



Photo by LAUREN FLORENCE

THE ST. Clairsville boys' basketball team defeated East Liverpool, 60-58, Saturday night inside the ECO Center in the Buckeye 8 championship game. Pictured with their trophy are, front row from left, are manager Jace Tuttle, Matheson King, Kaden Clifford, managers Cam Clifford and Leo Clifford, Ollie Muhly and Gage Wolfe. Back row, from left are, student manager Rowan Rine, head coach Ryan Clifford, Derrick Panepucci, Drew Gasber, Tyson Pastor, Brady Scxhafer (with trophy), Griffin Straub, Griffin Pastor, Luke Schafer, Kambel Sall and assistant coaches Eric Gay and Kevin Sacco. It's the Red Devils first Buckeye 8 boys title since 2021 and the program's ninth overall.

St. C. holds off East Liverpool for ninth Buckeye 8 championship

• Red Devils win first title since 2021

By **KIM NORTH**
Staff Writer

ST. CLAIRSVILLE — Whenever East Liverpool and St. Clairsville get together in boys' basketball action there

are a few certain guarantees. First, both teams will leave everything on the court and, secondly, they must be playing for some type of trophy.

Both came into play inside a packed ECO Center Saturday night as the Red Devils, the No. 1 seed in the South Division, hosted the Potters, the top team in the North for all the marbles.

When the back-and-forth action came to a close after 32 hard-fought minutes,

St. Clairsville (11-3) emerged with its first conference championship since 2021 with a 60-58 decision.

"People probably won't believe this, but Coach Reynolds and I texted back and forth this morning about tonight's game," St. Clairsville head coach Ryan Clifford said. "It's always for something and it's always a heck of a game. Tonight was no different. They are a really good basketball team and every

time we see them on the other bench, we know it's a big game."

The tightly contested game was deadlocked six times and saw the lead change hands on 11 occasions. The Red Devils held leads of nine twice in the first half and the teams were never more than six points apart in the final 16 minutes.

See **CHAMPIONSHIP**, Page B2

Locals victorious at bowling championships

By **MIKE HUGHES**
For The Times Leader

WOODSFIELD — While University boys and Parkersburg South girls captured the team championships Saturday at the OVAC Class 4A/5A Bowling Championships at Ten Pin Lanes in Woodsfield, a pair of locals claimed individual victories for their respective schools.

On the boys side, Wheeling Park senior Kaden Miller came out firing, setting the tone early with a 226 in game one.

He didn't let off the gas afterward, rolling a 221 and 214 in succession to finish with a 661 series, the best mark during either session Saturday.

In fact, Miller was the lone bowler to eclipse the 200 mark in all three games.

Hawks' freshman Gavin Demoss rallied in his third game, posting an individual-game high of 233, but it still left the ninth grader 37 pins shy of Miller's mark. Demoss came in short in game two, firing a still respectable 189, but given Miller's consistency, making up the pin differential proved difficult.

Parkersburg South's Brody Allman (609), Weir's Jayden Davis (595) and Harrison Central's Kobie Hennis (577) rounded out the top five.

In the team standings, University took top honors with 3,416, followed by Parkersburg South (3,308), and Wheeling Park (3,305).

The Bruins vaulted themselves into contention after the team combined for 1,106 pins during the third game, the best combined individual round mark of the afternoon.

ON THE GIRLS' side, John Marshall senior Shelby Crow battled back after trailing after the first game to roll a 224 and 178 in her final two, finishing with a 595 series to edge South's Addison Giffin (582) for individual honors.

East Liverpool's Addison Rudibaugh was third at 543, followed by Buckeye Local's Melissa Smith at 542 and Liverpool's Lani Rudibaugh at 510.

St. Clairsville sophomore Ashlan Sikora came out strong with a girls' individual best 229 in the first game, but a tough road in the final game kept Sikora out of the top five.

South utilized strong Bakers play to come back and overtake East Liverpool in the team standings. The Potters led after the first Baker round, but the Patriots closed with scores of 146, 184, and 176 while East Liverpool came up short, rolling a 128, 162, and 147.

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JOHN MARSHALL senior Shelby Crow, pictured, took top honors in the OVAC 4A/5A girls bowling competition. Crow battled back after trailing after the first game to roll a 224 and 178 in her final two, finishing with a 595 series.

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Buckeye Local, John Marshall and St. Clairsville rounded out the top five on the girls' side.
1A-3A

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Monroe Central with 3285.

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Conotton Valley won the girls championship, with Trinity Christian coming in second.



AP Photo

OHIO STATE Buckeyes head coach Ryan Day (from left) poses with Ohio State University president Ted Carter (center), Ohio Governor Mike DeWine, and Columbus Mayor Andrew Ginther during the National Championship football celebration at Ohio Stadium in Columbus, Ohio, Sunday.

Ohio State celebrates championship

COLUMBUS, Ohio (AP) — Ohio State, the first team to run the gauntlet of four playoff games on its way to the national title, celebrated with 30,000 Buckeyes fans on Sunday at Ohio Stadium.

Fans braved 30-degree temperatures to welcome home a team that beat five top-10 rivals on its way to the title, including Oregon in the Rose Bowl, Texas in the Cotton Bowl and Notre Dame in the College Football Playoff championship game.

"It took everybody to become national champions, and today we say thank you," coach Ryan Day told the crowd.

See **CELEBRATES**, Page B2

Hurts, Barkley each rush for 3 TDs to help Eagles reach Super Bowl with 55-23 win over Washington

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — Saquon Barkley dashed 60 yards for a touchdown on Philadelphia's first play and finished with 118 yards and three scores. Jalen Hurts rushed for three TDs and the Eagles soared into the Super Bowl with a 55-23 win over the Washington Commanders on Sunday.

Hurts and the Eagles are in the Super Bowl for the second time in three seasons, and this time Barkley is along for the ride. The Eagles will play either the Buffalo Bills or former Eagles coach Andy Reid's Kansas City Chiefs.



AP Photo

PHILADELPHIA EAGLES running back Saquon Barkley (26) runs for a first down as Washington Commanders defensive end Clelin Ferrell (99) defends during the second half of the NFC Championship NFL football game, Sunday, in Philadelphia.

See **EAGLES**,
Page B2

The Chiefs get more Mahomes magic and advance to 3rd straight Super Bowl, beating the Bills 32-29

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (AP) — Patrick Mahomes threw for 245 yards and a touchdown, ran through the Buffalo defense for two more scores, and relied on his defense at key moments to help the Kansas City Chiefs beat the Bills 32-29 on Sunday night and reach the Super Bowl for the third consecutive season.

Now, the AFC champions will try to do something no other NFL team has done: Win all three.

The Chiefs will get a familiar foe in the Eagles, whom they beat two years ago for the first title in this run.

Philadelphia romped to a 55-23 victory over the Washington Commanders earlier Sunday to earn a shot at the champs on Feb. 9 in New Orleans.

It's the fourth time since January 2021 that the Chiefs have ended the Bills' season in the playoffs.

And like all the rest, it came after a heavyweight fight between two of the top teams in the AFC, one that was tied 29-all after Buffalo quarterback Josh Allen found Curtis Samuel in the back of the end zone to set up a little more drama at Arrowhead Stadium.

Mahomes was simply unflappable, though.

He completed four consecutive passes on the ensuing possession, setting up Harrison Butker's go-ahead field goal with 3:33 left and putting the Bills in another do-or-die situation in Kansas City.

Allen got their drive going by running for a first down, but his next two throws were batted at the line of scrimmage and fell incomplete.

See **CHIEFS**, Page B3

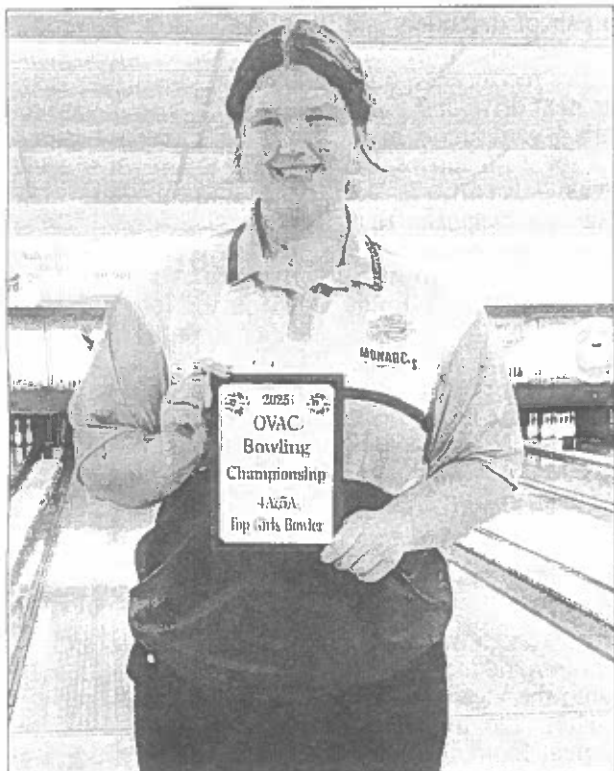


Photo by Mike Hughes

John Marshall senior Shelby Crow, pictured, took top honors in the OVAC 4A/5A girls bowling competition. Crow battled back after trailing after the first game to roll a 224 and 178 in her final two, finishing with a 595 series.

Park's Miller And JM's Crow Roll To OVAC Titles

By **MIKE HUGHES**
For The Intelligencer
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Please see ROLL, Page 10

St. C. Holds On To Win Buckeye 8 Title

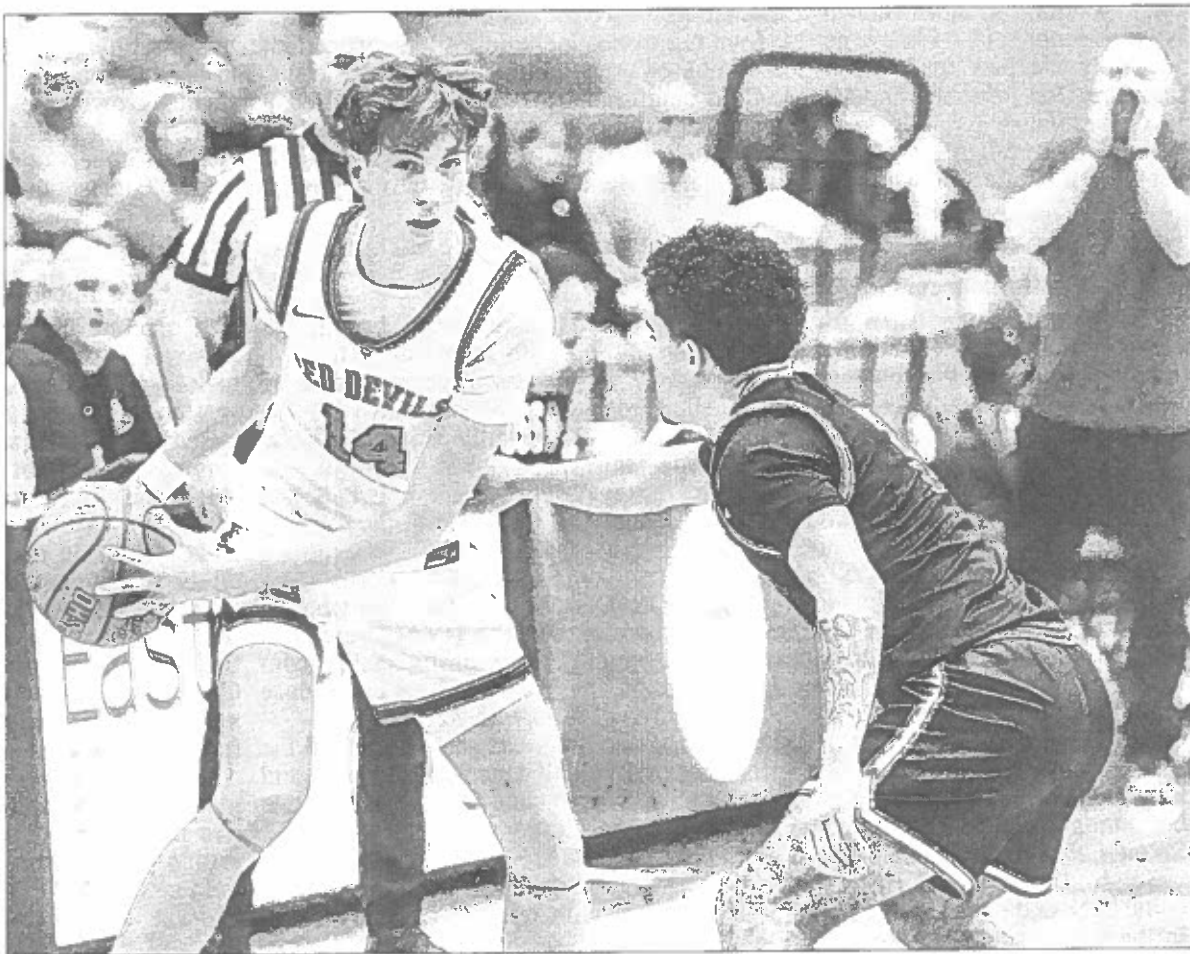


Photo by Lauren Florence

St. Clairsville's Griffin Straub (14) looks for somewhere to go with the basketball Saturday night against East Liverpool's Quintin Conrad (3) during the Buckeye 8 championship game inside the ECO Center. Straub scored 20 points, grabbed eight rebounds and blocked three shots as the Red Devils prevailed, 60-58, over the Potters. Straub was named St. Clairsville Most Valuable Player.

Straub, Pastor Lead Red Devils Past East Liverpool

By **KIM NORTH**
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The tightly contested game was deadlocked six times and saw the lead change hands on 11 occasions. The Red Devils held leads of nine twice in the first half and the teams were never more than six points apart in the final 16 minutes.

"I knew when we were up by nine that the game was far from over," Clifford said. "We knew they were going to make a comeback, and they did, but I'm most proud of how we rebounded at the end of the game."

Please see ST. C., Page 10

Seen This Before: Chiefs, Eagles To Meet In Super Bowl

Chiefs Beat Bills To Reach Doorstep Of Historic Three-Peat

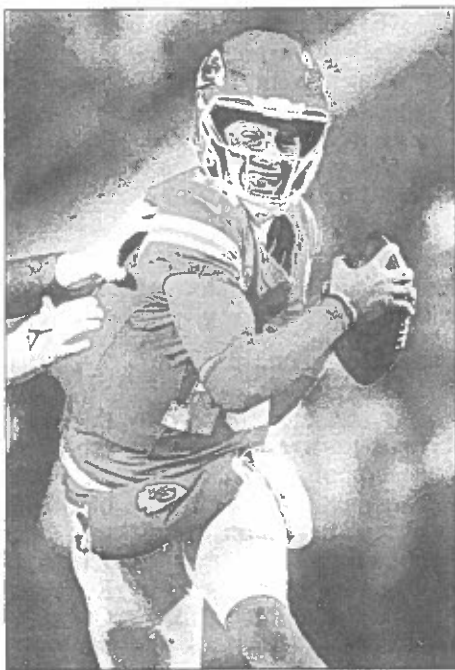
By **DAVE SKRETTA**
AP Sports Writer

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AP Photo

Kansas City Chiefs quarterback Patrick

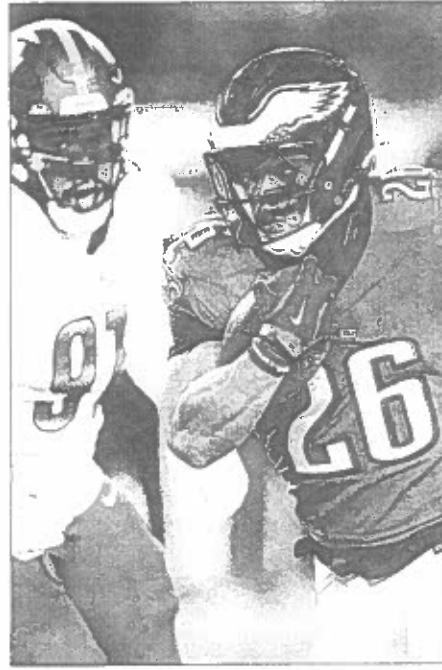
Eagles Ground Out 55-23 Victory Over The Commanders

By **DAN GELSTON**
AP Sports Writer

PHILADELPHIA — Saquon Barkley dashed 60 yards for a touchdown on Philadelphia's first play and finished with 118 yards and three scores. Jalen Hurts rushed for three TDs and the Eagles soared into the Super Bowl with a 55-23 win over the Washington Commanders on Sunday.

Hurts and the Eagles are in the Super Bowl for the second time in three seasons, and this time Barkley is along for the ride. The Eagles will play the Kansas City Chiefs, who defeated them on the NFL's biggest stage two years ago.

"I ain't gonna lie — I tried to downplay it in my head, but it's just amazing, man. It's amazing. We're here. The Super Bowl," Barkley said. "But



AP Photo

Philadelphia Eagles running back Sa-

EAGLES

(Continued from Page 9)

“And we’re going to celebrate and enjoy this and get right back to work.”

The 55 points are the most any team has scored in a conference championship game since the 1970 merger.

Hurts, wearing a brace on his left knee, also threw for 246 yards and a touchdown pass and the Eagles had a towel-waving crowd in a frenzy for the NFC championship game at Lincoln Financial Field.

“How about our quarterback? How about our quarterback! He’s a stud,” Eagles coach Nick Sirianni said. “I knew he was going to play that way. I knew it. Don’t doubt him. All he does is win.”

A.J. Brown caught six passes for 96 yards and a touchdown

and the Eagles scored a season high in points to usher the franchise into their fifth Super Bowl.

The Commanders played a role in getting the NFC title game to Philly with two straight road wins — including last week’s stunner at No. 1 seed Detroit that set the stage for the second-seeded Eagles to host.

Jayden Daniels threw for 255 yards with one touchdown, one interception and fell short in his bid to become the first rookie quarterback to lead his team to the Super Bowl. The Commanders were doomed by four turnovers, including a lost fumble by Austin Ekeler in the third quarter and the Commanders down 34-23.

“We believed that we belonged here,” Daniels said. “It

was just another game for me. That’s how I treated it.”

The Eagles won their only Super Bowl in the 2017 season and Nick Foles, the QB in that game against New England, was the honorary captain.

The Eagles cut to other stars from that game in attendance on the big screen and now — two years after Eagles lost to the Chiefs in the Super Bowl — the franchise has a chance at winning their second one.

Much as he has all season, Barkley led the way for the Eagles. After the Commanders opened the game with an 18-play drive and a field goal that quieted a raucous crowd, Barkley whipped the fans that included actor Bradley Cooper into a frenzy on the Eagles’

first offensive play from scrimmage. Only the ninth running back to rush for 2,000 yards in a season, Barkley took the pitch from Hurts and cut left, spun around a pair of defenders and took off on the touchdown run.

The Eagles recovered a fumble on the next drive and Barkley added a 4-yard run — making him 2 for 2 on carries and touchdowns — for a 14-3 lead.

Including the playoffs, Barkley extended an NFL record Sunday with his seventh rushing touchdown of 60-plus yards in a season.

Daniels, who led the Commanders to six consecutive victories, made his share of big plays that included a 36-yard touchdown pass to Terry McLaurin that pulled them to 14-12.

“I had a lot of confidence in what we would do and how we would play,” Commanders coach Dan Quinn said.

Hurts had his best game yet in a postseason where the Eagles played all three games at home. He closed the first half with a tush push 1-yard touchdown and threw a 4-yard scoring pass to Brown to send the Eagles into halftime with a 27-15 lead.

Hurts secured the Super Bowl berth with a tush push touchdown in the fourth quarter — after a humorous moment when an official said he’d award the Eagles a touchdown if Washington didn’t stop jumping offside — and his ninth career postseason rushing score gave them a 41-23 lead.

ROLL

(Continued from Page 9)

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MOUNTAINEERS

(Continued from Page 9)

WVU’s lack of shooting — 7 of 29 (24.1%) in the first half — was the telling stat.

With the game tied 2-2, the Mountaineers went on a scoring drought that lasted 6:46.

As if that wasn’t bad enough, WVU hit another scoring drought of 5:40 that basically covered the end of the half.

So, over a 20-minute half, WVU went 12 minutes and 26 seconds without scoring a single point.

That’s not good math.

“You can’t put yourselves in these types of holes,” DeVries said. “The Arizona State game was the same way. We started that game down 10-2. It’s hard to always keep crawling back.”

Meanwhile, K-State forced seven turnovers and had an 8-0 edge in points off turnovers and a 9-0 run in fast-break points in the first half.

West Virginia wasn’t just getting beat. The Mountaineers were getting beat both physically and athletically, too.

WVU’s defense, it’s hallmark for the upsets it had pulled off throughout the season, could never get any solid footing.

K-State made 16 of its first 30 attempts (53.3%) and had 18 points in the paint over the first 20 minutes.

The second half was, basically,

no more than just figuring out the final stats. WVU got no closer than 12 points, and when that happened, the Mountaineers went on another scoreless drought that lasted more than four minutes.

Outside of Small — he had 22 points and five assists — the stats didn’t look good for the Mountaineers.

WVU’s star point guard made 7 of 16 from the field, while the rest of his teammates combined for 35% shooting.

Kansas State was led by Dug McDaniell, who finished with 15 points and six assists.

WVU now returns to Morgantown with its first losing streak of the season. It won’t get any easier, as No. 7 Houston travels to the Coliseum on Wednesday.

The Cougars beat WVU 70-54 on Jan. 15.

NOTES

■ WVU has now lost four straight inside Bramlage Coliseum.

■ For the seventh time in eight Big 12 games, the Mountaineers were out-rebounded. K-State had a 40-36 edge on the boards.

■ WVU has gone nine consecutive games without reaching 80 points. The Mountaineers were held to less than 40% shooting for a third consecutive game.

CHIEFS

(Continued from Page 9)

“I’m proud of my teammates and how they responded,” said Mahomes, taking his oh-so-familiar place atop the victory stand and the Lamar Hunt Trophy raised aloft. “That was a great football team and I’m just at a loss for words.”

It’s the fourth time since January 2021 that the Chiefs have ended the Bills’ season in the playoffs. And like all the rest, it came after a heavyweight fight between two of the top teams in the AFC, one that was tied 29-all after Buffalo quarterback Josh Allen found Curtis Samuel in the back of the end zone to set up a little more drama at Arrowhead Stadium.

Mahomes was simply unflappable, though. He completed four consecutive passes on the ensuing possession, setting up Harrison Butker’s go-ahead field goal with 3:33 left and putting the Bills in another do-or-die situation in Kansas City.

Allen got their drive going by running for a first down, but his next two throws were batted at the line of scrimmage. He hit Amari Cooper for a short gain on third down, and the Bills chose to go for it — they were 4 of 5 on fourth down at that point — and the Kansas City blitz forced Allen to loft up a prayer that Dalton Kincaid was unable to corral deep down field.

The Chiefs took over, picked up a couple of first downs and began to celebrate once again.

“I think I’ve always said it: It’s not about one guy. It’s not about a couple guys. It’s about the whole entire team,” said Mahomes, joined by Andy Reid and Travis Kelce in the celebration. “When we needed the defense to get stops, they got stops. Offense, we made plays. That’s why we’re so special; it’s a team effort and it’s a team football game.”

Kareem Hunt had a touchdown run and Xavier Worthy had six catches for 85 yards and a score for Kansas City, which became the fourth franchise to reach three consecutive Super Bowls with its ninth consecutive playoff victory.

“Every one of these is so special,” Chiefs chairman Clark Hunt said. “What a game today. Travis, Patrick and their teammates always find a way to get it done. That was true this whole year. And it’s a credit to coach Reid and his amazing staff. Now we get to do something that’s never been

done before, Chiefs Kingdom.”

Allen threw for 237 yards and two scores for Buffalo. James Cook ran for 85 yards and two touchdowns of his own.

The Bills still have not been to the Super Bowl since a run of four straight during the 1990-93 seasons.

“Not the result we wanted,” Bills coach Sean McDermott said. “I told them they’ve got nothing to be ashamed of and I love them.”

The Bills and Chiefs have become well acquainted over the years, meeting seven times since Kansas City beat Buffalo under the exact same circumstances — the AFC title game at Arrowhead Stadium — to reach the Super Bowl in January 2021.

Buffalo had won all four games in the regular season. Kansas City had won the three that mattered in the postseason.

And all of that familiarity, along with the fact that McDermott once worked for Reid, was evident as the game transpired. The Bills simply refused to let Chiefs tight end Travis Kelce beat them, like he did against the Texans in the divisional round, while Kansas City was prepared for Allen’s propensity to take off and run.

It was the Chiefs who took a 21-16 lead into the locker room after a topsy-turvy first half.

Mahomes and Hunt ran for scores and Worthy had a touchdown reception as the teams traded the lead. Cook reached the end zone for Buffalo, and a spectacular touchdown catch by Mack Hollins just before halftime kept the Bills in the game.

It remained a game of inches in the second half: Cook barely reached across the goal line for a touchdown, the Chiefs stopped Allen inches shy of the marker on fourth down, Mahomes bulldozed into the end zone for a score, and the Bills answered with a 70-yard drive in which their MVP-candidate quarterback hit Samuel on fourth-and-goal to tie the game at 29-all.

Fifty-three minutes and 45 seconds had been rendered moot. Everything came down to the last 6:15 of the game.

UP NEXT

The Chiefs are headed to the Big Easy to face the Eagles in the Super Bowl for the second time in three years. In the first game, they rallied from a 24-14 halftime deficit with Butker hitting a 27-yard field goal for the 38-35 win.

ST. C.

(Continued from Page 9)

“They hurt us on the boards for most of the night, but when we needed them late, we got them.”

Knotted for the final time at 48 after Griffin Straub buried a jumper from the right corner early in the fourth quarter, St. Clairsville got the ball back and Gage Wolfe was fouled driving to the basket. The senior calmly

exchange baskets before Owen Fredritz scored on a backdoor layup to pull the Potters to within 54-52.

Straub scored on a twisting drive to the basket for a 56-52 reading and Clifford immediately called timeout. Following a missed shot by East Liverpool, Brady Schafer seemed to be trapped by a pair of Potters in the right

time off the clock with 20 seconds remaining. However, East Liverpool misfired on a three and Tyson Pastor collected the rebound before being fouled with 13.1 on the clock. The Red Devils were called for a lane violation prior to the first attempt, but the senior calmly knocked down the second attempt for a 59-55 lead as Clifford once

ied the second for a 60-58 margin.

St. Clairsville, with fouls to give before East Liverpool reached the two-shot bonus, immediately fouled on the in-bounds pass and Reynolds called his final timeout to set up a last-ditch effort.

Cohen Pease took the pass, wheeled and heaved the ball from near mid-court that was off the

The narrow victory was St. Clairsville’s second this season over East Liverpool (11-5) as it handed the Potters their first loss of the season, 68-64, in mid-December on John Jenkins Court. With the Red Devils No. 1 in the OVAC Class 4A race and the Potters No. 2, it’s not too unlikely that they will meet again this season.

Straub and Pastor each

game for all of us. It was nice to see that we were able to get off to a good start and get a good victory.”

East Liverpool, which played without 6-5 senior D’shawn Kirby who was on an NCAA Division I football recruiting trip to UMass, was led by Blake Adkins with a double-double of 13 points and 13 rebounds, of