

**Press Clippings 11/28/19 to 12/02/19**

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## **SPORTS**

**---The Courier-News---12/01/2019**

### **The payoff for Bonds**

Senior all-purpose threat leads Elgin to playoffs for 1st time in 10 years

**By Paul Johnson**



Elgin's Xavier Bonds runs the ball against East Aurora during an Upstate Eight Conference game.

When Elgin's Xavier Bonds entered high school, he had the potential. What he didn't have, however, was the confidence.

"I didn't believe in myself my freshman year," Bonds said. "I didn't think I was a good enough player. I wasn't as focused. I didn't think I would even make it to varsity."

But with the support of coach Anthony Mason and assistant Aaron Cobbs, Bonds started to see he had a chance to be great if he put his mind to it.

The hard work paid off as Bonds — the 2019 Courier-News Football Player of the Year — led the Maroons to the playoffs for the first time in 10 years.

"The great thing is he flipped the switch before his junior year and committed to being elite, committed to success, and it showed this year," Mason said. "I am so happy and proud of him."

"His confidence comes from his work ethic. I've been telling college coaches he has a will to win and a will to be successful that I haven't seen in a while."

The 5-foot-10, 170-pound Bonds did it all for the Maroons, playing both ways and starring on special teams.

He caught 44 passes for 1,008 yards, accounting for 19 touchdowns in breaking a 40-year-old program record. On defense, he had 34 tackles, two sacks and four interceptions.

Everybody in the stadium knew Bonds was going to get the ball, yet he made big plays anyway.

“He was game-planned for,” Mason said. “Every game he affected in a major way. I think that’s why he got offensive player of the year in the conference. That’s when you know you have something special.”

Bonds saved his best for the biggest game Elgin has played in years —a Week 9 showdown against East Aurora. The winner would end a long playoff drought, while the loser went home.

Bonds made sure it was the Maroons who moved on. He totaled 308 yards and four TDs in a 32-26 win.

“I’m just very thankful I had that opportunity to help the school and my teammates be a part of something that I had a big role in,” Bonds said.

Bonds is using his platform for good. Knowing he’s not the only kid in town without a consistent male presence in his life, he’s eager to show youngsters the way.

“We went to a middle school (recently) and gave back,” Bonds said. “When we went into groups, I told them, ‘Keep your grades right, stay on the right path. Everything can fall into place if you do what you have to do.’”

“I’m just grateful (Cobbs and Mason) helped me. Now I can give back, and I will.”

Bonds has more to accomplish on the football field. That freshman kid who wondered if he would even make it to varsity?

Well, now he’s sifting through offers to continue his career in college.

“I’m excited to see his future,” Mason said. “He has a lot of opportunities. The first couple years of high school didn’t go his way, but now he’s seeing the dividends of hard work paying off.

“I’m excited to see how he goes about the next few years. It’s exciting.”

Paul Johnson is a freelance reporter for The Courier-News.

**---Daily Herald---11/30/2019**

## **Benet's Schramek tops 1,000 mark against Bartlett**

**By: Orrin Schwarz**



Brooke Schramek

As much as the Schramek family enjoys Thanksgiving, the day after is pretty special also.

Benet senior forward Brooke Schramek passed the 1,000-point milestone Friday, leading the Redwings to a 60-32 girls basketball victory against Bartlett at the Tip-Off Tournament in Lisle.

Five years ago to the day sister [Emily scored her 1,000th point](#), doing it with a layup in the second quarter of a lopsided win over Naperville Central. She finished with 1,471. Sister Kendal scored 529 for the Redwings (5-0) also.

"It's crazy to think that I've been on this team since freshman year," Brooke Schramek said. "Freshman year I didn't get that many minutes, but more than the normal freshman. I don't think I could have done any of this without my teammates, clearly, because they find me when I'm open. They pass the ball really well."

Benet had a noticeable size advantage as a team, and coach Joe Kilbride took advantage by putting the 6-foot-1 Schramek, a senior who will play at Wisconsin, in the post early to get the points she needed.

Starting the night with 993 points, Schramek made a left-handed layup with 6:53 to go in the second quarter to give her 8 points to that point in the game. That made the score 16-10.

"When I scored the last layup everyone started cheering. It was such a cool feeling," Schramek said. "I honestly had goose bumps, it was so cool."

Kilbride said Schramek is very efficient with her scoring, getting her points without taking a lot of shots. She has to be, considering the Redwings have so much talent and depth that minutes and shots are at a premium.

"There's a lot of games where she only plays 10, 12, 14 minutes and isn't padding her stats. That's not a thousand that are padded stats," Kilbride said.

Schramek finished with 10 points in the game. Junior guard Molly Sheehan made her last five 3-point shots to lead Benet with 15 points off the bench.

Benet's depth played a key role in the game. Benet pulled away in the second quarter for a 26-13 halftime lead, making it 53-23 after three quarters.

"We're trying to play a certain way and it's hard to get there," Kilbride said. "I didn't feel like we played with the right level of juice early on. I mean our depth is really devastating when they play hard. I thought we just weren't at full throttle early.

"But when we got there you can see how it's exhausting if you're the other team and I bring in another wave of four or five and they're playing that way."

Sophomore Mackenzie Hare led Bartlett (3-2) with 11 points and junior Alexis Sinclair added 9.

Bartlett coach Joe Eirich was very happy with how his players performed against one of the best teams in the state.

"A lot of effort," he said. "We're a small team and we battled really hard. I mean we did not just let them play the game that they wanted. We made them work for it today. I'm completely in love with and proud of my girls and the effort that they gave tonight."

## **Bartlett wins wild one over Streamwood in double OT**

**By: Allen Oshinski**

Maybe it was only a preliminary round game in a Thanksgiving tournament, but Bartlett's 95-93, double-overtime defeat of Streamwood at the Wheaton Academy tourney was worthy of March Madness.

Conrad Luczynski's layup at the buzzer, on an assist from Nicholas Bucaro, was the game-winner for the Hawks (1-2). The 6-foot-10 sophomore finished with an even 30 points on the evening.

Jakobe Strong scored 36 for Streamwood.

The Sabres led by double digits after a wild second quarter that saw them outscore the Hawks 32-22.

Bartlett turned the tables in the third quarter, holding Streamwood to 10 points and pulling even at 63-all on George Betevis' bucket with a minute left in the period.

"Streamwood plays such a crazy style of basketball," said Bartlett coach Jim Wolfsmith. "They're so well coached, they just pressure, they pressure, they pressure. I told my guys, 'They're going to let you back in the game if you just defend their 3-point shot.' They hit eleven 3s in that first half. In that third quarter, we limited them I think to like (10) points as we made the comeback. If you can defend that 3-point stripe, then life is a lot easier for you at the end."

Neither team led by more than 6 points after that, with Luczynski tying the game at the end of regulation and the first overtime.

"I owe it to my team," he said. "They were the ones who gave me all the passes, all the looks. That's how I got the big '30.'"

He also grabbed 12 rebounds.

Bucaro finished with 17 points and 13 boards, Betevis added 16 points and 7 rebounds, and Hayden Angell had 15 points and 6 assists for Bartlett.

Luke Pentecost scored 18 points, all on 3-pointers, for the Sabres, who led by as many as 15 points in the first half. Kyle Maybrun added 13 points, and Lorenzo Coney and Zach Marquez chipped in 9 apiece for Streamwood. Coney also pulled down 13 rebounds.

The Sabres' fast-paced style, featuring pressure defense and plenty of 3-point attempts, flummoxed the Hawks at times early. Streamwood still led 60-48 after a Strong 3-pointer midway through the third. But Betevis answered with a 3-pointer of his own, starting a 17-3 run that extended into the early part of the fourth quarter and propelled the Hawks to their first lead since 18-16.

Strong's 3-pointer put Streamwood ahead 92-90. After the teams traded free throws, Bucaro's short shot tied it at 93. A Streamwood turnover led to the Hawks' final possession with less than 10 seconds left. They worked it upcourt quickly, Bucaro found Luczynski under the basket, and he laid it in at the buzzer.

## **Team effort sends South Elgin past Hampshire**

**By: John Lemon**

South Elgin took a couple extra minutes coming out of its locker room Friday at St. Charles East's 61st annual Ron Johnson Thanksgiving Tournament, and for good reason.

For the first time this year the Storm had a victory to celebrate.

John Aaron Wafford knocked down a 3-pointer from the left corner with 56 seconds remaining, breaking a 51-51 tie in what became a 56-55 win over Hampshire in a tight game throughout.

Turnovers plagued the Storm (1-2) in a 1-point loss to Proviso East and a lopsided loss to St. Charles East, but they limited the mistakes to 11 Friday.

"We're a young team so we're just improving every game," said Lane McVicar, one of three sophomores in South Elgin's starting lineup. "This shows us what we are capable of. We really focused on ball movement today and getting everyone the ball."

Hampshire (0-3) will play Plainfield East (1-2) at 2:30 p.m. Saturday in the seventh place game. The Storm follow at 4 p.m. going for fifth place against St. Joseph (1-2).

Wafford, a junior, led South Elgin with 15 points with those three sophs -- Drew Cwik, McVicar and Kendis Wiley -- right behind at 11, 10 and 10, respectively. McVicar also grabbed a game-high 8 rebounds and had 2 steals.

South Elgin coach Brett Johnson is looking to guards Cwik, Wafford and McVicar to create much of the offense.

"Those three guys hit shots when they had to hit shots and we got defensive stops when it mattered the most," Johnson said. "The first three games we've got better all three games and that's all a coach can ask for. They should all be able to create opportunities for others to score."

South Elgin led almost the entire first half, its biggest coming at 22-15 on a Wafford 3-point shot. Hampshire fought back within 24-23 at halftime when Nicholas Erickson made all 3 free throws after being fouled behind the arc, Jackson Milison drove for an offhand lay-in, and Collin Woods grabbed a defensive board and took it end-to-end for a layup.

The Storm pushed their lead out to 36-27 in the third only to see the Whips come back again, this time a 12-0 run spanning the third and fourth quarters to go up 39-36 -- a surge that began with back-to-back 3s from Erickson.

Erickson's two free throws with 5:13 remaining put the Whips up for the final time at 45-44. After they fell behind 51-47 they came back to tie at 51 when Jeremy Rosa made 2 free throws and Woods drove for a basket.

Cwik penetrated and kicked out to Wafford for the go-ahead 3-pointer. McVicar's 2 free throws made it 56-53 with :23 to go, and the Storm fouled Woods with seven seconds left so the Whips couldn't try a tying 3.

Woods made both free throws to get within 56-55, and the Storm missed a pair with :4.6 left. Hampshire grabbed the rebound and called timeout, but with only 2.2 seconds to go were only able to get off a desperation heave that hit hard off the backboard.

"We have to play a little smarter down the stretch," Whips coach Mike Featherly said. "Understanding the game and execution down the stretch."

Woods (16 points, 5 rebounds), Erickson (12 points, 7 rebounds, 3 steals) and Rosa (10 points) all hit double figures for the Whips.

Hampshire outrebounded South Elgin 25-20 and made 22 of 26 free throws but shot 41.6 percent from the field to South Elgin's 47.3. The Storm also made four more 3-point baskets.

"I'm proud of the fight and the battle," Johnson said. "It's a very young team. Winning a game like this is a big confidence builder for this group because it's hard when you are playing juniors and sophomores and the pace of the game is very different. It's a challenge."