with 380 points, 228 rebounds and 105 assists.

Mirich was a first-team District 12 selection who also excelled on the football field for the Purple Riders as a tight end and nose tackle.

Ryan is the son of Ed and Debbie Mirich.

J.D. QUILLEN, Conotton Valley: This rangy Rocket was one of the valley's leading scorers as a senior.

A 6-4 post, he averaged 20.7 ppg. and finished his career with 1,092 points and 651 rebounds.

He was a first-team all-district pick and the co-player of the season in District 5.

J.D. is the son of Jeff and Janene Quillen.

JORDAN THOMPSON, Buckeye Trail: This 6-1 guard averaged 21.3 ppg. for coach Dave Linn's Warriors.

An 82-percent foul shooter, Thompson finished his career with 1,001 points, 474 rebounds and 176 assists.

He was a first-team all-Eastern District pick and a third-team all-OHIO selection. He was also District 12 co-Player of the Year and all-OVAC.

Jordan is the son of Randy and Sue Thompson.

DAN VOGEL, Steubenville: This Big Red ace was a key contributor for coach Mark Masloski's district finalist squad.

The 6-3 Vogel pumped in 14 points a night and finished his career with 560 points and 287 rebounds.

Vogel, a wide receiver for the back-to-back state champion Big Red football teams, was a third-team all-District selection and was picked for the District 5 All-Star Game.

Dan is the son of Dan and Wendy Vogel.

ZACH TOLZDA, Beallsville: This Blue Devil led the valley in scoring for his dad and coach Lou "Scooter" Tolzda.

The 6-1 guard averaged 30 points a game this season and is Beallsville's career scoring leader with 1,843 points.

He was a second-team all-OHIO pick this season and one of three Eastern District Players of the Year.

JOEY WINES, East Liverpool: This Potters standout was a four-year regular who averaged 17.6 ppg. as a senior.

Wines finished his career with 609 markers and shot 80 percent from the foul line.

The 6-0 guard was a first-team all-OVAC and all-District 5 pick. He was also a second-team all-state selection in football.

Joey is the son of Keith and Liz Wines.

JUSTIN LINSCOTT, Cambridge: This Bobcat luminary had a solid career for coach Dan Vogt.

The 6-4 forward averaged 10.8 ppg. this season and had 462 points and 364 rebounds in his career while shooting better than 57 percent from the floor.

Justin was a first-team all-ECOL, all-District 12 and second-team Eastern District selection.

Justin is the son of Dan and Tami Linscott.

JORDAN WELLS, Monroe Central: This Seminoles leader was a mainstay for Taylor and company for four seasons.

The 5-5 point guard averaged 13.6 ppg. as a senior and finished his career with 989 points and 306 assists.

Wells is Monroe Central's all-time leader in both steals and assists. He was an all-OHIO honorable mention and was named all-OVAC, all-PVC and all-Eastern District.

Jordan is the son of Phil and Terry Wells.

Ohio All-Stars Ready to Shine

By **SETH STASKEY**
For the News-Register

The Ohio stars are set to shine.

They will be on display brightly today at Ohio University-Eastern's Health and Physical Education Building when the annual Samuel A. Mumley OVAC All-Star Classic unfolds.

The girls game tips off at 3 p.m. and the boys is set to unfold at 5 p.m.

The Ohio girls' squad is being coached by Buckeye Trail's Brad Lineback. He's being joined on the Buckeyes bench by Shadyside's Tina Yates and Steubenville's Phil Casinelli.

Here is a capsule look at the players:

Amber Skvarka, Martins Ferry — This 5-foot-6 Lady Rider had a strong senior season before it was cut short with an injury for coach Dave Reasbeck's club.

Skvarka averaged 14 points per game and finished her prep career with 502 points. She was a 54.9 percent foul shooter and passed out 246 assists. She's the Ferry single-game record holder for 3-pointers made in a career with eight bonus bombs.

Amber — the daughter of Dave and Paula Skvarka — plans on attending West Liberty State College and majoring in accounting in the fall.

Kayla Pickana, St. Clairsville — This Lady Red Devils' senior came back strong from preseason injuries sustained in an automobile accident.

The 5-6 guard surpassed the 1,000-point mark during her junior season. She finished her career with 1,186 points and posted a 82 percent clip from the foul line. She finished her playing career for coach Mickey Blatnik with 234 rebounds and 252 assists.

She was an all-district pick as well as a all-OVAC selection. She was special mention all-OVAC.

Kayla — the daughter of Tim and Mary Jo Pickana — plans on majoring in broadcast journalism at either Ohio State University or Otterbein College.

Mallory Yajko, Beaver Local — This Lady Beavers' guard was a four-year mainstay for coach Frank Linkous' club.

The 5-10 Beaver Local swing player finished her career with 1,086 points and was a 60 percent foul shooter. She had 410 rebounds and dished out 105 assists.

She was a two-time honorable mention all-OVAC pick and a two-time all-district selection. She was also a first-team all-OVAC pick.

Mallory — the daughter of Mark and Bob Yajko — plans on attending college and attaining a degree in criminal justice, while continuing her basketball career.

Elizabeth Watson, Buckeye Trail — This Warriors post player was a strong complement to the Trail outside game. The 5-11 post was a solid contributor for coach Brad Lineback's outfit.

Watson averaged 8.7 points a game this past season, while finishing her prep career with 464 tallies. She also had 351 rebounds and 56 career assists.

She was recognized on a bevy of postseason teams last winter. She was all-PVC, Honorable Mention all-OVAC and Honorable Mention all-district.

Elizabeth — the daughter of Mark Watson — plans on attending the University of Akron and majoring in education.

Catherine Sanders, Edison — This Wildcat was one of the key cogs in a highly successful season at the Richmond-based school.

Playing under veteran coach Ron Smyth, the 5-8 forward averaged 11.2 points a game last winter.

Sanders also standouts on the soccer field for the Wildcats where she earned first-team honors in the OVAC and district. She also earned hoop accolades from District V and the OVAC.

Catherine — the daughter of Jim and Traci Sanders, — plans to attend college and major in Neo Natal Nursing.

Erin Nicola, St. John Central — This Fighting Irish standout was a solid inside-outside contributor for coach Bubba Kapral's district finalist team this past winter.

The 5-6 Nicola averaged 10.3 points a game and finished her playing days with 718 markers. She was a 68 percent foul shooter and had 634 rebounds and 247 assists in her career.

Nicola was an all-District 12, all-Eastern District and all-OVAC selection for a Lady Irish club, which claimed the OVAC 1-A title again this season.

Erin — the daughter of Nick and Gail Nicola — plans to attend Marietta or Alderson-Broadus College in the fall.

Tara Harris, Zanesville — This Blue Devils forward capped a fine career under Libby McAndlish this season.

The 5-7 forward averaged 16 points per game and finished her career with 814 points and was a 64 percent foul shooter. She had 397 rebounds and 47 career assists.

Harris was an all-conference player as well as Player of the

Year in District 12. She was also selected to the East-West Game.

Tara — the daughter of Tommy and Terry Harris — plans on attending college and majoring in forensic psychology and playing basketball.

Darcy Grandstaff, Bridgeport — This Bulldogs standout played a key role in the resurgence the past several seasons under coach Ed Metz.

The 5-9 forward averaged 7.5 points a night last season. She closed her career with 519 tallies and was a 57.3 percent foul shooter. She had 567 rebounds.

She received the Bridgeport Will to Win Award as well as the Varsity Hustle Award. She was a honorable mention District 12 pick.

Darcy — the daughter of Jeff and Vickie Grandstaff — plans on attending Slipper Rock University and majoring in physical therapy.

Allie Dellatorre, Steubenville Catholic — This Crusaders backcourt ace was a four-year ace for coach Kevin Barr's program.

The 5-ft guard led the way for Catholic Central with 15.7 points per game. She finished her playing career with 844 markers and was a 72.4 percent foul shooter.

She was also effective in rebounding and dishing the ball with 208 boards and 258 assists. Her point total ranks sixth all-time at Steubenville Catholic.

Dellatorre was named to the District V team.

Allie — the daughter of Ernest and Tracy Dellatorre — plans on attending John Carroll University in the fall.

Molly Cruz, Shenandoah — This Lady Zepps played a major role in the success in Sarahsville the past several seasons.

The 5-5 Cruz scored at a 14.5 points per game clip for coach Amber Ellison's outfit. She finished her career with 1,149 points and 576 rebounds. She also dished out 123 assists.

For her fine season, Cruz was named to the third-team all-OVAC squad. She was a first-team all-district and District 12 pick.

Molly — the daughter of Manuel and Nancy Cruz — plans to attend Malone College and major in nursing.

Mara Bowman, Buckeye Local — This versatile player had a fine senior campaign for the Panthers and coach Brian Best.

The 5-9 swing player averaged 11 points per game this past season and finished her career with 560 points. She was a 64-percent foul shooter.

She closed her prep career with 348 rebounds and 174 assists.

Bowman was also selected to the District 5 game and is a four-year member of the all-OVAC Academic Team.

Mara — the daughter of Tammy and Bob Burlenski and Larry and Shelly Bowman — plans to attend Bethany College and major in biology and then head to medical school for optometry.

Courtney Stewart, Shadyside — This Lady Tiger was the floor leader for Yates' crew this past winter. She scored five points a game and finished her career with 237 markers.

Stewart — a relentless defender — also had 123 rebounds and 62 career assists.

The 5-4 guard was second-team District 12.

Courtney — the daughter of Tracy and Lorrie Stewart — plans on attending Ohio University to major in business.

Stacey Dunfee, Union Local — This Jets guard had a very solid year playing for first-year coach Marci Bonar.

The 5-5 dynamo averaged 16.6 points a game for Union Local. She finished her career with 832 points and 895 rebounds. She also passed out 201 assists.

Dunfee was a honorable mention District 12 pick.

Stacey — the daughter of Jim and Sue Dunfee — plans on attending West Liberty State College to major in audiology.

Bethany Wable, Barnesville — This Shamrocks guard was a mainstay at both ends of the floor for coach Nick Saffield's club.

The 5-3 guard scored 8.9 points per game this past season and finished her career with 342 tallies. She also had 142 rebounds and 77 career assists.

She was honorable mention all-Eastern District and second-team District 12.

Bethany — the daughter of Linda Woodland — plans on attending Alderson-Broadus College and majoring in pre-pharmacy.

Maggie Brunoni, Frontier — This Cougars standout was a solid inside-outside player for the New Matamorris-based school.

The 5-10 forward averaged 8.3 points a game and finished her career with 842 tallies. She also shot 61 percent from the foul line, while collaring 655 rebounds and passing out 100 assists.

Brunoni was a honorable mention all-OVAC pick and also a second-team Eastern District selection.

Maggie — the daughter of Mike and Carolyn Flowers — plans on attending Ohio University.

SCC's Cicone to Be Honored

Crusaders scorekeeper will receive award at OVAC All-Star Game

By RICK THORP
Staff Writer

When Ernie Cicone took on the job of timer at Steubenville Catholic Central High School boys' basketball games 45 years ago, he never expected the job would turn into a labor of love.

But it has. And he's enjoyed tracking every minute of it.

"What keeps me coming back is that it makes me a part of the game," Cicone said.

"I've seen a lot of young men play basketball and a lot of coaches come and go. It's been quite an experience and I've really enjoyed the people I've met.

"Everyone is really, really friendly and it's always a treat."

The passion Cicone has shown for his job and the youth of the Ohio Valley will be rewarded April 1 when the OVAC will present him with the Thomas E. Rataiczak Scorekeeper/Timer Award at the Samuel A. Mumley All-Star Basketball Classic at Ohio University Eastern.

"I was really surprised to tell you the truth," Cicone recalled about his reaction when he got the news about the honor. "I never expected it but I really appreciate it and I think it's a great honor."

A longtime supporter of Crusader athletics, Cicone never started being the timer to win awards or earn a stipend, he simply wanted to be a part of the excitement that is high school athletics.

"I'm right there where everything is happening," he said. "I just want to make sure everything is going OK."

"I try to be precise in what I do so the kids and the coaches that are playing get a fair shake because they put a lot of time into (basketball)."

Cicone, who believes he's never missed a game, is quick to point out there are many talented timers throughout the valley who have the same devotion to their schools and athletes.

"They all do a good job," he said. "I've never seen any hanky-panky or anything like that."

Cicone got the timer's job through his relationship with Ralph Carapellotti, who was involved in the opening of St. John Arena in the early 1960s. Cicone has been the unofficial

timer of the Steubenville arena ever since.

In addition to working Crusader games, Cicone has served as the timer for almost every event the arena hosts that needs one. That includes Ohio tournament games, as well as special exhibitions featuring the Pittsburgh Steelers and Harlem Globetrotters.

One of Cicone's proudest moments as a timer came in 1993 when he worked all of the Ohio state tournament games at St. John Arena in Columbus.

Cicone has also worked an NBA exhibition contest between the Detroit Pistons and the former Baltimore Bullets.

"I've pretty much done basketball," he said. "On some occasions I help with getting the sound equipment ready for announcing, but timing is primarily what I do."

When it's not basketball season, Cicone can be found working the scoreboard for the Steubenville Stampede. He has also operated the scoreboard clock for Mingo Chiefs games at Kettlewell Stadium.

And as the years have gone by, Cicone, a former president of the Steubenville Catholic athletic boosters, has seen clock technology change.

But not always for the better. "It was relatively easy with the panel you had back then," he said with a laugh. "It's changed quite a bit. It's a little more complicated now because you have a lot more things to do with the newer control panels."

But Cicone has kept pace with the times. A retiree from Conrail, where he worked for 37 years, Cicone still remains heavily involved in athletics in the Steubenville area.

He is returning this season for another stint as a little league coach in Mingo. Two years ago, Cicone compiled a meticulously researched book celebrating the 75th anniversary of Steubenville Catholic football.

Even though he's been away from home a lot, he's always had the support of his wife, JoAnn, and his family.

"I never thought I'd be doing it this long," he said. "I feel if I start getting a little slow on the clock then it's time for me to get out."

Don't expect that moment to come any time soon.

OVAC All-Star Tickets Available
Tickets are available for the Ohio-West Virginia Samuel A. Mumley All-Star Basketball Games at the Kroger stores in Wheeling, Belaire, Moundsville and St. Clairsville. Cost of the tickets is \$5 for students and \$6 for adults. All tickets at the door will be \$7. The games are set for Sunday, April 1 at 3 p.m. (girls) and 5 p.m. (boys).

SPORTS

Cicone to be honored by OVAC

By RICK THORP
For The Times Leader

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All-Star Rosters Released



By **SETH STASKEY**
For the News-Register

As the West Virginia state tournament came to an end Saturday and the last of the Ohio Valley Athletic Conference Ohio teams checked out this week, it's time to concentrate on the best senior hoop players the area have to offer.

The annual Samuel A. Mumley OVAC All-Star Basketball Classic comes to the forefront as game director Tom Bechtel has formally announced the players and coaches for the game.

The contests will take place Sunday, April 1 at the OUE Physical Education and Health Building with the girls' game slated for a 3 p.m. tip and the boys following at 5 p.m.

The players and coaches will begin familiarizing themselves with one another Monday when the teams from both Ohio and West Virginia gather for media night.

The coaching staffs for the game have also been set. Guiding the Ohio boys is Harrison Central's Donnie Madzia. He's being joined on the Buckeyes' bench by St. Clairsville's Kim Clifford and Monroe Central's Greg Taylor.

The Ohio girls are being coached by Buckeye Trail's Brad Lineback. He's being aided by Shadyside's Tina Yates and Steubenville's Phil Casinelli.

The West Virginia boys are being coached by Wheeling Central's Mel Stephens. He's being assisted by Wheeling Park's Michael Jebbia and Paden City's Fred King.

The Mountaineer girls are being led by Linsly's Kathy Roten. She's being assisted by Brooke's Erica Hall and Weirton Madonn's Rocky Bragg.

As for the players the coaches will have at their disposal, it's yet another talented group that shined all winter long in area gyms.

The West Virginia boys are led by a pair of players from state Class A runner-up Bishop Donahue.

A.J. Gordon and Ken Barrows were both named to the Mountaineer roster after strong campaigns.

Wheeling Central - which was ousted in the sectional by the aforementioned Bishops - received three bids to the team. Selected were: Eli Popicg, Nick Moore and Brian Yahn. All three played a key role in the Maroon Knights' season which resulted in an OVAC 2-A title.

Weir High also got two bids on the roster - Matt Gryskevich and Jordan Taflan.

Wheeling Park - which qualified for the regional this season - also has two players on the team. Point guard Chie Bryan was selected. He'll be joined by guard Mike Lake.

Brooke guard Jimmy Reiter was selected. He had a strong season for the Bruins, averaging 10.7 points a night.

Tyler Consolidated's Justin Lowe was picked for the team after a season in which he averaged 12.6 points per game.

Magnolia's run to the state tournament was fueled by Jonas McEldowney who averaged 11.3 points a night for the Blue Eagles. John Marshall's Tanner Defibaugh poured in 13.5 points a night.

Also picked were

■ **The Samuel A. Mumley OVAC All-Star Basketball Classic is set for Sunday, April 1 at Ohio University Eastern.**

the all-star game - Summer Flowers and Sara Mueller.

Mt. DeChantal will be represented by Emma Shalaway and Rita Stefan.

Representing Weirton Madonna will be Katie Lesho and Tasha Coleman. Wheeling Park's lone representative is Annie Flatley. John Marshall will be represented by Lauren Magers.

Brooke's Megan Gialluco was also named along with Bishop Donahue's Samantha McGlumphy and Weir's Emily Tonacchio.

The Ohio boys roster is led by several all-Eastern District picks. Fort Frye sharpshooter Tyler Engle was selected after a season in which he established the new state record for career 3-pointers.

Kodey Haddox will represent Zanesville.

Beallsville's Zach Tolzda was named to the team after a season in which he averaged some 30 points a contest to lead the area. Buckeye Trail's Jordan Thompson was selected after averaging some 20 points a night.

Harrison Central's Ben Hodkinson was selected after leading the Huskies to an OVAC and Buckeye 8 title this winter. He averaged 22.5 points a night to lead the area.

St. Clairsville's Adam Gay also earned a spot after netting 20 points a game during the regular season.

Barnesville's Randy Hunter was selected after scoring some 16 points a night this past winter for the Shamrocks.

J.D. Quillen will represent Conotton Valley.

Steubenville's lone representative is Dan Vogel. Martins Ferry's Ryan Mirich was also selected to the squad.

East Liverpool sharpshooter Joey Wines was named to the team. A pair of PVC standouts - Seth Lumpkins (Shenandoah) and Jordan Wells (Monroe Central) were also selected.

Rounding out the Buckeye roster are Edison's Aaron Hilt and Cambridge's Justin Linscott.

The Ohio girls are led by a pair of Buckeye Trail standouts in first-team all-Ohioan Amy Kittle and Liz Watson. Molly Cruz will represent Shenandoah.

St. John's Erin Nicola, was named to the team. She averaged a double-double for a Lady Irish squad, which advanced to the district final.

St. Clairsville's Kayla Pickana earned a spot on the team despite missing much of the season due to an injury she sustained in the pre-season. Pickana came back and averaged close to 17 points a game and helped lead the Lady Red Devils to the OVAC and Buckeye 8 titles.

Zanesville's Tara Harris earned a spot on the team. She was an all-Ohio performer for the Lady Blue Devils. Beaver Local's Mallory Yajko also earned a spot. She scored better than 20 points a night for the Lady Beavers.

Steubenville Catholic's Allie Delatore was selected

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Magnolia's run to the state tournament was fueled by Jonas McEldowney who averaged 11.3 points a night for the Blue Eagles. John Marshall's Tanner Defibaugh poured in 13.5 points a night.

Also picked were Cameron's Ryan Jones and Valley's Logan Miller.

The West Virginia girls are being led by a small-school standout. Lacy Tustin was selected after leading the Mountain State OVAC small schools with a 19 points per game average.

Wheeling Central — which advanced to the state tournament — received two spots on the team. Emily Bosley and Amy Schmitt will both take part after playing key roles for the Lady Knights this winter.

Oak Glen standout Ashley Benavides was selected to the team. She scored right around 12 points a game for the Lady Bears.

Linsly got two players into

standouts — Sen Lumpkins (Shenandoah) and Jordan Wells (Monroe Central) were also selected.

Rounding out the Buckeye roster are Edison's Aaron Hill and Cambridge's Justin Lin-scott.

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Steubenville Catholic's Allie Delatore was selected after a campaign in which she scored 15.7 points a night for the Lady Crusaders. Frontier's Maggie Brunoni — a rugged inside player — was named to the team after scoring better than 12 points a night for the Lady Cougars.

Martins Ferry's Amber Skavarka also made the team despite missing the latter part of the season with an arm injury. She scored 14 a night when she was able to participate.

Also named to the team were: Catherine Sanders (Edison), Courtney Stewart (Shadyside), Stacey Dunfee (Union Local), Darcy Grandstaff (Bridgeport) and Mara Bowman (Buckeye Local).

Andy to receive Haberfield Award

By NICK BEDWAY
For the Times Leader

The winningest coach in Ohio Valley high school basketball history has been selected to receive the Earl Haberfield Boys Basketball Award at this year's Samuel A. Mumley OVAC All-Star Basketball Classic.

Sam Andy, for 30 years the consolidated Wheeling Park High School's only head coach in basketball, will be presented the award when the 2007 Mumley Classic is held Sunday, April 1, at the Ohio University Eastern facility.

Over a head coaching career that spanned 39 years, Andy's teams won 611 games, which is not only an area best but second all-time in the state of West Virginia. The West Virginia University graduate

was head coach for two years at Frazeyburg (O.) and seven years at his alma mater Wheeling High School. When the consolidated Wheeling Park High opened its doors in the fall of 1976, Andy was appointed the head coach, a position he retained until his retirement following the 2006 season.

During his highly-successful tenure in Ohio County, "Big Sam" coached three state championship teams, the first occurring in 1976 which was the final year for the Wheeling High Wildcats. Then while directing the boys' basketball fortunes of the Wheeling Park Patriots, Andy had Class AAA championship teams in 1980 and 1995.

The 1995 state final was one of the great championship games in Mountain

State hoop history as Park and Beckley Woodrow Wilson, combined for a Class AAA triple-overtime masterpiece which went to the Patriots by a 99-96 score.

He coached in more than 900 games and his clubs experienced only three losing seasons. One of those rare sub-.500 seasons occurred during his final year on the Patriots' bench. But they still rebounded to win the Section One and Region One championships to earn a trip to the state tournament in Charleston.

Under Andy's direction, Wheeling High and Wheeling Park qualified for an OVAC record 20 state tournaments. In 37 years, his teams were sectional champions no less than 32 times. From 1977 through 1990, Wheeling Park won the Section One title every season until that string was ended by John Marshall High in 1991.

Sam's 1977 squad earned the United Press International Trophy as West Virginia's No. 1 ranked team, compiling a 23-0 record before being upended by a Jeff Schneider-led Clarksburg Washington Irving club in the state quarterfinals. His 1995 state champions and 1998 club were ranked No. 1 in the regular season-ending Class AAA poll conducted by The Associated Press.

Wheeling Park was the state runner-up in 1997, losing in another epic battle to downstate rival Beckley. Four other times the Patriots were eliminated in the big school semifinals.

The Park earned just three OVAC titles through no fault of their own or Coach Andy. Over the years, his Patriots have faced many national powers and defeated their share of them. However, they came up short in the standings because for many years the bonus rating system that determined the conference champions did not reward teams who played outside the OVAC.

Sam's determination to play the very best often saw Wheeling Park matched up

with high school basketball juggernauts from states including Ohio, Pennsylvania, Florida, Louisiana, Michigan and Kentucky.

For many years, the Patriots dominated their rivals in the conference, winning 78 percent of their games against OVAC opponents.

He has served on several occasions as coach of the West Virginia boys' team in the Mumley OVAC Classic and has coached six times in the W. Va. North-South All-Star Game.

Sam twice was honored as the Ohio Valley Conference Coach of the Year (1976 and 1995). In 2004 he was selected as the Upper Ohio Valley Dapper Dan Club's Co-Man of the Year along with Monroe Central coach Jay Circosta, the all-time winningest area football mentor.

Andy is a 1958 graduate of Wheeling High, played basketball for three years at West Liberty State College and earned his degree from West Virginia University before embarking on a teaching-coaching career.

Andy spent eight years coaching at Frazeyburg/Tri-Valley before coming home to take over the Wheeling High School program. He was an assistant coach for three years at Frazeyburg, spent two years there as head coach and then accepted an assistant coaching position at the consolidated Tri-Valley High School.

Sam's No. 1 fan and his lifetime sweetheart is his wife Sandy Andy. Although the Andy's never had any children, they have been "parents of nearly young man who passed through the Wheeling High and Wheeling Park basketball program.

The OVAC Boys Basketball Award, which Andy will receive, was named in honor of the late Earl Haberfield, the first recipient of the award and one of the founders of the Sam Mumley Classic.



SAM ANDY

A closer look at the West Virginia girls all-star rosters

By **SETH STASKEY**
Times Leader Sports Editor

The Ohio Valley Athletic Conference's annual Samuel A. Mumley Basketball All-Star Game is just over a week away.

Linsly West Virginia coach Kathy Roten has assembled one of the more talented Lady Mountaineer rosters in quite sometime.

The Lady Mountaineers will be on display Sunday, April 1 at OUE's Health and Physical Education Center when they meet the Ohio squad at 1 p.m.

Roten was selected by her peers as the West Virginia head coach. She'll be assisted by Brooke's Erica Hall and Weirton Madonna's Rocky Bragg.

Here is a capsule look at the Lady Mountaineers:

LAUREN MAGERS, John Marshall - This Lady Monarch was a steady player for Coach Stanley Blankenship this past season.

The 5-ft-5 guard averaged six points a game and shot 60 percent from the foul line this past season.

She's been honored as a Teen of the Week.

Lauren - the daughter of Gary and Dianne Magers - plans on attending college and majoring in physical therapy.

MEGAN GIALLUCO, Brooke - This Lady Bruin standout enjoyed a strong senior campaign for coach Erica Hall's squad.

The 5-ft-9 forward scored six points a game and shot 70 percent from the stripe. She finished her career with 407 points, 487 boards and 138 assists.

She was a second-team all-state in 2006.

Megan - the daughter of Gregg and Donna Gialluco - plans on attending Duquesne University and majoring pharmacy.

ANNIE FLATLEY, Wheeling Park - This Lady Patriot had a strong senior campaign for outgoing head coach Dee Davis.

The 5-ft-6 guard averaged 4.5 points a game and finished with 99 career points. She also had 78 rebounds.

Annie - the daughter of Timothy and Julie Flatley - plans on attending Wheeling Jesuit University to major in International Studies.

AMY SCHMITT, Wheeling Central - This Lady Maroon Knight came up big for Coach Penn Kurtz in helping Central get back to the West Virginia state tournament.

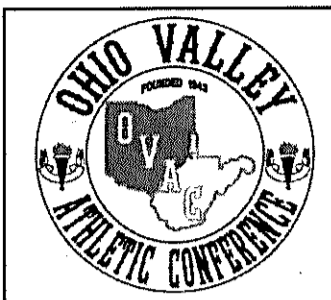
The 5-ft-11 post player averaged 10.2 points a game and finished with 443 career tallies. She also had 434 rebounds and 218 assists.

Schmitt earned all-tourney at the John Marshall Holiday Tournament and three varsity letters in hoops.

Amy - the daughter of Chuck and Sue Schmitt - plans on attending Bethany College.

EMILY BOSLEY, Wheeling Central - This Lady Knight veteran enjoyed a most productive career under Kurtz.

As a senior, Bosley poured in 10.9 points a night and shot 74 percent from the line. The 6-ft pivot finished with 558 points, 652 rebounds and a state title, having played on the 2004 team.



OVAC Girls All-Star Game

Who: Ohio vs. West Virginia.

When: April 1, 1 p.m.

Where: OUE Health and Physical Education Center.

Tickets: On sale at local Kroger's.

major in graphic design.

LACEY TUSTIN, Cameron - This Lady Dragon was sensational this past winter, averaging 18.7 points a game to lead the West Virginia small schools.

The 6-ft pivot finished her career with 1,156 points, 603 rebounds and 135 assists.

For her fine season, Tustin was a McDonald's All-American nominee and was the MVP of the Mason-Dixon Christmas Tournament this season.

Lacey - the daughter of Roger and Marjorie Tustin - plans on attending West Liberty State College to play softball.

TASHA COLEMAN, Weirton Madonna - This Lady Blue Don senior was a sparkplug for Coach Bragg's outfit, scoring 10.5 points a night.

The 5-ft-4 guard finished her career with 426 points, 188 rebounds and 112 assists.

She was honorable mention all-Mason Dixon and OVAC.

Tasha - the daughter of Melvin and Nora Coleman - plans on attending Marshall University to major in Occupational Therapy.

RITA STEFAN, Mt. DeChantal - This Hungarian-born player netted 12.5 points a game this season for the Lady Lions.

The 5-ft-9 Stefan also shot 84.1 percent from the foul line and earned MVP honors at the Ritchie County Tournament. Stefan is a member of the Hungarian National Team.

Rita - the daughter of Andra and Zsuzsanna Stefan - plans to study international relations and become a diplomat while playing college basketball.

SARA MUELLER, Linsly - This Lady Cadet was a standout for Roten's club the past several years.

The 5-ft-10 post player is also a standout in the classroom where she is an AP scholar and was named to the National Honor Society.

She also received the Tim Ashe Award given annually to the junior exhibiting strength in leadership, academics and athletics.

Sara - the daughter of Drs. Karl and Cynthia Mueller - plans on attending Slippery Rock University and major in pre-physical therapy.

EMMA SHALAWAY, Mt. DeChantal - This Lady Lion was also a standout for Coach Ron Moore's team, averaging 14.9 points a game this past season.

For her career, Shalaway netted 1,174 points and shot 79.2 percent at the line.

all-OVAC Academic Team.

Emma - the daughter of Scott and Linda Shalaway - plans on attending Cornell University to play basketball and major in philosophy.

EMILY TONACCHIO, Weir High - This Lady Red Rider had a strong final year for Coach William Smith. She averaged 9.7 points a game.

For her career, the 5-ft-5 guard finished with 403 points and had 50 rebounds and 30 assists.

Tonacchio is a two-time member of the all-OVAC Academic team.

Emily - the daughter of Domenick and Muriel Tonacchio - plans on attending West Virginia University to major in education.

KATELYN LESHO, Weirton Madonna - This Lady Blue Don came up big time and time again for Coach Bragg's team this past winter.

The 5-ft-10 post player averaged 11.2 points a game and finished her career with 601 points. She also shot 68 percent from the foul line this winter. For her career, she finished with 575 rebounds and 46 assists.

Lesho was recognized for her play by being named to the Undo's All-Tournament team, Mason-Dixon Second Team and All-Area squad.

Katelyn - the daughter of John and Tina Lesho - plans to attend college and major in biology and pre-medicine.

SUMMER FLOWERS, Linsly - This Lady Cadet came up big time and time again for Coach Kathy Roten's club this past winter.

The 5-ft-11 post player averaged 12 points a game and finished her career with 517 markers. She also had 423 rebounds and 24 assists, while shooting 70 percent from the foul line.

Flowers was a team co-captain this season and was named second-team all-OVAC as a junior.

She's also a standout in softball.

Summer - the daughter of Mike and Carolyn Flowers - plans on attending Bethany College to major in biology and play both basketball and softball.

ASHLEY BENAVIDES, Oak Glen - This Lady Bear served as the floor general for Coach John Weber's team this past winter.

The 5-ft-4 guard averaged 11.2 points and shot 58 percent from the line.

For her career, she dropped in 548 points, grabbed 181 rebounds and passed out 172 assists.

Benavides is also a standout in soccer where she's been named all-OVAC and also on the track where she was a member of Oak Glen's state championship 4x4 team.

Ashley - the daughter of Jackie Huff-Benavides - plans to attend college and pursue a degree in education.

SAMANTHA MCGLUMPHY, Bishop Donahue - This Lady Bishop standout averaged six points a game for the McMechan-based school this past winter.

The 5-ft-7 guard finished

... John Marshall Monday Tournament and three varsity letters in hoops.

Amy - the daughter of Chuck and Sue Schmitt - plans on attending Bethany College.

EMILY BOSLEY, Wheeling Central - This Lady Knight veteran enjoyed a most productive career under Kurtz.

As a senior, Bosley poured in 10.9 points a night and shot 74 percent from the line. The 6-ft pivot finished with 558 points, 652 rebounds and a state title, having played on the 2004 team.

Bosley was also named to the all-tournament team at the Undo's Tournament and also at the JM tournament.

Emily - the daughter of Gary and Mary Bosley - plans on attending college to

She also received the Tim Ashe Award given annually to the junior exhibiting strength in leadership, academics and athletics.

Sara - the daughter of Drs Karl and Cynthia Mueller - plans on attending Slippery Rock University and major in pre-physical therapy.

EMMA SHALAWAY, Mt. DeChantal - This Lady Lion was also a standout for Coach Ron Moore's team, averaging 14.9 points a game this past season.

For her career, Shalaway netted 1,174 points and shot 79.2 percent at the line.

She finished with 519 rebounds and 276 assists.

She's been honored for her playing by being named second-team all-state and first-team all-Valley in the past. She's also been named to the

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SAMANTHA MCGLUMPHY, Bishop Donahue - This Lady Bishop standout averaged six points a game for the McMechan-based school this past winter.

The 5-ft-7 guard finished her career with 350 points and 375 rebounds.

Samantha - the daughter of Lisa Yates - plans on attending Wheeling Jesuit University and majoring in psychology.

Andy to Receive Haberfield Award

By **NICK BEDWAY**
For the News-Register

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Sam Andy, for 30 years the consolidated Wheeling Park High School's only head coach in basketball, will be presented the award when the 2007 Mumley Classic is held Sunday, April 1, at the Ohio University Eastern facility.

During a head coaching career that spanned 39 years, Andy's teams won 611 games, which is not only an area best but second all-time in the state of West Virginia. The West Virginia University graduate was head coach for two years at Frazeyburg (Ohio) and seven years at his alma mater Wheeling High School. When the consolidated Wheeling Park High opened its doors in the fall of 1976, Andy was appointed the head coach, a position he retained until his retirement following the 2005-06 season.

During his highly-successful tenure in Ohio County, "Big Sam" coached three state championship teams, the first occurring in 1976 which was the final year for the Wheeling High Wildcats. Then while directing the boys' basketball fortunes of the Wheeling Park Patriots, Andy had Class AAA championship teams in 1980 and 1995.

The 1995 state final was one of the great championship games in Mountain State hoop history as Park and Beckley Woodrow Wilson, combined for a Class AAA triple-overtime masterpiece which went to the Patriots by a 99-96 score.

He coached in more than 900 games and his clubs experienced only three losing seasons. One of those rare .500 seasons occurred during his final year on the Patriots' bench. But they still rebounded to win the Section One and



Sam Andy

Region One championships to earn a trip to the state tournament in Charleston.

Under Andy's direction, Wheeling High and Wheeling Park qualified for an OVAC record 20 state tournaments. In 37 years, his teams were sectional champions no less than 32 times. From 1977 through 1990, Wheeling Park won the Section One title every season until that string was ended by John Marshall High in 1991.

Sam's 1977 squad earned the United Press International Trophy as West Virginia's No. 1 ranked team, compiling a 23-0 record before being upended by a Jeff Schneider-led Clarksburg Washington Irving club in the state quarterfinals. His 1995 state champions and 1998 club were ranked No. 1 in the regular season-ending Class AAA poll conducted by The Associated Press.

Wheeling Park was the state runner-up in 1997, losing in another epic battle to downstate rival Beckley. Four other times the Patriots were eliminated in the big school semifinals.

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came up short in the standings because for many years the bonus rating system that determined the conference champions did not reward teams who played outside the OVAC.

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Andy is a 1958 graduate of Wheeling High, played basketball for three years at West Liberty State College and earned his degree from West Virginia University before embarking on a teaching-coaching career.

Andy spent eight years coaching at Frazeyburg/Tri-Valley before coming home to take over the Wheeling High School program.

He was an assistant coach for three years at Frazeyburg, spent two years there as head coach and then accepted an assistant coaching position at the consolidated Tri-Valley High School.

Sam's No. 1 fan and his lifetime sweetheart is his wife Sandy Andy. Although the Andy's never had any children, they have been "parents" of nearly young man who passed through the Wheeling High and Wheeling Park basketball program.

EARL HABERFIELD AWARD WINNERS

Here is a list of the Past Winners of the Earl Haberfield Boys' Basketball Coaching Award:

- 1983—Earl Haberfield, Wheeling Central
- 1984—Dick Potts, River
- 1985—Clair Cribbs, Bellaire
- 1986—Henry "Herk" Lazas, Buckeye South
- 1987—Frank Baxter, Bridgeport
- 1988—Angela J. Vaccaro, Steubenville
- 1989—Eugene C. Joseph, Linsly
- 1990—Jim Fott, Warwood
- 1991—Bob Dawson, Wellsville
- 1992—Charles "Chuck" Walt, Steubenville
- 1993—Robert C. Smith, Buckeye West
- 1994—Charles "Hank" Morus, Frontier
- 1995—Ed Murphy, Wheeling High
- 1996—Russ Schwertfeger, Bethany/Brooke
- 1997—Tom Ackerman, Triadelphia
- 1998—Bob Burton, Padon City
- 1999—Dick Moore, Triadelphia
- 2000—Terry Leggett, Buckeye Trail
- 2001—Mel Coleman, Wintersville
- 2002—Everett Brinkman, Wheeling High
- 2003—Rich Santilli, Weirton Madonna
- 2004—Dick Pannett, Brooke
- 2005—Bob Sullivan, Magnolia
- 2006—Gene Ford, Cambridge
- 2007—Sam Andy, Wheeling Park



All-Star Game rosters named

By **SETH STASKEY**
Times Leader Sports Editor

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both Ohio and West Virginia gather for media night.

The coaching staffs for the game have also been set.

Guiding the Ohio boys is Harrison Central's Donnie Madzia. He's being joined on the Buckeyes' bench by St. Clairsville's Kim Clifford and Monroe's Greg Taylor.

The Ohio girls are being coached by Buckeye Trail's Brad Lineback. He's being aided by Shadyside's Tina Yates and Steubenville's Phil Casinelli.

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The Mountaineer girls are being led by Linsly's Kathy Roten. She's being assisted by Brooke's Erica Hall and Weirton Madonn's Rocky Bragg.

As for the players the coaches will have at their disposal, it's yet another talented group that shined all winter long in area gyms.

The Ohio boys roster is led by several all-Eastern District picks. Fort Frye sharpshooter Tyler Engle was selected after a season in which he established the new OHSAA record for triples in his career.

Zanesville's Kodey Haddox - fresh off a trip to the regional tournament - was selected to the team. He averaged some 15 points per game for the Blue Devils.

Beallsville's Zach Tolzda was named to the team after a senior season in which he averaged some 30 points a contest to lead the area. He was named co-player of the year. Buckeye Trail's Jordan Thompson - one of the newest members of the 1,000-point club - was selected after averaging some 20 points a night for the Warriors.

Harrison Central's Ben Hodgkinson was selected after leading the Huskies to an OVAC and Buckeye 8 title this winter. He averaged 22.5 points a night to lead the area.

St. Clairsville's Adam Gay

See, **OVAC**, Page B2

OVAC

Continued from Page B1

also earned a spot after netting 20 points a game during the regular season. He helped the Red Devils to a district final appearance where they lost to Zanesville.

Barnesville's Randy Hunter was selected after scoring some 16 points a night this past winter for the Shamrocks.

Conotton Valley's J.D. Quillen was one of the area's top players that most nobody knew about. He averaged 21 points a game for the Rockets.

Steubenville's lone representative is Dan Vogel who helped guide the Big Red to the district title game and OVAC 4-A title before it fell to Tri-Valley. Martins Ferry's Ryan Mirich - who has the ability to play inside or outside - was also selected to the squad.

East Liverpool sharpshooter Joey Wines was named to the team. A pair of PVC standouts - Seth Lumpkins (Shenandoah) and Jordan Wells (Monroe Central) were also selected to the Ohio team.

Rounding out the Buckeye roster are: Edison's Aaron Hill and Cambridge's Justin Linscott.

THE OHIO GIRLS are led by a pair of Lady Warriors. Buckeye Trail - which finished the regular season 19-1 - got two bids as first-team all-Ohiolan Amy Kittle and Liz Watson were both named to the team.

Shenandoah - which finished the season as district runnerup - got Molly Cruz on the team. She averaged close to 16 points a game for the Lady Zepps.

St. John Central's senior leader, Erin Nicola, was named to the team. She averaged a double-double for a Lady Irish squad, which advanced to the district final.

St. Clairsville's Kayla Pickana earned a spot on the team despite missing much of the season due to an injury she sustained in the preseason.

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Steubenville Catholic's Allie Delatore was selected after a campaign in which she scored 15.7 points a night for the Lady Crusaders. Frontier's Maggie Brunoni - a rugged inside player - was named to the team after scoring better than 12 points a night for the Lady Cougars.

Martins Ferry's Amber Skavarka also made the team despite missing the latter part of the season with an arm injury. She scored 14 a night when she was able to participate.

Also named to the team were: Catherine Sanders (Edison), Courtney Stewart (Shadyside), Stacey Dunfee (Union Local), Darcy Grandstaff (Bridgeport) and Mara Bowman (Buckeye Local).

THE WEST VIRGINIA boys are led by a pair of players from state runnerup Bishop Donahue.

A.J. Gordon and Ken Barrows were both named to the Mountaineer roster after strong campaigns.

Wheeling Central - which was ousted in the sectional by the aforementioned Bishops - received three bids to the team. Selected were: Eli Popiec, Nick Moore and Brian Yahm. All three played a key role in the Maroon Knights' season which resulted in an OVAC 2-A title.

Weir High also got two bids on the roster. Matt Gryskevich and Jordan Taflan will represent the Red Riders.

Wheeling Park - which qualified for the regional this season - also got two players on the team. Solid point guard Chie Bryan was selected. He'll be joined by slashing guard Mike Lake who enjoyed a strong campaign.

Brooke standout guard Jimmy Reitter was selected. He had a strong season for the Bruins, averaging 10.7 points a night.

Tyler's Justin Lowe was picked for the team after a season in which he averaged 12.6 markers.

Magnolia's run to the state tournament was fueled by OVAC pick Jonas McEldowney who averaged 11.3 points a night for the Blue Eagles. John Marshall's Tanner Defibaugh poured in 13.5 points a night and was rewarded with a spot on the Mountaineer roster.

Also picked were: Ryan Jones (Cameron) and Logan Miller (Valley).

THE WEST VIRGINIA GIRLS are being led by a small-school standout. Lacy Tustin was selected after leading the Mountain State OVAC small schools with a 19 points per game average.

Wheeling Central - which advanced to the state tournament once again this winter - received two spots on the team. Emily Bosley and Amy Schmitt will both take part after playing key roles for the Lady Knights this winter.

Oak Glen standout Ashley Benavides was selected to the team. She scored right around 12 points a game for the Lady Bears.

Linsly got two players into the all-star game. Summer Flowers was picked and she'll be joined by Sara Mueller.

Mt. DeChantal also got two players on the West Virginia roster. Emma Shalaway and Rita Stefan were picked.

Weirton Madonna also got a pair of standouts into the annual affair. They included Katie Lesho and Tasha Coleman. Wheeling Park's lone representative is Annie Flatley. John Marshall will be represented by Lauren Magers.

Brooke's Megan Gialluco was also named along with Bishop Donahue's Samantha McGlumphy and Weir's Emily Tonacchio.

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MUMLEY CLASSIC
Who: Ohio vs. West Virginia
When: April 1.
Where: OUE.
Tickets: On sale at area Kroger Stores.

STARS DAZZLE

• Ohio boys hold off Mountaineers

By RICK DeLUCA
Times Leader Sports Writer

A exciting 2006-2007 season was winding down to a close. Local seniors were playing their final prep game and even some coaches were saying good-bye.

Not without a little excitement first.

Fourteen players scored for the Ohio all-stars, three scored in double figures and all but two collected at least one rebound and the Buckeyes had leads of 12 in the second half and 11 in the first.

Then again, West Virginia had no plans of being a pushover, considering the Mountaineers had 13 players score, four in double figures and like the Ohioans, all but two pulled a missed shot off the boards.

West Virginia also wiped out that 11 point lead and nearly erased the 12-point deficit. In the end, it was the foul-shooting of Harrison Central's Ben Hodkinson and a big bucket off a rebound by Steubenville's Dan Vogel that sealed a 101-96 Ohio win in the annual Samuel L. Mumley OVAC All-Star Basketball Classic on the campus of Ohio University Eastern.

Ohio opened with an 8-0 lead, but quickly found a game opponent as the Mountaineers rallied to knot the score at 8-8. The Buckeyes were leaders by 41-39 at the intermission, before a second half that saw the winners take big leads only to half the Mountaineers rally with some great shooting from beyond the arc.

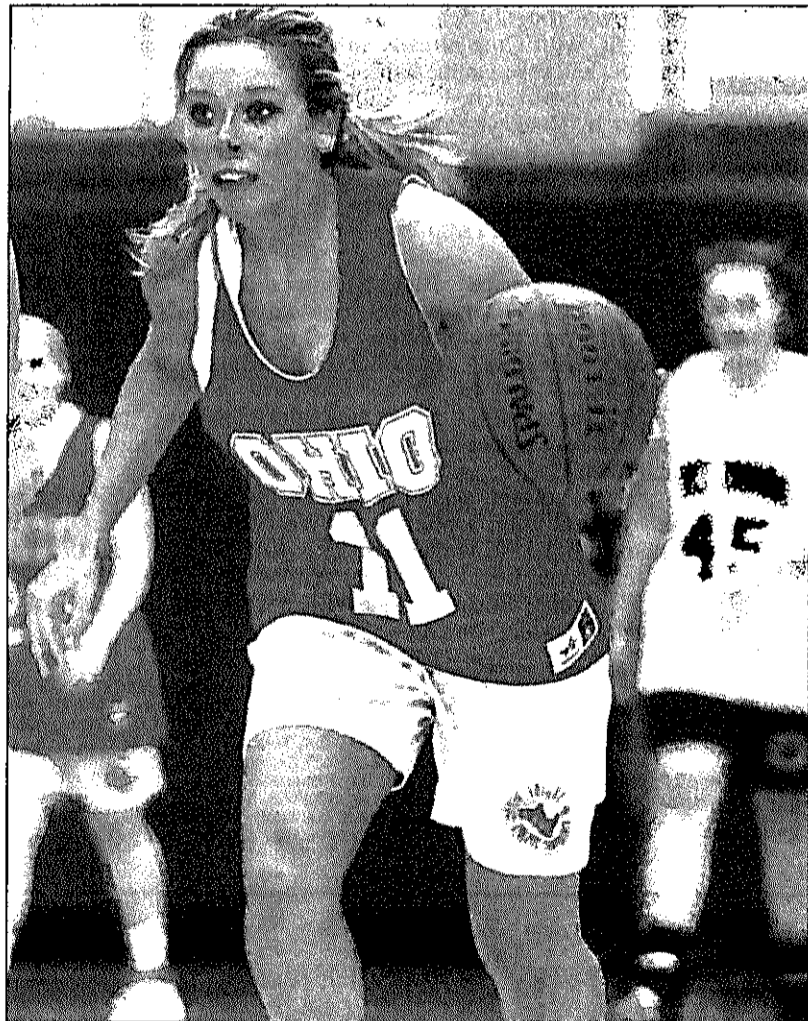
Ohio head coach Donnie Madzia's win from the bench was a just reward for the young Harrison Central coach who was coming off a pair of remarkable season's at the Cadiz-based school. Madzia just recently announced that he was stepping down from his coaching post with the Huskies.

"I'll be coaching in the North-South game on the

See, BOYS, Page B2



T-L Photo/JOEL JOSEPH
BUCKEYE TRAIL'S Jordan Thompson throws down a slam dunk during Sunday's Samuel A. Mumley All Star Classic.



T-L Photo/JOEL JOSEPH
ST. CLAIRSVILLE'S Kayla Pickana drives the ball down court Sunday afternoon at the Samuel A. Mumley All Star Basketball Classic. Pickana finished the game with 17 points.

• Pickana leads Ohio girls to victory

By JIM ELLIOTT
For the Times Leader

St. Clairsville's Kayla Pickana and Shenandoah's Molly Cruz proved to be the brightest stars on a stage full of them as they each scored 17 points to lead the Ohio squad to a 93-61 rout of West Virginia during the Samuel A. Mumley OVAC All-Star Girls' Basketball Classic on Sunday on the campus of Ohio University Eastern.

For Cruz, it was business as usual, as she was a few days removed from being the East's leading scorer in the District 12 All-Star game, but for Pickana, it was special.

Coming off a senior season that was delayed by injuries sustained in a car accident, Pickana missed out on a lot of postseason awards that surely would have come her way. With that, she used Sunday's game to help remind people she was the kind of player who'd scored more than 1,000 points by the time her junior season ended.

"It was a lot of fun," said Pickana, who was a perfect 7 of 7 from the field. "(Tying for game-high points honors) isn't what I was thinking about, but it's a big honor. We basically went out to have fun and tried to be equal."

The Ohio duo left plenty of strong impressions.

"My hat goes off to them," West Virginia assistant coach Rocky Bragg said. "To stand out among two teams full of all-stars says a lot about you as a player. The goal was to try to create an environment where the girls could show their talents and they did."

Ohio head coach Brad Linebeck had a method to his madness, sending out players in sets of five much like a hockey line change. Cruz went out with the first five. Pickana came out with the second.

"We tried to balance them up," he said. "We wanted to mix and match skills. Our kids came out ready to play."

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● Boys

Continued from Page B1

22nd," the Ohio coach pointed out after the game. "And Ben Hodkinson will be playing for me and that will be a very big honor for me."

"Coaching in the North-South game is a great honor. It is the most prestigious game in the state of Ohio and that will be my last game."

"This makes for the perfect ending," Madzia said about coaching in the OVAC All-Star game and the Ohio North-South game. "I've been in the deepest part of the valley and now I feel like I'm at the top of the mountain. It's been a heckuva ride and it's really nice to finish out a winner."

"It's not a retirement. It's a stepping away."

"You try to divide it into three equal teams and then try to play everyone as much as you can," he said referring to handling the talent on his Ohio team on Sunday. "You want to win, but you want to have fun."

"You read about these kids all year and you get a chance to coach them and get close to them for a couple days. It's a special day to me."

"It was a very good game. West Virginia didn't back down. They started to hit all those threes. They shot the ball exceptional well and that allowed them to stay in there the entire game," Madzia added.

"But Ben Hodkinson stayed in the game and made the foul shots for me like he did all year round."

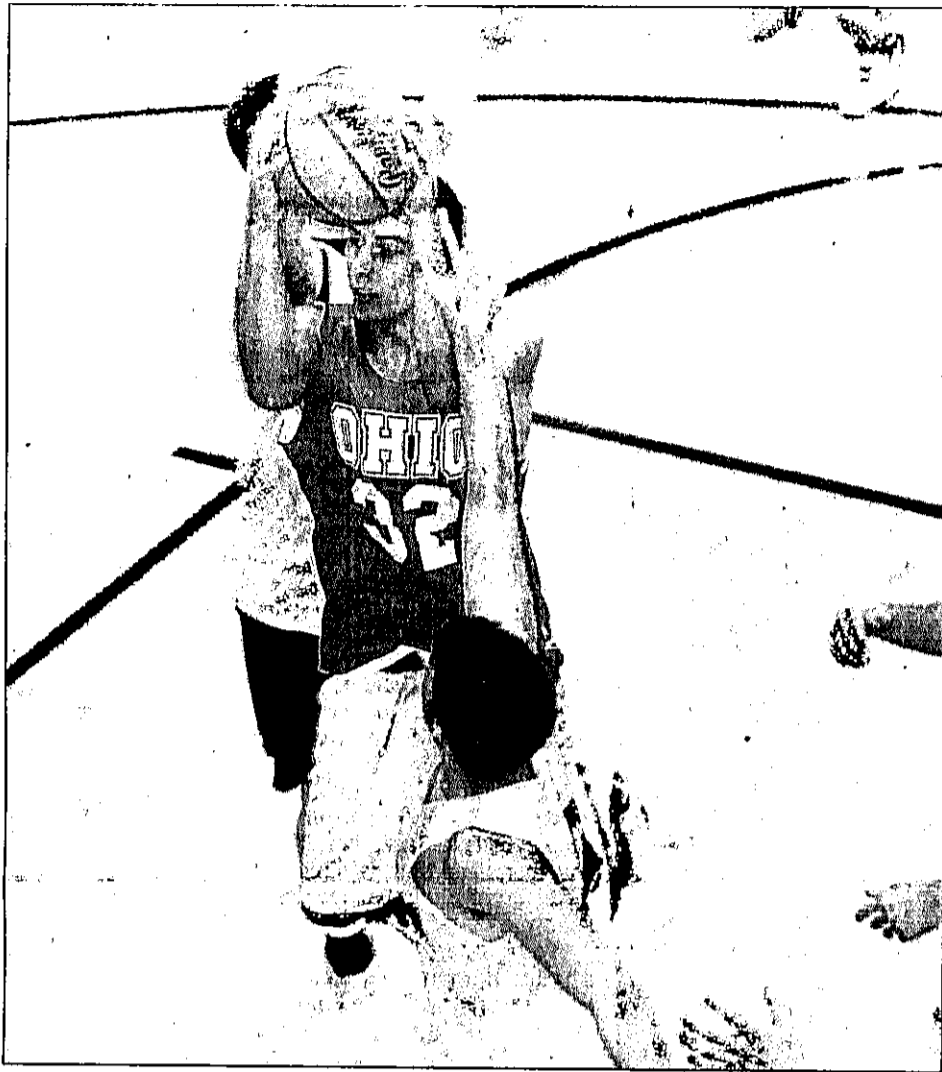
After being deadlocked at 8-all, Ohio opened another big lead with an 11-2 run that included seven points from Buckeye Trail's Jason Thompson and four from Cambridg's Justoin Linscott giving Ohio a 19-10 lead.

West Virginia bounced back with consecutive treys from Tyler's Justin Lowe and Bishop Donahue's A. J. Gordon, with two. The team's were knotted again at 25-all before Wheeling Park's Mike Lake and Wheeling Central's Nick Moore scored to give the Mountaineers a 29-25 lead.

Through the remainder of the first half, there were five more lead changes before Zanesville's Kodey Haddix nailed a three and St. Clairsville's Adam Gay added a deuce that provided the difference in the Ohioans' 41-39 halftime lead.

Both teams came out firing in the second half and the teams stayed within a couple through much of the second half until Ohio put together a 15-4 run that extended a slim 56-55 lead into a 71-59 gap, the game's biggest. Barnesville's Randy Hunter and Martins Ferry's Ryan Mirich keyed the outburst as they combined for nine points.

Scoring by Bishop Donahue's Ken Barrows, Magnolia's Jones McEldowney, Park's Chic Bryan and Moore enabled the West Virginians to narrow the margin to 73-67. But Ohio was relentless bouncing back behind Mirich, Shenandoah's Seth



T-L Photo/JOEL JOSEPH

BEALLSVILLE'S ZACH Tolzda drives to the bucket through a pair of West Virginia defenders in Sunday's Samuel A. Mumley All Star Basketball Classic. The Ohio All Stars went on to win the contest by a score of 101-96.

Lumpkins and Linscott to extend to another double digit lead at 81-70.

It wasn't until late in the contest that West Virginia started to erase another 11-point Ohio leads before Vogel and Hodkinson converted their late-game game-winners.

GAME NOTES

WHEELING CENTRAL'S Brian Yahn may be ready for the big time, at least the Slam Dunk big time. Yahn easily captured the Slam Dunk Contest at halftime with a pair of slams that brought the crowd to its feet. His first came on a Michael Jordan-like leap from the foul line and the second he went over another player seated just in front of the rim.

AWARDS WERE APLENTY on Sunday as the OVAC honored some of its finest during brief intermissions. Ernie Cicone was presented the Thomas E. Rataiczak Score/Timer Award. St. Clairsville's Mickey Blatnik was handed the Rich Saffield Girls' Coaching Award.

Former Wheeling Park coach Sam

Andy was given the Earl Haberfield Boys' Coaching Award. The Robert Dawson Basketball Official Award went to Gene Joseph and the Bob Burton Distinguished Service Award went to River's Gard Curtis.

A BRIEF MOMENT of silence was held in honor of the passing of two fine individuals who played a major part in OVAC basketball, Earl Haberfield, a former coach, and Joe Bechtel, a long-time scorekeeper at Wheeling Central.

Box score:
OHIO (101) — Engle 2, 0-0 4; Gay 1, 0-0 2; Wells 1, 0-0 2; Hodkinson 1, 5-6 7; Wines 0, 0-0 0; Haddox 3, 2-2 9; Vogel 3, 0-0 6; Thompson 3, 0-0 7; Linscott 5, 4-4 15; Hunter 3, 1-1 8; Tolzda 1, 0-2 2; Lumpkins 5, 0-1 10; Mirich 3, 4-5 10; Hill 4, 0-0 9; Quillen 3, 3-3 9. Totals, 38-76, 19-24. WEST VIRGINIA (96) — Delibaugh 5, 3-4 15; Lowe 2, 0-0 5; McEldowney 3, 3-4 10; Miller 0, 0-0 0; Reitter 0, 0-0 0; Gordon 3, 0-0 8; Popicz 3, 3-3 12; Lake 4, 0-1 9; Moore 3, 4-6 10; Jones 2, 0-1 4; Bryan 3, 2-2 8; Tallan 1, 1-2 3; Yahn 1, 1-2 4; Barrows 1, 0-0 2; Gryskevich 3, 0-0 6. Totals, 34-85, 17-23.

Three-point goals: Ohio (6) — Engle, 1; Haddox, 1; Thompson, 1; Linscott, 1; Hunter, 1; Hill, 1. West Virginia (11) — Popicz, 3; Delibaugh, 2; Gordon, 2; Lowe, 1; McEldowney, 1; Lake, 1; Yahn, 1.

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The Times Leader

SPORTS

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B

Tuesday,
March 20, 2007

Ohio gearing up for OVAC-All Star Game

St. Clairsville and Harrison Central hooked up in two of the area's best basketball games all winter.

The Red Devils won the opener at their place, but the Huskies prevailed in the second meeting, which clinched the Buckeye 8 title and gave them the upperhand to go on to wrap up the school's first OVAC hoop title.

However, the Red Devils went on to win the sectional at St. John Arena and narrowly fall to Zanesville in the district final. Harrison Central -- despite being the top seed -- was bounced in its first game of the tourney by East Liverpool.

All of that is a memory now because the team's premier players and head coaches are working toward a common goal.

Harrison Central's Donnie Madzia and St. Clairsville's Kim Clifford are two of the coaches on the Ohio side for the April 1 Sam Mumley OVAC All-Star Basketball Classic to be held at Ohio University-Eastern's Health and Physical Education building.

From the Press Box



By
Seth
Staskey
Times Leader
Sports Editor

The two coaches are joined in the Scarlett by first-team all-district players Ben Hodkinson and Adam Gay. All four of those and all of the OVAC All-Star Game participants met the media Monday evening in preparation for the annual game.

While the two meetings between the two schools were heated, all that matters is now is coming up with a way to get the Buckeyes a victory in their next game.

"Everything's going real well," Hodkinson said. "Adam (Gay) and I are really good friends. We had a couple of hard-fought games with (St. Clairsville). We got the regular-

season awards with the OVAC and Buckeye 8, but they went to the district final, so they definitely had a great season as well."

Gay scored 27 points in the loss at Harrison Central in early February.

"Ben's a real nice guy," Gay said. "We're good friends and (St. Clairsville) and Harrison is a real good rivalry. It was never about me vs. him or him

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T-L Photo/SETH STASKEY

PICTURED ARE Mel Stephens of Wheeling Central, Kathy Roten of Linsly, OVAC Tournament Director Tom Bechtel, Donnie Madzia of Harrison Central, Brad Lineback of Buckeye Trail. All of these coaches are preparing for the upcoming OVAC All-Star Basketball games.

● Ohio

Continued from Page B1

vs. me like some people thought. It was a great high school basketball game."

The two players aren't the only two who are friends.

Madzia actually played his prep ball for Clifford at Cadiz High. The two have remained tight to this day and one of the reasons Clifford offered to coach again in the OVAC Game was for the ability coach with Madzia.

"I probably would have took my name out of the running, but I left it in, so I could have a chance to coach with Donnie," Clifford admitted. "Coaching is all about relationships. I will probably remember this opportunity over some of the wins and losses I have had in my career."

Actually during the second meeting, this writer spotted the two old friends joking with one another as the game went along. Not because they didn't want to win in the worst way, but because their friendship and bond never wavered.

"Coach Clifford and I have stayed in touch ever since I graduated," Madzia said. "I have so much respect for him as a coach and as a person, and it's nice to get to coach with him."

The relationships don't stop with your coaching counterparts. They go with the players you watch grow up and develop over the course of their career, which is another big reason why both Madzia and Clifford are involved in this year's game.

Hodkinson -- who will also take part in next month's prestigious Ohio North-South Game in Columbus where he will also suit up for Madzia -- is going to cherish the opportunity to play for his coach in front of the people where he grew up.

"I think it's awesome to get a chance to play for Coach Madzia again," Hodkinson said. "In my opinion, he's best the best coach in the Ohio Valley, and I think this game is going to be really special."

The savvy Huskie point guard was the quiet leader all season for the Huskies, averaging close to 22 points a night.

Gay averaged close to 23 points a game for the Red Devils and became the school's all-time leading three-point shooter in leading the Devils to the district for the first time since the 1999 season.

"Adam and his brother (Eric) are like surrogate sons to me," Clifford joked. "Our families are really close, and I really hate to see him go, but I have a feeling he'll still be hanging around our house at times."

Gay can hardly wait for the game to get here.

"I am really excited to play for Coach Clifford one more time," Gay said. "He has taught me a lot about basketball and growing up. It's just a great honor to be a part of this game with him."

The unfortunate part for these four OVAC All-Stars is that all good things must come to an end.

OVAC NOTES

■ **THE GAME** was shifted to a Sunday this year to accommodate the kids because that's what the event is about. In the past, when the game was held on Saturday some players had to choose whether they wanted to play in the game to accept an honor they earned or play their respective spring sport whether it be track, baseball or softball. So, the game committee -- during its meeting last summer -- opted for a Sunday schedule, which alleviates the problem.

■ **THE OHIO BOYS** and West Virginia girls both had the opportunity to practice at the OUE facility Monday night.

■ **BARNESVILLE'S** Bethany Wayble has been added to the Ohio roster. She was a chosen when a Lady Buckeye player dropped out to take part in the District 12 and Ohio North-South Game.

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