

It was largely an unpolished product when girls' basketball was introduced to Metro area schools in the early 1970s.

Some schools struggled to compete the first few years, but others adapted to the 6-on-6 game fairly quickly. Washington, Kennedy, Jefferson and Regis all reached state tournaments. Kennedy finished second in 1977, Washington third in 1976.

The traditional 5-player game for girls began for large schools in the 1984-85 season, then for all Iowa schools in 1993-94.

Metro schools and their players sure have come a long way over the years.

In the process of compiling all-time records, Metro Sports Report has found that the area has produced some of the finest players in Iowa history.

Two Metro products hold all-time 5-player records. Kiah Stokes of Linn-Mar has the state record with 515 career blocked shots. Jefferson's Kate Galligan has the top 3-point field goal percentage in a season with 76.7 percent (46 of 60) in 1991.

Stokes is a junior at Connecticut, which won the NCAA championship last spring and went to the Final Four in Stokes' freshman year. Galligan played four seasons at Nebraska, totaling 1,069 points in 103 games.

Kennedy's Anne O'Neil, a four-year starter from 1996 to 2000, ranks No. 3 all-time – and No. 1 in the Metro - in career scoring with 2,494 points. She registered top 5 season point totals in each of her freshman, sophomore and junior seasons. O'Neil played her freshman season at Illinois before transferring to Iowa State.

Jaime Printy, who starred at Iowa after an outstanding prep career at Linn-Mar, still holds the second-best career free throw percentage in state history. She made 88.6 percent during her high school career (319 of 360).

There have been some outstanding family stories as well, topped by the Frese sisters of Washington. Marsha, Brenda and Stacy combined to score 4,440 points in their careers. In addition, Lisa and Robin Becker both are in the state Hall of Fame.

Robin Becker is among the players whose career spanned both the 5-player and 6-player eras and whose totals are not included. She also played part of her career (1983-86) at Benton Community. Now Robin Becker-Pington, she was a three-time NAIA All-American at St. Ambrose and now is the head women's coach at Missouri.

Since the relative late start in the sport, the Metro area has produced nine state championship teams, five Miss Iowa Basketball selections and seven Hall of Famers.

While MSR records do not include those from the 6-player era, at least one player deserves special mention.

In the 1982-83 season, 6-foot-4 Lisa Becker of Jefferson averaged 58.7 points per game, a mark that is No. 9 in Iowa 6-player history. In 26 games, she scored 1,527 points and made 76.4 percent of her shots from the field (582 of 762).

Becker's high game was a 75-point effort against Prairie in her senior season.

Jefferson was denied a trip to the state tournament in 1983. The J-Hawks won 25 straight games, including two against Dubuque Senior, but the Rams prevailed in the regional final.

Becker was named Miss Iowa Basketball by the Iowa Newspaper Association and was selected to three All-America teams. She played four years at the University of Iowa and ranks No. 14 on

the all-time Hawkeye scoring list with 1,335 points and No. 12 in rebounding with 691.

MSR welcomes substantiated additions or corrections to these records. Contact Mark Dukes at maduker56@mchsi.com