

# Flyers Knock Stoners From Unbeaten Ranks

sports

BY DAN WILLIAMS  
Sports Editor

They just don't get any better. Last Wednesday's long-awaited and anticipated match-up between Norwood-Norfolk and Potsdam was everything people hoped it would be.

It had emotion, electricity, drama, and tears. In the end, after 32 minutes of an all-out struggle between two bitter North Country rivals, the upstart and underdog Flyers held on for an exasperating 58-57 win in front of the largest crowd to ever attend a Potsdam High School basketball game.

As well-played as the game was, ironically, the ending featured missed opportunities by both exhausted squads. And, when the final horn sounded signalling the Flyers as upset winners, a wild celebration erupted at midcourt of the Sandstener Gymnasium.

"We had beaten them five times in a row coming into tonight's (Wednesday) game, so we knew they'd be ready for us. They played smart and they fought back after being behind early," said Potsdam Coach Steve Kmack. "Jim (N-N Coach Jim Myers) had his kids playing they way he played."

The loss was especially hard to swallow for Kmack and his Stoners. Earlier in the day, Potsdam had been defeated in the Norwood-Norfolk game, a game the pressure which came from being state-ranked.

## N-N Boys, Gouverneur Girls Win

Norwood-Norfolk and Gouverneur split a pair of overtime games as the winning Flyers and Wildcats maintained a share of their respective Division I basketball leads.

The Flyer boys climbed to 7-1 with a 73-70 verdict while the Wildcat girls climbed to 5-1 with a 63-60 decision.

The Flyer boys relied on a balanced offense as Scott Collins and Jeff Wellings scored 18 and 15 points pacing four players into double figures. Gouverneur's Bill

"It's great to get the recognition from the people around the state. It means we are noticed and recognized as being a pretty good team. But, also, every team we play will be extra pumped up for us," said the veteran coach.

Potsdam started off well, leading by as many as six points in the first half. Soon, however, N-N would cut into that lead, thanks mostly to the excellent play of senior swingman Scott Henry. Henry hit shots from all over the court, pulled down key rebounds, and broke the full court pressure. He finished with a game-high 21 points.

"Scott Henry was just unbelievable. It feels great to come in here and win in 'The Pit,'" said Myers.

A hoop by Matt Morgan in the first half brought N-N to a 31-29 lead at the intermission. It would be just the beginning of a furious paced second half.

Potsdam, hurt by the inability to get the ball inside to Basil Cheney, was forced to shoot from the perimeter. In the first half, the shots were falling. In the second, a defensive adjustment by the Flyers shut off the Stoners' potent outside game.

N-N, led by Henry and sophomore guard Jeff Wellings, grabbed a five point lead with time winding out in the fourth quarter. A foul by a Potsdam player to Adam Unswoth gave the Cats a 31-29 lead. Adam Unswoth earned

Porter claimed scoring honors with 24 points before fouling out in the final two minutes of regulation time along with another Wildcat starter in Correy Storrin.

Freshman Amie Jo Leonard exploded for 33 points hitting 14 of 29 field goal attempts to pace the Gouverneur girls past an N-N upset. Michelle Desmoreaux added 15 points for the Cats while Lynn Reed and Tracy Gladding combined for 26 and 12 points for the Flyers.

two free throws to cut the Flyer lead to 58-57 with 18 seconds left. Immediately, the Stoners fouled Wellings, who proceeded to miss the front end of a one-and-one.

Potsdam's Kyle Matott grabbed

the rebound and raced downcourt. Kmack pleaded for a timeout, but the crowd noise was too high for his players to hear him. Matott launched a 12-foot jumper which rimmed out with eight seconds left. Morgan

pulled in the rebound and was fouled.

He, too, missed the one-and-one, and Matott once again raced down court. His six-foot pull-up jumper hit the front of the iron, then the back, then rolled off the rim. Still, Potsdam was to get another try at the win as a Flyer traveled with the ball on the rebound.

With one second remaining Bharat Patel's desperation heave from 25 feet out was partially tipped and the Flyer celebration began.

Wellings finished with 11 points, while Potsdam was paced by Patel's 17 points. John Kmack, whose five straight jumpers brought Potsdam within striking distance, finished with 12 and Cheney added 10 markers.

**Stoners Regroup**  
An undermanned Tupper Lake quintet was just the medicine the Stoners needed to get back on the winning track after their disappointing loss to N-N.

On Saturday afternoon, Potsdam upended the Lumberjacks 81-55 behind a balanced scoresheet.

Cheney led the onslaught with 24 points. Kmack followed with a career high 20 points, and Matott came back with 15.

Don Fletcher led all Lumberjacks with 18 points. Matt Denis tallied 11.

"The Flyers first time out about 20 minutes ago, we were happy with our offense, hopefully, our shooting is starting to come around," said Coach Kmack.

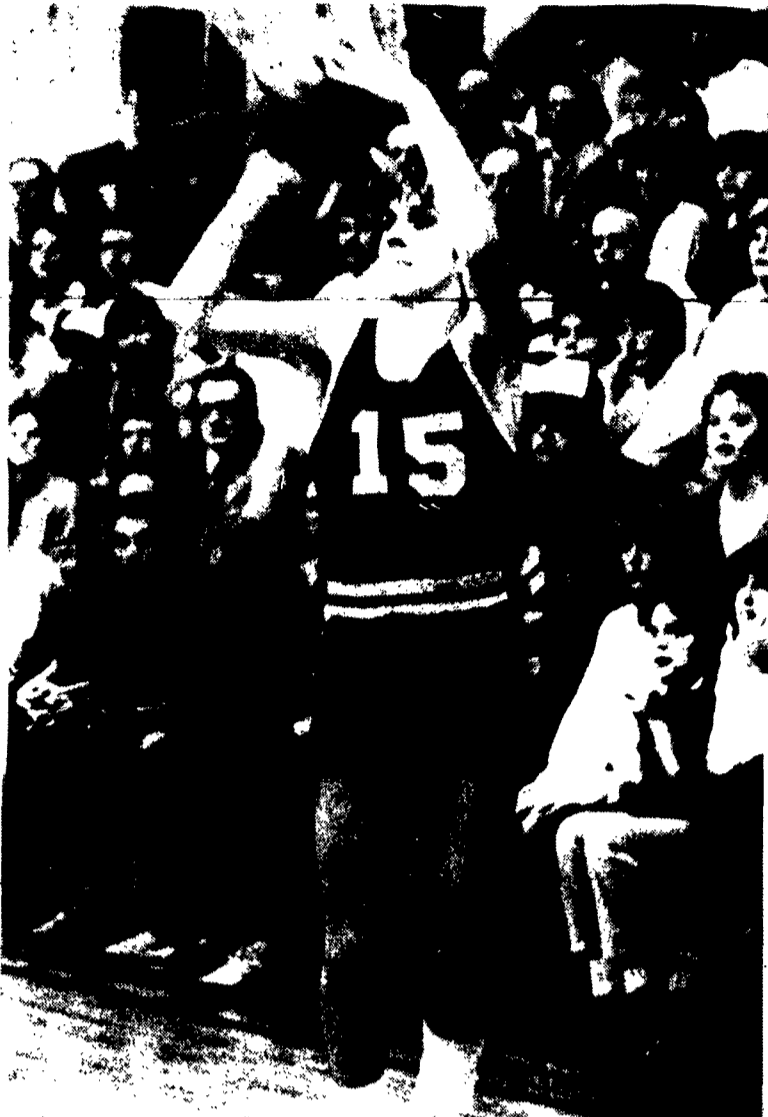
Potsdam hosts OFA Thursday night in Sandstener Gym.

**Colts Split**  
Senior forward Brian Chamberlain scored 22 points, handed out nine assists, and had six steals to pace Colton-Pierrepoint past Chateaugay 52-43 Saturday.

Tim Doyle added nine points and 10 rebounds for the 4-3 Colts. Kevin Burke led the Bulldogs with 18 markers.

Chris Richards pumped in a game-high 17 points to lead Parishville-Hopkinton to an easy 64-41 win over the Colts last Wednesday.

Doyle and Chamberlain each tallied 11 points for the Colts.



SOPHOMORE STAR — N-N sophomore Jeff Wellings is quickly establishing himself as one of the better players in the NAC. He scored 11 points last Wednesday against Potsdam. (Dan Williams photo)



OUTTA MY WAY — Potsdam senior center Basil Cheney heads for an easy layup against the Flyers. (Dan Williams photo)

## The Winning Edge

BY DAN WILLIAMS  
Sports Editor

This week's Courier-Freeman Athlete of the Week is Potsdam High School junior John Kmack, the starting point guard on the Stoners' boys basketball team.

Kmack played one of his best games last Wednesday in the heart-breaking 58-57 loss to rival Norwood-Norfolk. Basically, the Stoners were that close because of the play of Kmack, the smallest player on the court.

He hit five crucial jump shots in the fourth quarter to keep Potsdam close and just played a flawless floor game. Kmack is the key to Potsdam's success on the hardwood. When he's out of the game, the offense sputters.

And he certainly didn't sputter Saturday afternoon in Tupper Lake when he pumped in a career high 20 points during the Stoners' easy romp over the Lumberjacks. With his increased scoring output, combined with his valuable ball-handling and directing, Kmack is one of the better guards in the area.

**Other Nominations**

Another top guard, and perhaps the North Country's best player, is N-N's Scott Henry, who was phenomenal against Potsdam.

The senior swingman poured in 21 points and gathered up many rebounds and loose balls for the Flyers. Henry was on fire, hitting shots from downtown, from inside, falling down, tip-ins. You name it. Other weeks, he'd be a sure-fire athlete of the week, but this week, Kmack was tough.

Two other Potsdam athletes received honorable mention this week. Kelly Norman and Katie Baker, both seniors on the girls basketball team, had outstanding games last Tuesday, leading the Stoners to an easy win over N-N. Baker scored 23 points and Norman added 19, plus handling all of the point guard duties.

Colton-Pierrepoint's Brian Chamberlain is becoming a regular in this column. Last week, the senior pumped in 33 points in two games, including 22 against Chateaugay. Parishville-Hopkinton junior Nikki Koen makes the list this week thanks to her consistent effort in three Panther losses last week. She scored 34 points in the three contests and was P-H's leading scorer in all three.

### Disappointing Post-Game Celebration

I don't usually publicly chastise athletes for poor behavior, especially local kids. But, I can't ignore what happened in the Potsdam gym and locker rooms following the Norwood-Norfolk upset win over Potsdam last Wednesday night.

In summary, the locker rooms were trashed and signs in the gym were ripped down as Flyer players "celebrated" their landmark win. Yes, the basketball players, who just moments earlier displayed guts and sportsmanship and worked hard to earn the biggest victory in their young careers, turned to vandals.

From reports I've heard, the locker room was a total mess with lockers knocked down, things torn off the walls, and paper hurled everywhere. There is no excuse for this behavior. The athletes involved should be disciplined, not just by their coach, but by the school administration.

They worked so hard and prepared so well for this win, but now it's tarnished. They've lost the respect that people had for them when they held off the gallant Stoner comeback.

I just cannot imagine the Potsdam players doing the same if they were placed in a similar situation. I know the kids too well. I also know these kids feel insulted and extremely hurt by this sad act of "salt in the wound." I hope and expect that no similar incident will take place in Norwood when Potsdam travels there next month.

I understand the reason for a celebration by N-N's players. Hooping and hollering, and high-fiving is fine. Destroying public property is not. I'm not looking to point fingers of blame at anyone. I'm just asking that it doesn't happen again.

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