

Strong Metro history at state tournaments

Written by Mark Dukes

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This is the 100-year anniversary of the first boys state basketball tournament and the Metro area has contributed significantly to its history, especially in the last 50 years.

In commemoration of the anniversary, the Iowa High School Athletic Association has compiled a historical document that can be read at its website (www.iahsaa.org). Members of the media, coaches, officials and others contributed to the historical look.

Small schools, many of which no longer exist or have merged with others, wrote many of the stories in the first 50 years. That's still somewhat true today, but areas like the Metro have been at the forefront of state tournament highlights.

-- In 1967, Jefferson played in the first overtime championship game, defeating Ames, 72-71. The J-Hawks rallied from a 15-point second-half deficit and preserved the win with a 40-second dribbling exhibition and two free throws at the end by Larry Lawrence.

-- Two of the four coaches in Iowa history to take two different teams to titles coached in the Metro area. The late Denny Theissen did it with Bettendorf (1986) and Prairie (1998), and Bob Landis accomplished the same with Mount Vernon (1973) and Linn-Mar (1983).

-- Regis is one of five schools to win three straight state titles. The Royals' triplicate was in 1982-83-84. They were three of four titles under Coach Dick Breitbach.

-- In 1984, Cedar Rapids became the first community in state history to claim two championships, as Kennedy won the 3A crown and Regis prevailed in 2A. That feat was duplicated in 2005 by tiny Orange City with MOC-Floyd Valley and Unity Christian.

-- Linn-Mar has made a record eight straight trips to the state tourney, and can make it nine this

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year.

Many players distinguished themselves at the state basketball tournament, but later went on to greatness in other sports.

Norway's Bruce Kimm scored 46 points in a 1969 tourney game. Kimm played major league baseball, breaking in as the personal catcher for Mark "The Bird" Fidrych, and managed the Chicago Cubs. Kimm's son Josh played on the 1998 Prairie state championship team.

You know Aaron Kampman as a 10-year veteran of the National Football League, most of those seasons with the Packers. But in 1997, he led the state tourney in rebounding for Aplington-Parkersburg.

Brandon Myers is best known as a standout tight end at Iowa who plays for the Oakland Raiders. But in 2004, Myers scored 36 points in a PCM Monroe win over Fort Dodge St. Edmond. Myers scored 90 points and had 42 rebounds in that state tournament.

It would be impossible to pick an all-time state tournament starting lineup, especially among players of the past 40 years. Try picking a fivesome from this group: Bob Hansen, Fred Hoiberg, Raef LaFrentz, Jess Settles, Dean Oliver, Kyle Korver, Nick Collison, Kirk Hinrich, Harrison Barnes, Doug McDermott, Jason Bohannon and Marcus Paige.

The history is rich, 100 years worth, at the boys state basketball tournament. And they'll be writing more chapters in just a few weeks.

STATE LEADERS – The Metro area could end up with Class 4A state scoring leaders in both boys and girls basketball this year.

Marcus Paige of Linn-Mar has a comfortable lead among boys, according to Quik Stats. Paige was averaging 26.2 points per game, but that was before he exploded for 46 Friday night

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against Prairie and 34 Saturday against Benet (Ill.) Academy.

Courtney Strait of Kennedy is the girls 4A leader at 21.1. She added a pair of 22-point performances over the weekend.

Taylor Olson of Jefferson is fourth on the boys chart at 20.2 and Washington's Danielle Franklin is 11th among girls at 14.5.

(Mark Dukes is former sports editor of the Cedar Rapid Gazette. He is co-host of The Gym Class radio show weekdays from 3-4 p.m. on KGYM-AM 1600 and FM-106.3.)