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Three lacrosse teams to debut in spring at U46 schools

BY RAFAEL GUERRERO



Lacrosse will become an IHSA-sanctioned sport for School District 46, with two boys teams and one girls team making their debut in the spring. (Jon Langham/Naperville Sun)

School District U46 high schools will have both boys and girls lacrosse teams competing for conference and state titles in 2018.

Two boys and one girls cooperative teams will make their debut in [Illinois High School Association](#)-sanctioned games in the spring as the IHSA prepares to take over high school lacrosse and crown its first-ever state champions in the sport.

"This is all relatively new for us here in U46," said Jason Ward, South Elgin High School athletic director. "We've had club teams (in the district), but we hadn't quite discussed it as a co-op team."

Boys club lacrosse teams in Bartlett and South Elgin already existed prior to the school board's approval of sanctioned teams earlier this month, but they were independently funded.

The South Elgin team had notable success in June, winning the Lacrosse Cup, the B Class club championship in the Illinois High School Lacrosse Association Tournament.



South Elgin High School celebrates its win over Carmel during the lacrosse state finals in June in Lincolnshire. (Mark Kodiak Ukena)

"Both (Bartlett and South Elgin) teams have had a little bit of success," Ward said. "It'll be nice to bring that success to the U46 level."

Because it will become a district sport instead of a club, the district will have jurisdiction over the lacrosse program. Like other IHSA sports U46 schools participate in, students will have to pay a \$200 athletic fee that covers transportation and maintenance of the fields, district documents said.

The hiring of coaches and trainers will go through the district's human resources department, and the district may expand its athletic training contract to meet training demands of three co-op teams, according to board documents.

The all-U46 girls team will start with 40 players from all five high schools, with practices taking place at Eastview Middle School in Bartlett and Kenyon Woods Middle School in South Elgin.

Meanwhile, the boys teams will be based out of Bartlett High School and South Elgin High School. The Bartlett co-op team will feature players from Bartlett and Streamwood and the South Elgin team will have students from South Elgin, Elgin and Larkin high schools. Each team will have 40 players, with South Elgin practicing at Kenyon Woods and Bartlett at Eastview.

Home games for all three teams will be played at Millennium Field at Streamwood High School.

With regards to transportation, the district will bus athletes to and from games but students will have to find a way to get themselves to practice.

"At this time, with bus schedules established back in July and August, there is no way to rearrange what they are doing," said Terri Lozier, the district's assistant superintendent for secondary schools instruction and equity.

The first official games are set for March 12, Ward said.

In preparation for the upcoming season, U46 maintenance staff have done work on the practice and competitive turf so it will be in playable condition for lacrosse, he said.

The Elgin-area school district last introduced a new IHSA-sanctioned team last school year, girls co-op golf.

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Opinion: Mayor touts Elgin accomplishments

BY LINDA MCDANIEL HALE

Mayor Dave Kaptain gave his annual State of the City address recently at the [Elgin](#) Area Chamber of Commerce, touting accomplishments from the credit rating to all-day kindergarten and conversations about race relations.

Kaptain is proud of what's happening in Elgin. The city has "provided stable and efficient government that has not happened over night," he said, adding that numerous city councils have worked toward this goal.

He outlined 10 accomplishments of the city and community. Kaptain said the city is very proud of its "Triple AAA bond rating. Elgin has managed to not let the problems in the state drag Elgin down."

Other accomplishments include a change of leadership with new people as city manager and fire chiefs. **School District U46** has begun an all-day kindergarten which assists parents with child care, and Elgin's Human Relations Committee has fostered peaceful discussions of racial problems.

Council Member Terry Gavin will be acting as a city liaison to help improve maintenance of city streets. "The city survey conducted this past summer showed that the condition of Elgin streets was a major concern of local residents," Gavin said.

In contrast, Gavin said, "I am most proud of the police and fire and ambulance services in Elgin, as our recent survey showed that the people are highly satisfied with these services."

Kaptain mentioned the business side of the city.

"When the city begins discussions with a prospective retailer, home builder, or industry, Elgin asks them what is their 10- to 20-year plan. Elgin wants to look down the road to make sure new businesses and housing development are sustainable," he said.

He and other leaders want to attract young people to the city.

"The Tower Building is just about completed on a 1930s structure. That will be a home to commuters and young people," Kaptain said.

Elgin should continue to grow. Even with the state of finances in Illinois, Elgin has managed to keep more than afloat. Improvements are being made.

This city council is open to the voices of residents, who say they want growth and more attention to streets and code enforcement. This city council is prepared to continue to make Elgin a city everyone can be proud of.

SPORTS SECTION

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Bartlett cruises to win

BY ANDY MARTINEZ

Tomas Vikonis and Bartlett had nearly a flawless night.

"We really moved the ball well," Vikonis said. "For the first time this year, and probably for a while, we have size, we were bigger than them, so we tried to get in the post, seal them, get easy layups. We outrebounded them."

Bartlett cruised to a 67-44 boys basketball win over West Chicago in the Upstate Eight Valley opener for both teams.

Well, there was one small snafu. Just, don't blame Vikonis or any Bartlett player.

Midway through the fourth quarter, Johnny Angell checked into the game with the number 52, but there was no 52 listed on the roster, so the Hawks were assessed a technical foul.

"We got some mixed up numbers," Bartlett coach Jim Wolfsmith said with a laugh. "That's on me, I got to take care of business. "

The Bartlett (3-5, 1-0) players had some fun with it, too.

"Now we said that (Angell) had the wrong number, now he's got the most technicals on the team," Vikonis said with a laugh.

The Hawks, showed both their prowess and height advantage on the glass. Bartlett outrebounded West Chicago (3-2, 0-1) 32-19, which included a 9-3 advantage on the offensive glass.

"We weren't boxing out hard," West Chicago guard Isaac Nelson said. "We weren't attacking the glass with aggression and going after each loose ball."

Really, West Chicago stumbled out of the gates.

The Wildcats missed their first four shots, allowed 4 offensive rebounds and trailed 8-3 just 4 minutes, 33 seconds into the game.

"(Bartlett is) athletic," West Chicago coach Bill Recchia said. "In order to beat a team that is that athletic and highflying, you have to do the little things right. You need to come out with energy. We did not come out with energy."

West Chicago showed some fight, though, in the second quarter. The Wildcats chipped away, and with 3:37 left in the half Jeremy Belington found Jason Gimre for a 3-pointer, to trim the deficit to 22-21.

Bartlett, however, kicked things back up. The Hawks closed the half on a 9-1 run to take a 31-22 lead at the half.

"The whole game, everyone was just playing together," Bartlett forward Austin Gates said. "We had good chemistry and everything started clicking."

And in the fourth quarter Bartlett stymied any attempt by West Chicago at a comeback.

Vikonis sparked a 13-4 run to open the fourth quarter, opening a 56-34 lead. Vikonis had 8 points, 2 rebounds and an assist on that run. Vikonis finished with a team-high 18 points while adding 5 rebounds and 5 assists. Junior Garrett Jurina had a double-double night, scoring 15 and adding 10 rebounds.

"I did not want them to come back," Vikonis said. "We had kind of a rough third quarter; we turned it over a lot. We were nonchalant with the ball. We were just careless."

"I thought we had to attack more and I thought I had to get everybody else involved."

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Larkin's torrid shooting derails Geneva

BY STEVE NICHOLS

Larkin's boys basketball team won't chalk up Friday's 58-46 win over Geneva as an early season statement game, but it certainly became the Royal standard for the amount of effort needed the rest of the season.

After not playing their best basketball of late -- which included a lackluster win over Elgin on Tuesday -- the Royals pulled a 180 and came out refocused, energized and really let it rip.

A rejuvenated Larkin, on its home floor, shot a sizzling 66.7 percent from the field, missing just 4 shots in the first half and 11 overall on 33 shot attempts. The Royals (5-2, 3-0) also played inside-out through 6-foot-10 senior Jalen Shaw, who finished with 14 points, 8 rebounds, 4 assists, 4 blocks and 2 steals.

Shaw dominated the post on both ends, helping Larkin score 26 points inside. But Shaw also opened the floor and got his teammates involved, who were more than just ready on the perimeter where it was no different, scoring 21 from midrange and beyond.

"After Elgin, we've been working hard in practice," Shaw said. "We finally understand that we have to play as a team, rotate the ball, give it to me and I kick it out."

"We came in Wednesday with a different mental approach to practice," Royals coach Deryn Carter added. "We needed an effort. We needed a concentrated, mental effort like this."

Senior Anthony Lynch turned in a game-high 18 points in Upstate Eight River action while Kindrel Morris added 11 including two 3-point field goals. Jackson Reuter also scored 7 big points off the bench in the first half.

But Morris and Shaw were key to Larkin racing out a 15-4 first quarter lead and Shaw finished off one of Geneva's 14 turnovers along the baseline for an up-and-under and a

26-12 lead with 5:45 left. It was one of the many moves he threw at the Vikings throughout.

"We tried three different defenses on Shaw," said Vikings coach Scott Hennig. "He passed out of the double teams, had a plethora of post moves. Made his free throws. He's a high D-1 player for a reason. And they have a lot of nice pieces around him."

Those other pieces for Larkin opened up a 17-point third quarter lead and gave Geneva problems, shooting 40 percent. The Vikings (5-2, 1-1), led by Jack McDonald and Joshua Preston who each had 12 points and 5 rebounds, saw their 4-game win streak snapped as Larkin turned up the pressure. Besides Geneva's 20-point fourth quarter, its quarter point total dropped from 12 to 8 to 6 during the first 3 quarters.

"We like playing fast and from defense to offense," Lynch said. "I think we came out with a lot of energy. Against Elgin we were laid back but we came out pretty strong and we need to keep doing this."

Geneva cut the lead down to 8 thanks to a late 9-3 run with a minute left in the fourth and played its best at the end.

"It was a game of runs and they can score so quickly, especially in transition. We didn't shoot it well. We had a few wasted possessions," Hennig said. "We jacked a couple of shots and a lot of that goes to Larkin and their pressure and their athleticism."

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Peterson, Batavia top Sabres

BY SCOTT MILLER

Eric Peterson's offensive performance on Friday night in Batavia's come-from-behind win at Streamwood was impressive enough. However, his defensive effort took his game to whole other level.

Peterson scored a team high 22 points, but equally important played shutdown defense on the Sabres' top scoring threat in the second half to lead the Bulldogs to a 60-46 victory in Upstate Eight River boys basketball action.

The Bulldogs (5-1, 2-0) trailed 25-20 at halftime and were still down 35-28 in the middle of the third quarter, but outscored the Streamwood 32-11 the rest of the way.

On the offensive end Peterson scored 17 of his points in the pivotal second half, including three 3-pointers. His 3 -pointer with just over a minute left to play in the third quarter put the Bulldogs up for good 40-37.

"I think mentally things started clicking for us in the second half," Peterson said. "We started playing with more energy. I know we all kind of struggled shooting in the first half. Once we hit a few shots in the second half we got a lot more confidence."

The Bulldogs shot just 7 of 28 (25 percent) from the field in the first half. Peterson was just 2 of 6 in the first half. However, the second half was a different story. Peterson

made 4 of his 6 shots from the field and 6 of 7 from the free throw line. The rest of the Bulldogs followed his lead and as a team shot 10 of 18 from the field in the second half.

"(Eric) is that type of player," Batavia coach Jim Nazos said. "When the team is struggling he keeps steady and stays with it. He keeps us composed. He's just a smooth scorer who can get it done a lot of ways."

On the defensive end in the second half Peterson switched to guard the Sabres' Nikola Sinik, who had 14 points in the first half including four 3-pointers. After a bucket on the first possession of the second half not only did Peterson hold Sinik scoreless the rest of the way he held him without a shot.

"I asked coach to let me guard him," Peterson said. "He's a really good shooter, so a big part in stopping him was getting right up on him, but another big part was my teammates helping with backside defense. That's a big thing we work on in practice and they really did a great job."

Riley Cooper added 13 points for the Bulldogs. His first of two 3-pointers in the third quarter started the Bulldogs on a 14-2 run that erased a 35-28 deficit and put them in the lead 42-37.

"Obviously with this just our second game having everyone back from football we are still getting used to it," Cooper said. "We got off to a off slow start and weren't hitting our shots, but we just stayed calm. The coaches had a great game plan and we just stuck to it and eventually got it going. For me I know I'm not the first scoring option, so I'm looking first to get the ball to them, but I will supplement them when I need to and tonight I was able to make a couple baskets when we needed them."

Sinik finished with 16 points to lead the Sabres. Junior Keenon Cole had a strong game with 13 points, 8 rebounds, and 3 blocked shots.

The Sabres (2-5, 0-2) were hurt by a 32-23 rebounding disparity, including 13-4 on the offensive glass.

"That's something we have struggled with and need to find a remedy," Streamwood coach Paul Kowalyszyn said. "We have enough size down there to control the boards, but we just have to get a body on people. We can't give up that many extra shots to a team like Batavia. But we will get there. Right now we are staying right with some good teams, but I think when we get more polished we will be beating some of these teams."