

It's Been 21 Years, But '59 is Trojan Time!

Putnam County Sentinel – February 27, 1959

Ottawa Sts. Peter and Paul's terrific Trojans, meeting the toughest competition this county could provide, waltzed through the Putnam County tournament and wrapped up its first tourney championship since 1938 Saturday night by upending the defending champions from Miller City 65-54.

Coached by Willard Kellogg, SPPS had little trouble disposing of any of its four tourney foes and goes into Sectional tournament play Saturday night with a record of 22 victories against only two defeats.

The Trojans never trailed in the championship game although they did not play the brand of ball they displayed the previous night. On Friday in a semi-final game at Ottoville, the Ottawa squad looked like world-beaters as they walloped Kalida 65-45. In other tournament games the locals disposed of a highly regarded Ft. Jennings club 62-47 and Columbus Grove 78-46.

Miller City reached the finals for the sixth time in the last 14 years on Friday night by whipping league runner-up Continental 61-53 to prove that their victory over the Pirates during the season was no fluke and snapped Continental's nine-game winning streak.

The Wildcats went into the championship game in quest of their fourth crown since 1948, but they were no match for the Ottawa team which picked up only the second championship for the local school in the 36-year history of the county classic.

STS. PETER AND PAUL have been in the finals of county tournaments six times, but Saturday was the first time in 21 years that they have brought home the bacon. The last time was in 1948 and it was Miller City who beat them at that time for the Wildcats' first championship.

So, Saturday's game was in some measure sweet revenge for Ottawa fans who have waited a long time for a championship club.

They had little to worry about as the Trojans led all the way. They moved to a 10-point lead early in the first quarter and maintained it almost all the rest of the game.

However, Miller City could never be counted out of contention until midway in the last quarter as, for a while, the two clubs traded points six at a time.

Three times during the game, Ottawa held a 12-point lead and Miller City cut it to six with sudden outbursts. But each time the Trojans would quickly regain their wide margin to get out of trouble.

The senior-laden Ottawa sharp-shooters, hitting from well outside the tight Miller City zone defense, cashed in on 42.9 percent of their shots as they took only a few from under the bucket. Although they seemed to get into trouble several times during the game, they continued to play the same, steady brand of ball which has characterized their play all season.

JUNIOR GERRY SCHOMAEKER was easily the outstanding player on the floor, although it was a team victory for the Trojans. In addition to pumping in 26 big points for the locals, Schomaeker's ball hawking tactics brought roars of delight from the jam-packed Columbus Grove gym.

Once in the fourth quarter, when SPPS was wasting time more than anything else, Schomaeker dribbled through the entire Miller City squad. Unable to get off a shot under the basket, he went entirely around the half-court one and one-half times without giving up the ball.

Another time, with two Wildcat defenders playing him close, he faked them both flat onto the floor and went in for lay-up. He had 10 points in the fourth quarter which was the best scoring period of the game.

Miller City's Ken Kern matched Schomaeker's production in the final stanza and he finished with 21 points, well ahead of the rest of the Miller City pack.

Ottawa took the lead at the outset and Miller City was never able to catch up.

ROGER SCHUMACHER got the locals on their way when he canned a pair of free throws after the teams exchanged the ball a couple of times. Paul Lammers hit a free toss for Miller City and Schomaeker hit the first goal of the game to make it 4-1 in Ottawa's favor. Kern hit a free throw for the Wildcats and then Ottawa got six straight points.

Schumacher goaled, Kaufman and Schomaeker hit free throws and Ron Gerdeman got another bucket to make it 10-4 before Miller City scored its first bucket by Kern.

Ted Ruhe hit for Ottawa and Larry Burkhart retaliated for Miller City. Schomaeker and Schumacher hit two straight for

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the Trojans and they held a 10-point lead at 16-6. Kern sank one for the Wildcats, Schomaeker did likewise for the Trojans and Gene Liebrecht canned another for Miller City as the quarter ended 18-10.

THE WILDCATS rallied during the second quarter and cut the margin to two points in the late stages of the first half. Liebrecht opened with a free throw for Miller City, but Kaufman hit a goal for Ottawa. Kern got it back for Miller City and Ruhe hit on a three-point play for Ottawa to make it 23-13.

Then Miller City got three quick buckets as the Trojans went into a momentary lapse. Kern hit the first and Burkhart followed with two more. Schomaeker made a basket for Ottawa and the score stood at 25-19. When Lammers and Liebrecht each canned a goal to cut the lead to 25-23, Miller City fans sensed a glimmer of hope.

But it didn't last long. Ottawa called time out and then came back to hit four straight free throws, two by Schumacher and two by Schomaeker to get them back out of trouble and the first half ended 29-23.

Ottawa stretched its lead to 12 points as Miller City did not score in the first three and one-half minutes of the third quarter. Schomaeker hit two free tosses and Kaufman and Schumacher each connected from the floor to make the score read 35-23.

The teams then traded buckets for a while with Burkhart hitting for Miller City, Schomaeker for Ottawa, Burkhart again, Schomaeker again, Ken Palte for Miller City, Gary Noon a free throw for Miller City and Schumacher a bucket for Ottawa. The score stood 40-30.

ONCE MORE THE WILDCATS cut the margin to six points as Kern goaled and Lammers converted two free throws. The Wildcats got the ball back with time running out in the period and were waiting for one shot with hopes of trailing only by four going into the last period. However, Ruhe stole it and went all the way to score just before the gun sounded. Once more the Trojans were on top 42-34 at the rest period.

Schomaeker hit two quick buckets for the Trojans as the final frame got under way and they were ahead by 12 again. But it was short-lived as Burkhart came through with two more fast goals and Tom Inkrott came off the bench to another to make it 46-40.

Kaufman and Schomaeker got two buckets back for SPPS, Ruhe hit two free tosses and it was 12 points once again. Still Miller City did not give up as Kern and Palte came back with two more goals.

THEN OTTAWA MARCHED to its biggest lead of the night at 13 points when Schomaeker goaled, Kaufman hit a free throw and Ruhe got another goal to make the score stand at 57-44.

Midway in the quarter, Miller City rallied again. Kern drove in to lay one in for the Wildcats. Schomaeker hit for Ottawa and Kern added another. Palte followed suit for Miller City to cut the margin to 59-50, but that was all they could do.

Ruhe converted two free throws and the Ottawa crowd sensed the victory. Schomaeker faked off two Miller City defenders and drove in for another lay-up. It was 13 points once more.

In the late stages, Kern hit two free throws for the Wildcats and Kaufman goaled for Ottawa. Kern got another bucket just before the final gun sounded to make the final score 65-54.

Miller got off 16 more shots at the basket than Ottawa did, but the pressing Trojan defense kept them off balance and they couldn't find the range. They hit just 23 of 72 tries for a 31.9 per cent average.

Ottawa made 10 of 29 shots the first half and 14 of 27 in the second while Miller City made 10 of 28 the first half and 13 of 44 the second.

Ottawa SPPS

Ruhe – 4/12 3/5 11 2. Gerdeman – 1/7 0/1 2 3.
Schumacher – 6/11 4/4 16 2. Schomaeker – 9/18 8/8 26
1. Kaufman – 4/8 2/3 10 1. Westrick – 0/0 0/0 0 1.
Totals – 24/56 17/21 65 10

Miller City

Kern – 9/20 3/3 21 1. Noon – 0/10 1/1 1 1. Lammers –
1/4 3/4 5 3. Liebrecht – 3/10 1/2 7 2. Burkhart – 6/16
0/0 12 4. Inkrott – 1/3 0/2 2 3. Palte – 3/9 0/0 6 0.
Totals – 23/72 8/12 54 14

SPPS	18	11	13	23	65
Miller City	10	13	11	20	54