

2024 Fall Newsletter

Remembering the State A Tournament of 1930

By Bob Swanhorst

From 1922 through 1929 the Yankton Bucks' basketball teams had their way in South Dakota basketball circles by winning six of eight state championships. Surely they could apply that little sentence in Psalm 23:5 "My cup runneth over." They had won state titles in 1922, 1923, 1924 and 1925, and took a two-year break as Salem and Huron won in 1926 and 1927 respectively. The Bucks came back strong to win it all in 1928 and 1929. Yankton was a strong favorite for a third straight championship in 1930, but it proved to be a very different year. Yankton coach W. W. Stephenson found himself facing not only an ineligible ruling for the state tournament, but also forfeiting all but one conference game during the season. The Bucks went from a 12-1 tie atop the ESD with Huron to a bottom dwelling 1-12 because of playing an ineligible player.

All across the nation interscholastic activities and their associations have used age as a fundamental guideline as a governance for their supervised competitions. The magical age was when a student turned a given age they became ineligible. That meant the burden of proof fell on the student's birth certificate. When a school is vying for a state championship it was expected that the institution will supply a list of eligible team members based on valid birth certificates. That is when human error and perhaps an inherent racial bias comes into play. South Dakota, according to SDHSAA minutes from the past, showed that the state first joined the National Federation of State High School Associations in 1905 and that a student could NOT compete after his 21st birthday. However, Dr. Dan Swartos, SDHSAA Executive Director, relayed that



Archive Photo

Yankton claimed the state basketball championship in the 1929 season behind, from left, front row, Don "Dit" Smith, Emry Smith, Ray Hamann, Kenneth Jensen and Stanley Smith. Back row, Hugo Bauer, Cliff McCarthy, Luvern Thomas and Coach W. W. Stephenson.

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SDHSAA minutes verified that in 1936 to the present a player can NOT compete after his 20th birthday.

The 1929-30 season appeared rosy for Yankton as star player Ray Hamann was back as well as a host of lettermen. One of those lettermen was Don "Dit" Smith. Dit was described by well-respected *Yankton Press and Dakotan* sportswriter Hod Nielsen as fast and smooth, an excellent passer and defensive player, unselfishly team-oriented, and perhaps the most popular member of the 1929 championship team. Don Smith was also black.

With one game remaining in the

1930 season, Yankton Principal R. E. Nichol reported an age discrepancy between school records and courthouse records pertaining to Don Smith. Were all players' records double checked? Or was Smith's birth certificate double checked prompted by an outside source? Regardless, the school record showed Smith was born on October 20, 1910, and the courthouse certificate showed his birthdate as October 20, 1908. Not only was Smith ineligible for the 1930 tournament but any games he played in during the season must be forfeited. Don Smith was 22 years old. Huron went on to win the 1930 championship 17-13. An explanation regarding the low scores in those times: there was a jump ball after every basket, no ten-second line, no shot clock, and the set shot was almost exclusively taught. Rule interpretations favored a slow game. Without a doubt many Yankton fans were disgusted and skeptical as to

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Remembering the State A Tournament of 1930

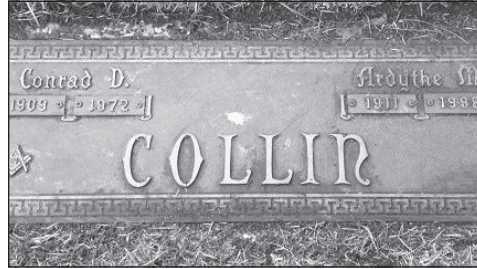
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why he was playing almost the entire season and why it wasn't discovered before the season. In Betti VanEpps-Taylor's book, *Forgotten Lives*, a sentence read, "Many people today still believe that the issue was motivated by racial jealousy and was calculated to lose Yankton its third championship."

During those years the Huron Tigers had an athlete who might well be considered one of the greatest all-around athletes ever produced in the state (basketball, football, baseball and track). Conrad "Cornie" Collin most certainly was the main factor in winning the 1930 championship over Yankton. Collin played college basketball at Creighton University. It is a little-known fact that Creighton played in the old North Central Conference from 1923 to 27. His coaching career, all at Omaha South High, was as accomplished as his playing career. He was an Omaha legend. Conrad and wife Ardythe were laid to rest in Graceland Park Cemetery in South Omaha. Collin's grave marker showed his birth was in 1909 and his death in 1972.

A further investigation showed his birth day as August 30, 1909, and his death as November 27, 1972. Collin was 20 years old in March of 1930 and since his birthdate was in August, that made him eligible for interscholastic competition. By 1972, the year of Collin's death, most fans in South Dakota had associated that reaching the age of 20 made a basketball player ineligible. But in 1930 a player or student had to be 21 before becoming ineligible. Collin was eligible. Incidentally, Yankton did not win another state championship until 1974 when the Coach Bob Winter and Chad Nelson led Bucks bested Rapid City Central.

North Dakota had a similar situation. In 1942 the North Dakota Activities Association also dealt with an ineligible player on the championship team. A small Berthold Reservation school, Elbowoods, had won its way into the championship game against Lakota. Elbowoods coach



SDBBHOF Photo
The headstone at the graves of Conrad "Cornie" and Ardythe Collin in South Omaha. Conrad was born in 1909 and died in 1972.

Leon Wall and school officials notified the NDHSAA that star player John Rabbithead turned 20 the day of the championship game. Tourney regulations allowed only eight players on

a team. Elbowoods led the entire game up to the last 1½ minute. With one player fouling out, another injured and lacking its star player, Elbowoods lost by one point. Public sentiment and newspaper accounts admired Elbowoods for graciously accepting the results. The school and community had been proud that they were state runner-up champions.

A short time later, Lakota admitted they had played an ineligible player all year. Orlin Billings was declared ineligible, and the team forfeited all games and the state crown. The 1942 championship was declared vacated and remained so on every list published. But sentiment and public perception cast Elbowoods in a positive light. All the players served in WWII. Later the town fell victim to the Garrison Dam and Lake Sakakawea. Elbowoods and other small communities were moved to a place on higher ground aptly named Newtown. By 2002 the NDHSAA accepted Elbowoods as the 1942 champion. Relatives and friends of the new state champions were invited to the tourney that year and were celebrated for their win in 1942 as the rightful state champs. Many thanks should go to the friends and relatives of the 1942 team whose tireless efforts restored a 1942 state champion as well as to the NDHSAA and its then Executive Director Sherm Sylling.

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Hall of Fame



- 2010:** Robin Anderson-Spronk, Clear Lake '80
Bruce Bad Moccasin, Pierre '67
Steve Brown, Hamlin '74
Becky Flynn-Jensen, Wakonda '92
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Gene Smith, Watertown '47
Bob Swanhorst, Cresbard '57
Rex Swett, Huron '58
John Thomas, Alexandria '65
Harold Thune, Murdo '37
Lisa Van Goor, Yankton '80
- 2011:** JoElle Byre-Benson, Washington '82
Harry Carleton, Washington '43
Cathy Coyle-Grubb, Belle Fourche '79
Terry DuPris, Cheyenne-EB '76
Gordon Fosness, Presho '53
Diane Hiemstra-Gabriel, Yankton '80
Tom Malchow, Aberdeen '61
Alan Miller, Stickney '81
Roger Nelson, Brookings '54
Rick Nissen, Miller '72
Harley Petersen, Hayti '54
Renae Sallquist-Knopf, Brookings '86
Terry Slattery, Salem St. Mary '56
Jim Sutton, Onida '53
Kim Templeton, Miller '72
Jerry Wingen, Canova '56
Randy Fletcher, Reliance '65
- 2012:** Barry Glanzer, Armour '78
Greg Hansen, Hurley '70
Randy Jencks, De Smet '71
Eric Kline, Aberdeen '91
Jesse Mendoza, Cheyenne-EB '71
Myron Moen, Sisseton '63
Dana Nielsen-Honner, Armour '88
Tom Orton, Madison '65
Taran Stapp, Newell '96
Courtney Stapp-Pool, Newell '94
Karla Stevenson, Hamlin '83
Bob Stewart, Aberdeen '49
Jason Sutherland, Watertown '93
Jack Theeler, Sisseton '63
LaMoine Torgerson, Forestburg '59
- 2013:** Scott Bosanko, Aberdeen '77
Chris Divich, Doland '52
Carol Freeman-Galbraith, Canova '79
Clyde Hagen, Webster '66
Garney Henley, Hayti '55
Kent Hyde, Onida '54
Jerry Lund, Belle Fourche '57
Amy Mickelson, Brookings '86
Mike Miller, Mitchell '98
Chad Nelson, Yankton '74
Renee Ruesink, Castlewood '84
Jim Schlekeway, Britton '64
Wayne Stone, Mitchell '41
Wendy Swanhorst, Cresbard '78
Marty Waukazoo, Rapid City '67
Chuck Welke Jr., Warner '94
- 2014:** Rich Andrzejewski, Arlington '69
Dick Authier, Woonsocket '67
G.E. Buening, Parkston '66
Bart Friedrick, Mitchell '85
DuWayne Groos, Sisseton '62
Steve Hammer, Pierpont '69
Julie Harmacek-Bridge, Avon '83
Luther Hippe, Washington '83
Kris Holwerda-Woerner, Brookings '81
Mandy Koupal, Wagner '99

2015:

Lien Marso, Harrold '51
Phil Miedema, Hitchcock '58
Colleen Moran, Stickney '79
Denver TenBroek, McIntosh '99
Mark Tetzlaff, Hamlin '81
Willie White, Pine Ridge '87
Lori Wohlleber-O'Farrell, Summit '86
Carla Allard-Watson, Bennett Co. '87
Amy Burnett, Huron '91
Lee Colburn, Brookings '69
Katie Dailey, Jefferson '81
Jim Dyer, Willow Lake '60
John Eidsness, Canton '66
Mike Freier, Tripp '67
Ray Hamann, Yankton '31
Chuck Iverson, Vermillion '69
Julie Jensen-Rozell, Langford '91
Jimmy Lovley, Elkton '20
Jim Mitchell, S.D. Deaf '54
Marv Rasmussen, Claremont '55
John Sivesind, Roosevelt '96
Jim Tays, Gettysburg '50
Vince Whipple, Rapid City '56

2016:

Amy Allard-Carmody, Jefferson '82
Elton Byre, Reliance '56
Conrad Collin, Huron '30
Roger Faber, Canistota '58
Dale Hall, Ravinia '54
Maury Haugland, Murdo '54
Fred Hecker, Washington '57
Steve Jansa, O'Gorman '64
Matt Jones, Alpena '01
Bob Marske, Andover '44
Chris Miller, Stickney '71
Scott Morgan, Mitchell '89
Josh Mueller, West Central '01
Melissa Olson-Guebert, Lincoln '83
Wayne Rasmussen, Howard '60
Holly Sivesind-Borchers, Roosevelt '93
Rudy Soderquist, Rapid City '37
Lolly Steele, Pine Ridge '84
Harley Zephier Sr., Dupree '55
Joe Ashley, Pierre '79

2017:

Ron Bertsch, St. Lawrence '61
SuAnne Big Crow, Pine Ridge '92
Jerry Buri, Hazel '60
Kriss Edwards, Watertown '77
Gary Evjen, Washington '68
Terry Jorde, Corona '57
John Lillibridge, Burke '58
Guy Mackner, Sisseton '65
Donna Muir, Cheyenne-EB '78
Ann Pancoast, Washington '81
Jim Schmidt, Dell Rapids St. Mary '41
Mike Sisk, Miller '57
Dick Baun, Mobridge '44
John Bertolero, Lead '56
Howie Bich, Yale '58
Frank Brost, Murdo '55
John Diefendorf, Irene '46
Chad Greenway, Mt. Vernon '01
Cary Hornaman, Roncalli '75
Mandy Kappel, Roosevelt '00
Lisa Kurtenbach-Glanzer, Brookings '85

2018:

Dick Baun, Mobridge '44
John Bertolero, Lead '56
Howie Bich, Yale '58
Frank Brost, Murdo '55
John Diefendorf, Irene '46
Chad Greenway, Mt. Vernon '01
Cary Hornaman, Roncalli '75
Mandy Kappel, Roosevelt '00
Lisa Kurtenbach-Glanzer, Brookings '85

- Dona Ray-Reed, Yankton '78
Jared Reiner, Tripp-Delmont '00
Harvey Schaefer, Hayti '54
Louis Tyon, Pine Ridge '63
- 2019:** Scott Beckstrand, Lincoln '89
Mike Begeman, Parker '75
Lefty Engebritson, Webster '46
Dave Fischer, Wall '61
Rollie Furois, Deadwood '40
Freddie Knife, Cheyenne '59
Megan Mahoney, Sturgis '01
Alan Nissen, Miller '68
Henry Park, Chester '45
Doug Peterson, Watertown '60
Jodi Pipes-Altenburg, Armour '88
Shannon Schlagel-Huber, Clark '01
Cregg Skarin, Hitchcock '70
Lindsay Thomas, Roosevelt '02
Sox Walseth, Pierre '44
- 2020:** Janel Birrenkott, Lemmon '82
Jerry Even, Dell Rapids St. Mary '64
Jayne Even-Gust, O'Gorman '96
Austin Hansen, Brandon Valley '98
Joe Krabbenhoft, Roosevelt '05
Sarah Mannes-Homstad, Yankton '88
Arlo Mogck, Parkston '55
Sam Perrin, Huron '27
Bob Pidde, Freeman '75
Dave Thomas, Onida '69
Loren Thornton, Harrisburg '36
Stanton Uhler, Kadoka '51
Denny Womeldorf, Wess. Springs '66
- 2021:** No inductees due to pandemic
- 2022:** Jeff Booher, Brookings '88
Sherri Brende, Baltic '97
Laurie Bruns-Kruse, Lennox '87
Bernard Duffy, Fort Pierre '47
Delbert Gillam, Argonne '53
Gordie Groos, Sisseton '66
Dawn Hull-Zahn, Sisseton '92
Lisa Kannegieter-Bahe, Willow Lake '90
Matt Martin, Spearfish '04
Clyde Olsen, Plankinton '56
Tom Rops, Lennox '92
Milt Sorenson, Wakonda '53
Wayne Thue, Hayti '60
Harley Zephier Jr., Roncalli '75
- 2023:** Chad Boekelheide, Northwestern '91
Scott Boekelheide, Northwestern '91
Brenda Davis-Comstock, Tri-Valley '00
Dan Freidel, Armour '80
Jeana Hoffman-Krome, Mitchell '04
Jenna Hoffman-Kubesh, Mitchell '04
Arnold Johnson, Brookings '53
Louie Krogman, White River '08
Eric Lappe, Harrold '92
Harry Marske, Andover '55
Derek Paulsen, Custer '99
Paige Paulsen, Custer '03
Jordan Stapp-Proefrock, Newell '04
- 2024:** Denny Busch, Huron '59
Tara Batcheller-Volesky, Mobridge '78
Jay Ellwein, Huron '94
Wayne Fix, Aberdeen '53
Roger Hammerbeck, Chamberlain '66
JoEllen Hofer-Salmen, Hitchcock '94
Dale Jacobsen, Lake Norden '54
Derrick McCauley, Aberdeen '04
Dick Padrnos, Lake Andes '51
Troy Schaefer, Pierre '83
Brian Shanks, Huron '74
Dennis Smith, Glenham '67
Kay Stormo-Freund, Watertown '78
Jill Young-Sargent, Mitchell Christian '07

Moving forward in Aftermath of Misfortune

By Greg Hansen

Matt Jones doesn't choose to waste time thinking about the past and what could have been.

His basketball career was on a trajectory to rank among the greatest ever in South Dakota. Then, with a future so promising, the game was taken from him.

Jones was raised on a farm four miles from the small town of Alpena in Jerauld County. Growing up he and older brother Jon wore out a string of nets shooting at their basket inside a farmyard shed.

By the time Jones was a 6-foot-6 junior at Alpena High School his ability was widely recognized. That's what happens when an athletically gifted all-state player averages 27 points and 13 rebounds per game.

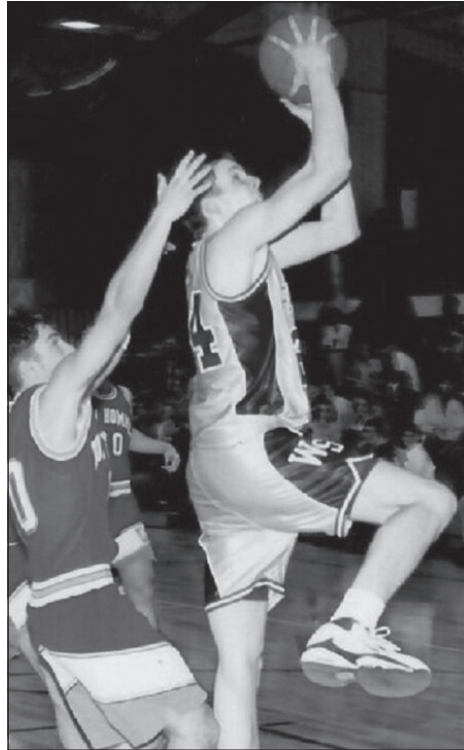
Starring for the Alpena and Wessington Springs co-op, Jones was a senior in 2001. He again produced 27 points a game, shooting 62 percent from the field, and averaged 16 rebounds.

The Wild Spartans of Coach Jim Noyes finished 18-2 after falling to Miller in District 11A. Jones' career totals included 1,537 points, 795 rebounds and 163 blocks.

Jones was strong and agile. Many college coaches took notice. Jones eventually narrowed his recruitment to South Dakota State University and the University of North Dakota. He chose the Jackrabbits.

"I didn't have any expectations about college. None. I just wanted to come in and do whatever was asked of me," says Jones.

But it didn't take long before his explosiveness near the rim confirmed that Jones would not be an ordinary freshman. In an early December win over North Dakota



Family Photo
Matt Jones was inducted into the South Dakota High School Basketball Hall of Fame in 2016. Following a stellar prep career, he then played 1 1/2 seasons at South Dakota State.

State he had five dunks among his 31 points.

Jones shot 65 percent from the field while averaging 15 points and nine rebounds. Such production earned him a spot on the all-North Central Conference team and the honor of being named NCC Freshman of the Year.

"We had a great team," says Jones. South Dakota State, coached by Scott Nagy, won the NCC and went 24-6 overall.

That spring brought with it a change to Jones' life.

"I had been busy with basketball. And school was important to me," he says. "I finished finals and had a sore throat. It got worse in a hurry."

At the end of the semester Jones went home to Alpena. "I felt pretty lousy through the whole summer," he says. When he got

back on the SDSU campus to begin his sophomore year his health took another alarming turn.

"I tried to do things to get ready for the season," says Jones. "I'd go work out and then come back to the dorm exhausted. There were times I was so tired I slept for 24 hours straight."

Consultations with a series of doctors failed to uncover a conclusive diagnosis. "Nobody could tell exactly what was going on," says Jones.

So he was forced to sit out that season amid conjecture about cause and treatment of what was ultimately determined to be a severe form of mononucleosis.

Jones came back as a junior to play in half of SDSU's games in the 2004 season. But despite some flashes of his former self, Jones at age 21 had the maturity to understand and accept the reality of his situation.

"Something wasn't right," he says. "I wasn't the player I had been. I knew that."

It is painful to let go of dreams that had been within reach.

Jones is now 42. He and wife Katie live with their three children on an acreage near Brookings. After 14 years as a chiropractor he made a career change. Jones is now a marketing consultant at the Brookings branch of Hurley & Associates, an agri-marketing company in Charleston, Mo.

He believes that dwelling on the past serves no purpose.

"Would I have liked to have been able to play four years in college and see what might have happened? Obviously, I would," says Jones. "But the way I look at it, my freshman season was a tremendous experience that not many kids ever get. I'm grateful to have had that."

Class AA all-staters lit up Winter of 1989

In our 2024 Spring Newsletter the South Dakota High School Basketball Hall of Fame asked its readers to tell us about the all-state first team they consider the most memorable. Following is a look back at the team our readers mentioned most often.

The talent pool ran excessively deep in the State Class AA Tournament of 1989 at the Rushmore Plaza Civic Center in Rapid City.

A couple weeks later, after Rapid City Stevens had secured the championship, the annual all-state team was announced. The first team consisted of Eric Piatkowski, Scott Beckstrand, Scott Morgan, Eric Kline and Tim Ahartz.

Each of the five had excelled in the state tournament and all had been rewarded with inclusion on the all-tourney team.

Stevens got 19 points from Piatkowski while edging Aberdeen Central 54-52 in the championship game. Kline scored 24 for the Golden Eagles.

Beckstrand went for 30 points to lead Sioux Falls Lincoln past Mitchell 79-61 for third place. Morgan paced the Kernels with 22.

Brookings received 17 points from Ahartz in the fifth place game but fell to Rapid City Central 68-59.

Here is a look at the five, including their statistics from the all-state story and highlights from their college careers:

Piatkowski, a 6-6 senior, averaged 26 points and 10 rebounds per game as the Raiders went 19-4. He was the state's Mr. Basketball after shooting 60 percent from the field and 89 percent on free throws. Piatkowski's career scoring total at Stevens was 1,517 points.

While at the University of Nebraska he had 1,934 points for

Championship game of State Tourney was Act II

The championship game of the State Class AA Tournament in 1989 ranks as a classic. Rapid City Stevens held off Aberdeen Central 54-52 at the Rushmore Plaza Civic Center. It was not the first compelling game between those teams that season.

Aberdeen was undefeated at 9-0 on Jan. 21 when Stevens arrived at the Aberdeen Civic Arena for a regular season showdown. Eric Piatkowski scored 31 points for the Raiders, who won 63-58. Eric Kline notched 27 points to lead Aberdeen.

The teams would meet again in March. The title game in Rapid City was even more dramatic. The Raiders were up 33-22 at halftime before Aberdeen rallied. Stevens survived when a last second shot by the Golden Eagles missed its mark.

the Cornhuskers. Piatkowski played 14 seasons in the NBA, spending time with the Clippers, Rockets, Bulls and Suns.

Beckstrand, a 6-6 senior, paced Lincoln to a 19-3 record. He was a two-time MVP in the Sioux Interstate Conference. He put up 23 points and 10 rebounds per game for the SIC champion Patriots. Beckstrand finished his Lincoln career with 1,289 points.

A four-year starter at Augustana, he was an all-North Central Conference player. Beckstrand scored 1,681 points for the Vikings and grabbed 684 rebounds.

Morgan, a 6-6 senior, and the Kernels finished 17-6 and shared the Eastern South Dakota Conference title with Aberdeen Central. He netted 27 points per game to extend his scoring total at Mitchell to 1,151 points. He also pulled down 15 rebounds a game.

Morgan was an all-South Dakota Intercollegiate Conference standout at Dakota Wesleyan. During his career with the Tigers he produced 2,810 points and 1,163 rebounds.

Kline, a 6-0 sophomore, averaged 23 points per game for

the Golden Eagles as they wound up with a 20-4 record. Two seasons later Kline would conclude his Aberdeen Central career with what was then a Class AA record 2,025 points.

After playing one season at Augustana he transferred to Northern State and became a fixture on the all-Northern Sun Conference team. Kline's career collegiate scoring total was 3,062 points.

Ahartz, a 6-6 senior, was the cornerstone of the Bobcats. He delivered 16 points per game while also pulling down an average of 10 rebounds. Brookings finished 12-12.

Ahartz played at Northern as the Wolves posted an overall record of 101-31 in his four years. During the 1993 season, as a teammate of Kline, he helped Northern go 34-2 and finish as runner-up in the NAIA National Tournament.

(Class AA of 1989 was the all-state first team that received the most support from readers who responded to our survey. The Class A team which was mentioned most often was 1972. And the Class B team that was favored was 1967.)

Augustana got an Early Look at Larry Legend

During the opening stage of the 1976-77 season a legend was in the making in Terre Haute, Ind.

Larry Bird was relatively unknown at that time. Most of America was unaware of the unique skills he possessed on a basketball court.

Among the first to experience the Bird mystique were the Augustana Vikings.

Bird was from French Lick, Ind. He had enrolled at the University of Indiana to play for Coach Bob Knight. But before he saw any action for the Hoosiers he moved on to Indiana State. There he sat out a season due to the NCAA transfer rule.

Indiana State had played only five games in Bird's first season with the Sycamores when Augustana visited the Hulman Center in Terre Haute on Dec. 9, 1976.

The Vikings, a Division II team, were coached by Mel Klein. His



Augustana Photo
Mel Klein, here coaching the Augustana Vikings, was an Aberdeen Central product and former standout player at Northern State.

rotation against Division I Indiana State included former South Dakota high school standouts Mike Begeman of Parker, Steve Krier of Yankton, Ron Stotz of Bowdle and Bob Wilber of Miller.

Bird was still getting acclimated

to the college game. But his talent was already evident. The Sycamores of the Missouri Valley Conference topped Augustana 94-69 behind Bird's 32 points, nine rebounds and six assists.

Indiana State finished the season 25-3 with Bird averaging 33 points and 13 rebounds per game. Augustana wound up 16-12. The Vikings took second place in the North Central Conference with a 10-4 record as North Dakota won the league at 13-1.

It was two years later when Bird sparked the Sycamores to a 33-0 record entering the title game of the national tournament. Michigan State and Magic Johnson prevailed 75-64 to end Indiana State's quest for an undefeated season.

Bird then was off to a superlative NBA career that saw the 6-foot-9 forward tagged with the nickname Larry Legend. He won three MVP awards and led the Boston Celtics to three championships.

Momentum kept Building for Lincoln, Clark

In our 2023 Spring Newsletter the South Dakota High School Basketball Hall of Fame asked its readers to tell us about their most memorable upsets in prep basketball. Two that were mentioned were detailed in our 2024 Spring Newsletter. Here are two others.

Patriots took on Challenge

In order to reach the State Class A Tournament in 1968, and make a title run, Sioux Falls Lincoln faced a formidable challenge. The Patriots needed to overcome highly rated opponents led by some of the best players in South Dakota.

Lincoln opened Section 3

against Sioux Falls Washington, No. 3 in the UPI poll and built around 6-foot-7 Gary Evjen. The Patriots won 51-49. No. 1 Sioux Falls O'Gorman and 6-6 Larry Jacobson awaited in the finals. Lincoln prevailed 67-56.

Floyd Farrand coached the Patriots, paced by 6-3 guard Neil Graff. Jerry Johnson and Steve Simonson were also veteran starters.

As the state tourney began Lincoln downed Vermillion and 6-9 Chuck Iverson. The Patriots then got past No. 2 Miller and 6-3 Al Nissen. In the title game Brookings and 6-4 Lee Colburn stopped Lincoln 69-57. Graff,

chosen tourney MVP, and the Patriots finished 17-8.

Graff and Jacobson went on to football stardom, Graff at Wisconsin and Jacobson at Nebraska. Outstanding basketball careers were ahead for Evjen (Northern State), Iverson (South Dakota), Nissen (Nebraska) and Colburn (South Dakota State).

Comets kept on Believing

Prospects didn't look good for Clark in 1969 when the Comets were 5-12 with two games left in the regular season.

Clark opened District 4 by slipping past Bradley by three

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S.D. girls Adapted Quickly to College Game

Women's college basketball is a must-see attraction on the South Dakota winter sports calendar. Teams stocked with talented players perform before ever-growing crowds of enthusiastic supporters.

Circumstances were quite different when the sport was first gaining a foothold in the state.

The Association for Intercollegiate Athletics for Women was the governing body during the early stages of women's basketball. The first AIAW National Tournament was in 1972 with Immaculata University (Pa.) emerging as champion.

College coaches in South Dakota, who were striving to get women's programs established during that time, faced unique challenges. They had the task of assembling teams without the benefit of a statewide high school season in which to evaluate potential players.

There were no state tournaments for girls in South Dakota until 1975. Prior to that some high schools played a scattering of games while others did not. So recruiting was difficult for college coaches who did not have the luxury of being able to assess prospects in game situations.

The first players at colleges in South Dakota often had little or no experience in organized basketball before arriving on campus. But they learned quickly.

Norma Boetel was a Huron native and one of the trailblazers of women's basketball. She was the first coach at South Dakota State and led the Jackrabbits to an unbeaten record in an inaugural season in 1967 that consisted of only six games.



Norma Boetel



Pat Dobratz

Sandy Sundstrom of Artesian paced South Dakota State in scoring in 1968. Pam Kessler of Brookings was the leader in 1969. Pat Dobratz (shown with Boetel in SDSU photos) of Sioux Falls Lincoln led Jackrabbit scoring in 1971, 1972, 1973 and 1974. Those women had not had the opportunity to play organized basketball as preps.

Despite a background of only intramurals in high school, Dobratz quickly solidified herself as the state's premier collegiate women's star. She averaged 19 points per game over her four seasons as a Jackrabbit while totaling 1,334 career points.

A postseason tournament determined the AIAW state

champion. South Dakota State dominated those events, winning 11 titles in 13 seasons between 1970 and 1982.

The University of South Dakota started its women's program a bit later than South Dakota State. The Coyotes' initial season was 1972 and produced a 4-2 record. USD won its first AIAW state championship in 1978.

It wasn't until 1982 when the first NCAA National Tournament was held. Louisiana Tech won the championship. The AIAW also staged a national tournament that year with the title going to Rutgers.

By the following season the AIAW had passed into history.

After making the NCAA transition, USD was coached by Clear Lake product Chad Lavin when it earned its way for the first time to the Division II postseason in 1983. South Dakota State's first postseason appearance came in 1988 under Coach Nancy Neiber, a native of Pierre.

The march was underway towards a successful future in Division I.

Momentum kept Building for Lincoln, Clark

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points. The Comets then beat Florence. In the finals Clark edged Conde 63-61.

Close calls continued in Region 1. The Comets of Coach Farrel Jacobsen opened with another two-point win, 50-48 over Corona.

Clark then faced Groton in the finals. Groton led by three in the fourth quarter before the Comets went on an 11-0 run. That surge helped Clark emerge 45-39 and

clinch a berth in the State Class B Tournament.

The Comets featured all-state players 6-6 Lon Nelson and 6-1 Gene Denekas. They posted a 58-55 victory over Leola before falling in the semifinals to De Smet. Clark ended the season by dropping a close 68-64 decision against Tyndall.

In its improbable journey Clark rallied from 5-12 to appear in the third place game of the state tourney at the Sioux Falls Arena.

≡ Fast Break of Things to Know ≡

HOF Overview: The South Dakota High School Basketball Hall of Fame is located at the Sanford Pentagon pictured at right. Exhibits are on display in the main Hall of Fame area on the ground floor with additional items on the second floor. We are a non-profit organization and chartered as a 501(c)(3) in 2009. To learn more about the Hall of Fame please plan to visit our website often at www.sdbbhof.com.

Back Together: Emma Ronsiek scored 1,622 points while playing for Creighton. She will finish her college career this season after transferring to Colorado State of the Mountain West Conference. With the Rams the 6-2 forward joins her sister Hannah, a 5-11 junior guard. Both starred as preps while at Sioux Falls O'Gorman.

Family Night: On the night of Jan. 8, 1966, the Groos brothers of Sisseton were both on target. DuWayne scored 20 points as Northern State won 72-67 at Huron College. At the same time, some 150 miles northeast at Sisseton, Gordie had 27 points as the Redmen beat O'Gorman 66-59. The brothers are SDBBHOF members.

For Kenny: Hurley defeated Marion 67-50 on Nov. 18, 1958. Harold Boomgarden led the Bulldogs with 23 points. The game story in the *Argus Leader* said Hurley's players had vowed to "Win this one for Kenny Lehmann." The star Bulldog junior guard was 16 when he lost his life in a car accident the previous week on Nov. 12.



Sanford Photo

SD Connection: As an Iroquois senior Jason DeJean netted 26 points per game in 1992. He then played four years at Huron College. DeJean's son, Cooper, a product of Odebolt, Iowa, was an All-America cornerback at Iowa and is an NFL rookie with Philadelphia.

Early Star: One of the first standouts in South Dakota girls basketball was the late Jane Nicolaisen. She led Winner to the inaugural Class A state tourney in 1975, was all-state, then excelled at Northern where she scored 1,375 career points for the Wolves.

Double 66s: Twice during the 1954 season, against Agar and Ipswich, 6-7 senior Kent Hyde of Onida scored 66 points. He had at least 50 points in 18 different games while setting a national record by averaging 50.4 per game. Hyde's career total was 1,982 points.

Sharp Shooter: The accuracy of Dan Duffy of Fort Pierre was noted in the Faces In The Crowd section of Sports Illustrated on April 11, 1983. That season the Dakota Wesleyan senior shot 50 percent on 3-pointers (130-259) and 89 percent on free throws (87-98).

Winning Touch: SDBBHOF member Becky Hammon finished her third year coaching Las Vegas with a 75 percent career winning rate in the regular season (87-29). The Rapid City native guided the Aces to WNBA championships in 2022 and 2023.

Game's Guardians: The importance of officials to the integrity of the game was emphasized at the 14th annual SDBBHOF Banquet in August. Recognized posthumously by the Hall of Fame were legendary referees Leon Tobin, Milo Wepking, Vern McKee and Pat Morrison.

In Solemn Remembrance and Tribute

Ed Wagner, 71, of Smithtown, N.Y., died Aug. 18, 2023. He played basketball at Canisius (N.Y.) and Dakota Wesleyan. The West Islip, N.Y., native was a physical therapist.

Gene Schlekeway, 90, of Spearfish died April 23, 2024. A stellar athlete at Britton and Northern State, he was a basketball and football standout. He coached at Amherst, Britton and Watertown, then was football coach at Black Hills State.

Bob Brewster, 77, of Browns Valley, Minn., died May 8, 2024. The all-state player helped 25-0 Sisseton to the Class A state title in 1963. He played at the University of South Dakota, served in the U.S. Army and was a businessman.

Dave Geisler, 86, of Murdo died May 17, 2024. A key player on Murdo's highly rated team in 1955, he graduated from Concordia College (Neb.). He was a businessman in Murdo.

Ardell Nelson, 80, of Savage, Minn., died May 19, 2024. He helped Clear Lake to its only "B" tourney in 1961. The South Dakota State graduate was an insurance executive.

Robert Buck, 86, of Dodgeville, Wis., died May 20, 2024. The Belle Fourche and Black Hills graduate taught at Mobridge before coaching for 36 years at Dodgeville. He was a member of the Wisconsin High School Basketball Coaches Hall of Fame.

Doyle Selland, 89, of Letcher died June 2, 2024. As a Letcher senior in 1953 he scored 50 points against Fulton. He graduated from Augustana and was a longtime farmer.

David Doman, 83, of Sioux Falls died June 9, 2024. A talented player at Harrisburg, once scoring 42 points in a game, he attended Augustana and served in the Army.

Law "Nick" Brod, 83, of Canton, Ohio, died June 10, 2024. An all-state stalwart for Huron, he helped the 22-0 Tigers earn the Class A championship in 1958. He then was a starter for SDSU on the NCAA College Division title team in 1963.

Mike Pietz, 57, of Pierre died June 11, 2024. He played at Aberdeen Central, where he was all-state, and Northern. He was a Behavior Management Specialist.

Hadley Wallace, 19, of Alexandria died June 14, 2024. A fine all-around athlete at Hanson, he competed in basketball, football and track for the Beavers. He was an upcoming sophomore running back on the Tigers football team at DWU.

Bob Pollmann, 85, of Scottsdale, Ariz., died June 25, 2024. He was a four-year player at Bridgewater and a graduate of SDSU. He taught at Brandon Valley for 17 years then spent the next 26 years employed in the agricultural wing of SDSU.

Rick Zephier, 54, of Aberdeen died June 25, 2024. While at Northwestern he was a multi-year standout player. After high school he had a long career working for the BIA.

Eddie Munsen, 86, of White Lake died July 5, 2024. After he graduated from White Lake, where he was an outstanding player, he began a lifelong career in farming and ranching.

Ty Frederick, 34, of Sioux Falls died July 7, 2024. An all-around athlete at Brookings, he served in the National Guard. He was employed at World Wide Services at Joe Foss Field.

Brandy LeBeau, 49, of Rapid City died July 8, 2024. He was a talented guard at Cheyenne-Eagle Butte. After playing for the Braves he went on to United Tribes College (N.D.).

Dean Mann, 92, of Sioux Falls died July 31, 2024. The graduate of Sioux Falls Washington and Augustana was an administrator and a successful track and cross country coach at Washington. He also was a basketball and football official.

Jim Eichel, 78, of Chapel Hill, N.C., died Aug. 6, 2024. A standout guard, he helped Parker reach its first Class B tourney in 1964. The SDSU graduate served in the Army.

Trevor Zuehlke, 21, of Britton died Aug. 8, 2024. He was an outstanding quarterback and linebacker in football and guard in basketball for Britton-Hecla. He battled valiantly after suffering a traumatic brain injury while playing football for the Braves in 2019.

Ken Kessinger, 99, of Sioux Falls died Aug. 13, 2024. A graduate of Sioux Falls Washington and Augustana, he was an Army veteran. He was chairman of the HPER Department at Augustana and coached Vikings baseball from 1958 to 1978.

Dan Sutura, 84, of Onida died Aug. 13, 2024. At Tyndall he won Class B titles in the 880 and mile. The Southern graduate coached some outstanding Sully Buttes basketball teams.

Doug Peterson, 81, of Rapid City died Aug. 24, 2024. The SDBBHOF member was all-state at Watertown and helped the Arrows to the Class A state championship in 1959. He was a three-sport standout at SDSU and had a career in banking.

Max Gonzenbach, 88, of Milbank died Sept. 3, 2024. He was a star for Milbank as it took third in the "A" tourney of 1953. A member of the SDBBHOF, he played at Michigan State and was a businessman with Valley Queen Cheese.

Bob Kennedy, 91, of Beresford died Sept. 25, 2024. A talented Beresford athlete, he played baseball at Wheaton College (Ill.). He was an Army officer and had a career in farming.

Roger Faber, 84, of Maple Grove, Minn., died Oct. 5, 2024. He led Canistota to the Class B title in 1958. The SDBBHOF member was NCC scoring champ for USD in 1962, served in the Army and had a career in the reinsurance industry.

Ken "SID" Kortemeyer, 73, of Sioux Falls died Oct. 14, 2024. The native of Chancellor filled several different positions at the University of Sioux Falls since his graduation from the school in 1974. Among his roles at USF was athletic director.

Class of 2024 expands Hall of Fame to 212

Before a supportive crowd of 362, the Class of 2024 was inducted into the South Dakota High School Basketball Hall of Fame at the Ramkota Hotel in Sioux Falls on Aug. 24.

With the addition of the 14 former greats there are now 212 members in the Hall of Fame.

The Class of 2024:

Denny Busch (Huron 1959): The late Busch was a versatile junior as Huron won the Class A championship in 1958 and went 22-0. The following season Busch and the Tigers took third in the state tournament.

Jay Ellwein, Huron (Huron 1994): Huron was Class AA champion in 1993 as Ellwein led the Tigers with 19 points per game. A year later as a senior he averaged 24 points to cap his career with 1,383 points and earn Gatorade Player of the Year recognition.

Wayne Fix (Aberdeen Central 1953): The late Fix was a dominating presence as the Golden Eagles reached the Class A state tournament in 1952 and 1953. Fix was all-tourney both years with Aberdeen winning the championship when he was a senior.

Kay (Stormo) Freund, Georgetown, Texas (Watertown 1978): Freund was a Watertown mainstay as the Arrows took second in the Class A tourney in 1975 and won the title in 1976. She averaged 17 points per game as a senior.

Roger Hammerbeck, Hamill (Chamberlain 1966): Chamberlain was the smallest school in Class A when Hammerbeck led the Cubs to the state tournament when he was a senior. He averaged 20 points per game.

Dale Jacobsen (Lake Norden 1954): The late Jacobsen was a four-year standout for Lake Norden.



Dave Eggen Photo

Pictured at the banquet was the Class of 2024. From left, front, Dick Padrnos, Tara (Batcheller) Volesky, Jill (Young) Sargent, Brian Shanks, Troy Schaefer and JoEllen (Hofer) Salmen. Back, Kathy Schultz representing her late brother Denny Busch, Dennis Smith, Derrick McCauley, Roger Hammerbeck, Jay Ellwein, Dean Jacobsen representing his late father Dale Jacobsen and Kay (Stormo) Freund. Also inducted at the banquet was the late Wayne Fix.

He averaged 19 points per game as a senior while also leading the Bluejays in rebounding. Jacobsen was noted as a tenacious defender.

Derrick McCauley, Waubay (Aberdeen Central 2004): McCauley was a premier ball-handler who produced 21 points per game for Aberdeen during his senior season. When he was a junior he averaged 25 points at Waubay.

Dick Padrnos, Boulder, Colo. (Lake Andes 1951): Lake Andes made its first trip to the Class B state tourney when Padrnos was a senior. The Eagles took third. Padrnos averaged 23 points per game.

JoEllen (Hofer) Salmen, Tulare (Hitchcock 1994): A five-year Hitchcock starter, Salmen totaled 2,564 career points. During her senior season she averaged 28 points per game for the Bluejays.

Jill (Young) Sargent, Waynesville, Ohio (Mitchell Christian 2007): Christian won the Class B title when Sargent was a junior in 2006. Sargent was Miss Basketball and Gatorade Player

of the Year as a senior when she averaged 29 points per game. Her career total was 3,317 points.

Troy Schaefer, Rapid City (Pierre 1983): Schaefer led Pierre to the Class A title in 1982. The Governors finished second when Schaefer was a senior and averaged 19 points per game. He was co-Mr. Basketball.

Brian Shanks, Elk Point (Huron 1974): Shanks led Huron to the Class A championship in 1973 when he averaged 22 points per game. The following season Shanks was a senior and scored 26 points per game.

Dennis Smith, Tulare (Glenham 1967): With a career scoring average of 25 points per game, Smith concluded his four seasons at Glenham with 2,186 points. He produced 32 points per game as a senior.

Tara (Batcheller) Volesky, Mitchell (Mobridge 1978): Volesky was a multi-position player who averaged 24 points per game as a senior. She also was medalist for Mobridge in the Class B state golf tournament in 1977.

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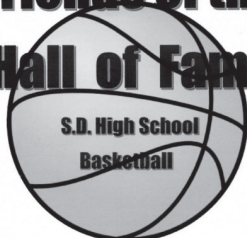
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Growing up with the Game

Like so many of South Dakota's great players, the Boekelheide twins committed to basketball at a young age. In 1988 their youth team won a title in the Aberdeen YMCA Tourney.

SDBBHOF members Chad and Scott were part of 199 wins in high school at Northwestern (93-10) and college at Northern State (106-28).

Their 1988 squad was, from left, front, Scott, father and coach Jim Boekelheide and Chad. Back, Jon Miller, Marc Ford, Joel Steward and Mike Thelen.

(Family Photo)

