

# Miller City Nips Kalida 51 – 46 For Fourth Tourney Crown

Putnam County Sentinel – February 28, 1958

Miller City High School won its first tournament championship in six years Saturday night and for the second straight year Kalida had to settle for second.

Coach Cot Marquette's brand of Wildcats from Miller City downed his brother, Ron's squad, 51-46, after a hard-fought battle before a turn away crowd at Columbus Grove.

Meanwhile at Glandorf, Ft. Jennings won a last-second thriller from dark horse Ottoville 63-62 for the consolation cup and Putnam County's third Sectional tournament berth.

The 1958 champions racked up their fourth Putnam County tournament crown for their school and their fourth basketball championship for their coach. They won three league titles under Marquette, but this is his first tournament championship.

His brother's squad had to settle for second place ever since Ron came to Kalida at the beginning of last season. They were runner-up to Ft. Jennings in the tournament last year and finished second in the league this year. Last year they finished behind Miller City and Ft. Jennings who had tied for the league championship.

RON COMMENTED after Saturday's disappointing loss, "Always a bridesmaid."

This year he could say maids of honor as the boys made a good showing for themselves playing their way through four extremely tough tournament games. Kalida had to win a pair of thrillers from the two Ottawa teams the previous week-end and, in last Friday's semi-, they squeezed out a 48-46 victory over defending champion Ft. Jennings.

Miller City, touted as one of the state's best Class A teams and seeded first in the Putnam County meet, did not have as tough a row to hoe, downing two of the bottom teams in the league in the first two rounds. However, in the semi-finals, the new champs had to overcome a nine-point halftime deficit before coming off with a 56-39 win over Ottoville.

THE WIN OVER OTTOVILLE was a costly one for Miller City as Ken Kern, a tall board man for the Wildcats, suffered a severe hand injury in the third quarter and he was unable to play in Saturday's final.

A slow start and too many fouls in the waning minutes possibly cost Kalida the championship trophy Saturday night. Miller City pulled away to a 10-point lead in the first 11 minutes before Kalida started to roll. Once the Kalida boys found the range, they made an exciting battle of it and only Miller City's sharp eye at the foul line gave them the edge in the final minutes.

Kalida caught up in the last seconds of the third quarter and surged into the lead once in the final period. However, they

fouled too often and Miller City actually won it from the line. Miller City's last 10 points were scored on fouls.

Both teams scored 15 field goals but the winners connected on 21 of 29 charity tosses while Kalida hit 16 of 26. Kalida also finished with a flourish from the line, scoring their last seven points that way.

KALIDA COULDN'T FIND the range when the game opened and didn't score a point for the first four minutes and 40 seconds. They didn't score their second field goal for another five minutes as Miller City built up a 14-4 lead. Then they seemed to catch fire and, by the halftime intermission, the overflowing crowd knew it was going to be another close one.

Kalida missed seven of eight shots at the basket in the first quarter but they actually ended up with a better shooting average than Miller City. For the game, the losers sank 15 of 33 shots for a 44.5 percent average while Miller City made the same number but took 39 shots for a 38.4 percentage.

After making only one bucket the first quarter, Kalida hit six of ten shots the second round, five of eight the third and three of seven in the final period. Meanwhile, Miller City was clipping along at an even rate, hitting four of nine the first quarter, three of nine the second, four of 14 the third and four of seven the fourth.

GARY NOON GOT the winners off on the winning path with a free throw after about one minute of the game was gone. Ken Vennekotter and Dick Bruns hit a pair of goals to give Miller City a 5-0 lead before Ron VonderEmbse broke the ice for Kalida with a bucket with 3:20 left in the first period.

It was slow and deliberate play from then on. Vennekotter and Elmer Lammers each goaled for the champs yet in the first quarter and it ended 9-2.

Noon sank another bucket for Miller City after the second stanza opened and, a little later, Duane Deken dunked a pair of free tosses for Kalida.

Dick Bruns and Noon goaled again for Miller City to give them a 14-4 lead and the stunned crowd began to wonder whether Kalida would ever get into the game.

They did not have long to wait for an answer as Bill Mead goaled with 5:40 showing on the clock and VonderEmbse followed suit in short order.

The teams traded points for the next few minutes with Lammers hitting a bucket for Miller City. VonderEmbse retaliated for Kalida. Vennekotter sank a free toss for the winners and Deken goaled for Kalida. Vennekotter came right back and hit two more free tosses.

Lammers added another foul shot to give Miller City a 20-12 advantage. Gene Nartker made a pair of free throws and Jim Laudick came off the bench for Kalida and got a quick goal to make it 20-16.

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VENNEKOTTER MADE TWO more free throws, bringing his string to five without a miss and then VonderEmbse ended the

scoring for the first half with a goal. When the buzzer sounded, Kalida had cut the Miller City lead to four, 22-18.

Vennekotter started the scoring in the second half with his sixth straight foul toss and then Kalida cut the lead to 23-21 as Mead goaled and VonderEmbse hit a free toss.

Gene Liebrecht collected a bucket for Miller City and Noon made another free toss. Laudick hit from outside for Kalida and Bruns got the bucket back for Miller City, making it 28-23.

Miller City got a break at this point as Vennekotter stole Kalida's pass-in under his own bucket and dumped it right back through the hoop for another two points but this did not deter the determined Kalida bunch.

Mead converted from the line and Deken followed with a bucket. Vennekotter was awarded a pair of free tosses, missing the first and sinking the second to make it 31-26.

BIG JIM SMIEDEBUSH dunked his first goal for Kalida and followed with a conversion from the line to cut it to 31-29. With 26 seconds remaining in the third period, Nartker got his only bucket for Kalida to tie the score at 31-31.

The clock showed one second remaining in the period when Vennekotter let fly with one from beyond the circle, which swished through to break the tie just as the buzzer sounded.

Vennekotter gave the titlist a four-point spread with another bucket just after the final period opened. Deken got the bucket back for Kalida and, with 5:27 showing on the clock, Smiedebush tied the score again with a pair of free throws.

Vennekotter hit again for Miller City and Smiedebush tied it up for the third time, hitting a goal from underneath this time.

The clock showed 3:50 left in the game when VonderEmbse gave Kalida its only lead at 39-37.

Lammers was quick to retaliate for the winners and, with 2:07 to go, Vennekotter hit again for Miller City to break the tie and put them out in front for good at 41-39.

THAT WAS the last field goal of the game. There were 17 points scored after that, all from the foul line. In the last two minutes, Miller City sank 10 of 11 charity tosses while Kalida made seven out of eight.

Liebrecht started the foul parade with a pair giving Miller City a 43-39 edge. Mead made one for Kalida and Noon sank two more for the winners making it 45-40.

Smiedebush canned a pair for the losers, Lammers hit one for the winners and Nartker hit another pair for Kalida to cut the lead to 46-44.

With 31 seconds left, Miller City wrapped it up with three free throws. Liebrecht sank a pair on a one-and-one situation and Vennekotter added the other on a technical foul when a Kalida substitute failed to report to the official scorer.

Lammers gave Miller City a 51-44 lead in the dying seconds and Nartker made good another pair for Kalida, just before the final buzzer.

There were 17 personal fouls called on Miller City while Kalida was charged with 19 personals and one technical.

Vennekotter, scoring on seven of 13 shots at the bucket and eight of nine free throws, was the game's leading scorer as he totaled 22 for the night. Kalida's VonderEmbse was next high with just half of the Miller City star's total.

## Miller City

Bruns – 3/6 1/1 7 5. Vennekotter – 7/13 8/9 22 3. Lammers – 3/8 4/8 10 2. Noon – 1/6 4/5 6 3. Liebrecht – 1/4 4/6 6 4. Burkhart – 0/2 0/0 0 0. Inkrott – 0/0 0/0 0 0.  
Totals – 15/39 21/29 51 17

## Kalida

VonderEmbse – 5/8 1/4 11 5. Mead – 2/4 2/6 6 3. Smiedebush – 2/4 5/6 9 1. Nartker – 1/3 6/6 8 2. Deken – 3/12 2/2 8 3. Laudick – 2/2 0/2 4 5. Schulte – 0/0 0/0 0 0.  
Totals – 15/33 16/26 46 19