

Press Clippings - 12/11/2023

- Chicago Tribune -

A fierce Nathan Searce gets Bartlett past East Aurora. And he doesn't mind extra pressure. 'It's better for me.'

By: Paul Johnson

Dec 08, 2023



Bartlett's Nathan Searce (5) applauds a teammate's basket and foul against East Aurora during the third quarter of an Upstate Eight Conference game in **Bartlett** on Friday, Dec. 8, 2023. (H. Rick Bamman/The Beacon-News)

Suddenly, senior guard Nathan Searce found himself alone in the spotlight for **Bartlett**.

In a stunner, fellow senior guard Kelton McEwen transferred to Wheaton St. Francis. It turned Searce into both the Hawks' top offensive option and lone returning starter.

Big changes, huh?

"Last year, I didn't have to bring the ball up, and now it's my job every day," Searce said. "It's more pressure, but I also get to take more shots, so it's better for me."

Searce couldn't have looked better Friday. He scored a career-high 33 points to go with seven assists and four steals in a 77-71 Upstate Eight Conference win over East Aurora.

Drew Cwik added 14 points for **Bartlett** (2-5, 2-1) and Brendan Campbell had 13.

Jalen Bealer led a frantic comeback for East Aurora (2-5, 2-1), scoring 29 of his game-high 34 points in the second half. All-state football star Kenneth Cooley added 13 points.

McEwen played with **Bartlett** over the summer, so Searce didn't have time to work on being the main option. **Bartlett** coach Jim Wolfsmith has been impressed with his progress.

"Nate's been tremendous," Wolfsmith said. "From the minute we found out Kelton was leaving, Nate's been nothing but a great leader in the offseason, in lifting, in workouts.

"You see him taking care of the ball and running the point for us. That would have traditionally been a role that he and Kelton would have split. To handle the ball like that and still find time to put up 33 points, really impressive on his part."



Bartlett's Nathan Searce (5) blocks a pass by East Aurora's Jalen Bealer (5) during an Upstate Eight Conference game in **Bartlett** on Friday, Dec. 8, 2023. (H. Rick Bamman/The Beacon-News)

Wolfsmith was quick to point out Searce wasn't the only player affected.

"When you lose one of your mainstays, one of your intelligent, knows basketball kind of kids that can kind of calm people down in the craziness, everybody has to change their role," Wolfsmith said. "Everybody has to step into those spots."

As the only returning starter, however, Searce saw his role transform dramatically. He said that makes the little things even more important than usual.

"It just started in practice with me bringing the ball up all the time," Searce said. "It's preparing me for games because I'm getting face guarded."

Campbell, who's in his first varsity season, has seen the work Searce puts in.



East Aurora's Davion Jackson (23) secures a rebound against **Bartlett** during an Upstate Eight Conference game in **Bartlett** on Friday, Dec. 8, 2023. (H. Rick Bamman/The Beacon-News)

“Nate’s a great player,” Campbell said. “He’s really stepping into that point guard role very well. He works really hard, and he’s one of the best shooters I’ve ever seen.”

Campbell and Searce fueled an 18-0 run at the start for **Bartlett**. Campbell scored seven points and Searce added six. East Aurora started out 0-for-19 from the field but clawed back into the game.

Bartlett led 69-48 midway through the fourth before Bealer scored 13 points to fuel a 21-6 burst that got the Tomcats back into things.

“It’s East Aurora-Bartlett, man,” Wolfsmith said. “I expect nothing less.

“We had to hold on down the stretch. Part of that is (Bealer) did a phenomenal job on his end matching Nate, playing with pace, knocking down jump shots, playing with energy. He’s a heck of a player.”



Bartlett's Nathan Searce (5) drives against East Aurora's Kenneth Cooley (4) during an Upstate Eight Conference game in **Bartlett** on Friday, Dec. 8, 2023. (H. Rick Bamman/The Beacon-News)

It was the first time the Hawks faced pressure down the stretch like that this season. While it wasn't always pretty, they did hang on and win.

"It definitely feels good," Campbell said. "We started out hot in the first half, skidded a little bit in the second half. We really came together as a team, I thought.

"Just to pull that out felt amazing."

Searce feels the win is all a part of the team's growth.

"We're a younger team," Searce said. "We'll get better with more experience."

- Chicago Tribune -

Basketball scores for the Southland, Aurora, Elgin, Naperville and Lake County

By: From Staff Reports

Dec 08, 2023



Lincoln-Way East's Brenden Sanders (3) pulls down a rebound against Homewood-Flossmoor during a SouthWest Suburban Blue game in Flossmoor on Thursday, Dec. 7, 2023. (Steve Johnston/Daily Southtown)

Results and highlights of high schools and local colleges from the Southland and Aurora, Elgin, Naperville and Lake County coverage areas.

FRIDAY'S RESULTS

HIGH SCHOOLS

BOYS BASKETBALL

Andrew 60, Bradley-Bourbonnais 56

Andrew (7-1, 2-0 SWSC Red): Athan Berchos 15 points, 8 assists. Kaleb Simms 14 points, 6 assists. James Gallagher 13 points.

Aurora Christian 76, Chicago Christian 43

Aurora Christian (8-1, 1-0 Chicagoland Christian): Marshawn Cocoroft 24 points.

Beecher 81, Donovan 36

Beecher (8-0, 4-0 River Valley): Zack Johnson 22 points, 5 rebounds. Adyn McGinley 21 points.

Benet 51, Carmel 45

Bloom 59, Bishop Noll (Ind.) 55

Bloom (5-1): Jaden Clark 16 points, 5 rebounds. Payton Edwards 15 points, 5 rebounds. Elijah Lovemore 13 points, 9 rebounds, 9 assists, 4 steals.

Bolingbrook 79, Sandburg 69

Sandburg (4-4, 0-2 SWSC Blue): David Vargas 29 points.

Bowen 71, Thornridge 68

Brother Rice 70, Leo 36

Brother Rice (8-0, 4-0 CCL Blue): Tyler Wooten 13 points. Cale Cosme 12 points. Xavier Fitch 11 points. Marcos Gonzales 11 points.

Burlington Central 53, McHenry 44

Burlington Central (5-2, 3-1 Fox Valley): Myles Lowe 24 points.

DeKalb 63, Naperville North 53
Eisenhower 71, Richards 63
Eisenhower (6-3, 2-1 SSC Red): A.J. Abrams 29 points. Cam Ellis 22 points.
Fenwick 53, St. Rita 37
Hampshire 42, Dundee-Crown 38
Highland Park 47, Vernon Hills 33
Highland Park (3-4, 1-1 Central Suburban North): Simon Moschin 23 points.
Hinckley-Big Rock 70, Somonauk 38
Hinckley-Big Rock (6-3, 2-0 Little Ten): Martin Ledbetter 30 points, 11 rebounds, 5 assists.
Somonauk (4-3, 1-1): Carson Bahrey 18 points, 6 rebounds.
Indian Creek 51, Newark 48
Indian Creek (6-3, 2-1 Little Ten): Jeffrey Probst 19 points. Landon Schrader 16 points.
Lemont 57, Tinley Park 46
Lemont (6-2, 3-0 SSC Blue): Ryan Runaas 16 points, 5 assists. Klaidas Paskauskas 11 points. Simas Dyglys 11 points.
Lincoln-Way West 54, Lockport 52
Lincoln-Way West (5-4): Eli Bach 20 points, GW layup with 2.5 seconds remaining in regulation. Max Gabriel 14 points. Jacob Bereza 13 points.
Lockport (3-5): Anthony Kosi 14 points, 7 rebounds. Collin Miller 14 points.
Marian Catholic 71, Marist 60
Marist (7-1, 2-1 ESCC): Darshan Thomas 23 points. Achilles Anderson 15 points.
Marmion 61, Providence-St. Mel 45
Marmion (4-4, 1-1 CCL White): Braden Harms 12 points, 9 rebounds. Evan Stumm 10 points, 5 assists.
Minooka 59, Oswego 30
Mount Carmel 59, De La Salle 46
Mount Carmel (8-1, 2-2 CCL Blue): Angelo Ciaravino 17 points. Grant Best 14 points.
De La Salle (6-1, 1-1): Richard Lindsey 20 points. Bryant Hedrick 16 points.
Neuqua Valley 71, Naperville Central 43
Northland Lutheran (Wis.) 58, Illinois Lutheran 57
Northridge 67, Elgin Academy 64
Oak Lawn 68, Evergreen Park 66
Oswego East 54, Yorkville 40
Oswego East (6-3, 2-1 Southwest Prairie West): Jehvion Starwood 15 points. Andrew Wiggins 14 points.
Yorkville (3-4, 1-3): Jason Jakstys 17 points.
Providence 48, Montini Catholic 44
Providence (2-5, 1-1 CCL White): Seth Cheney 22 points. Max Clarke 19 points, 12 rebounds.
Reavis 61, Shepard 41
Charles East 49, Lake Park 31

St. Laurence 71, Aurora Central Catholic 39
St. Laurence (4-4, 2-0 CCL White): Zerrick Johnson 17 points. Caleb Lindsey 15 points. Josh Pickett 10 points. Khalil Jones 10 points.
St. Viator 60, Joliet Catholic 42
Serena 80, IMSA 38
South Beloit 51, Harvest Christian 49 (OT)
South Elgin 71, Glenbard East 61
Stagg 49, Lincoln-Way Central 39
Thornton 68, Rich Township 62 (OT)
Thornton (6-1, 1-1 Southland): Isaiah Green 24 points. Morez Johnson 15 points, 14 rebounds. Chase Abraham 13 points.
Thornwood 44, Crete-Monee 37
Waubonsie Valley 52, Metea Valley 39
West Aurora 53, Plainfield North 50
West Aurora (6-2, 4-0 Southwest Prairie West): Jordan Brooks 12 points. C.J. Savage 10 points. Terrence Smith 10 points. Kewon Marshall 10 points.
West Chicago 47, **Larkin** 45
Woodstock North 54, Plano 53
Plano (3-4, 1-1 Kishwaukee River): Davione Stamps 15 points. Christ Keleba 13 points.

GIRLS BASKETBALL

Argo 42, Bremen 41
Argo: Alizza Quinones 17 points. Morgan Murphy 10 points.
Batavia 58, Wheaton North 29
Batavia (8-1, 3-0 DuKane): Brooke Carlson 22 points.
Cary-Grove 50, Jacobs 16
Geneva 64, Glenbard North 21
Grayslake Central 57, Antioch 48
Hampshire 69, Dundee-Crown 38
Hampshire (4-5, 2-1 Fox Valley): Ashley Herzing 28 points.
Kaneland 50, LaSalle-Peru 21
Kaneland (7-2, 2-0 Interstate Eight): Kendra Brown 20 points. Lexi Schueler 12 points.
Lake Zurich 44, Zion-Benton 24
Libertyville 56, Lake Forest 26
Libertyville (8-3, 3-1 North Suburban): Madison Sears 16 points. Kate Rule 11 points.
Mundelein 59, Waukegan 37
Mundelein (9-2, 3-1 North Suburban): Rylan Foster 18 points.
Round Lake 38, North Chicago 16
Round Lake (3-5, 1-2 Northern Lake County): Brianna Arteaga 14 points.
St. Charles North 57, Wheaton Warrenville South 42

St. Charles North (7-1, 2-1 DuKane): Reagan Sipla 21 points, surpassed 1,000 career points. Laney Stark 11 points.

Shepard 49, Reavis 42

Shepard (6-3, 3-0 SSC Red): Jessica Manley 17 points. Emma Greene 14 points.

Wauconda 44, Lakes 26

Wauconda (5-2, 3-0 Northern Lake County): Grace Parker 10 points, 7 rebounds.

West Aurora 49, Plainfield 38

WRESTLING

Jacobs 43, Cary-Grove 33

Kaneland 45, Riverside-Brookfield 36

Lincoln-Way Central 64, Stagg 10

THURSDAY'S RESULTS

HIGH SCHOOLS

BOYS BASKETBALL

Ag. Science 68, Harlan 33

Ag. Science (4-3, 2-0 Public White-South): Bryce Tillis 11 points.

Bremen 57, Argo 55

Bremen (2-6, 1-2 SSC Blue): Ja'Ron Powell 21 points.

Argo (1-8, 0-3 SSC Red): Kassam Saleh 15 points.

Glenbard West 66, **Larkin** 34

Hinckley-Big Rock 51, Genoa-Kingston 40

Hinckley-Big Rock (5-3): Martin Ledbetter 18 points, 4 blocks.

Homewood-Flossmoor 77, Lincoln-Way East 72

Lakes 74, Johnsburg 46

Lakes (2-7): Lamar Pierce 19 points. Jimmy Kania 17 points. Thomas Mercure 14 points.

Morgan Park 75, Harlan 30

New Trier 60, Deerfield 36

GIRLS BASKETBALL

Aurora Central Catholic 65, St. Laurence 62

Bartlett 47, East Aurora 17

Beecher 58, Grant Park 15

Beecher (5-4, 3-1 River Valley): Evelyn Jablonski 17 points. Aylin Lagunas 15 points. Emma Tiltges 10 points.

Bradley-Bourbonnais 36, Stagg 35

Stagg (5-4, 1-1 SWSC Red): Abbey Hobart 15 points.

DeKalb 39, Naperville North 38

Glenbard East 64, **South Elgin** 39

Harvest Christian 63, South Beloit 34
Hinckley-Big Rock 37, Somonauk 31
Hinckley-Big Rock: Raven Wagner 13 points. Payton Murphy 10 points.
Somonauk: Haley McCoy 13 points, 6 rebounds.
Lincoln-Way Central 49, Sandburg 35
Lincoln-Way Central (8-0): Lina Panos 11 points. Brooke Baechtold 11 points.
Sandburg (4-4): Ellie Driscoll 17 points. Olivia Trunk 10 points.
Lincoln-Way East 46, Lockport 35
Lincoln-Way East (6-2, 1-1 SWSC Blue): Lilly Dockemeyer 17 points. Hayven Smith 15 points.
Lincoln-Way West 35, Andrew 19
Lincoln-Way West (4-5, 1-1 SWSC Red): Molly Finn 13 points.
Mother McAuley 63, Montini 45
McAuley (6-4, 2-0 GCAC Red): Grace Gambotz 27 points, 10 rebounds. Quinn Arundel 19 points.
Oak Lawn 46, Evergreen Park 27
Oak Lawn (4-4, 2-1 SSC Red): Lamia Quinones 12 points. Danielle Dempsey 10 points, 10 rebounds, 4 assists.
Oswego East 60, Yorkville 53
Oswego East (6-4, 4-0 Southwest Prairie West): Audrey Lamberti 22 points. Maggie Lewandowski 14 points.
Yorkville (6-3, 3-1): Brooke Spychalski 21 points. Sweeney 12 points.
Providence 71, Joliet Catholic 48
Providence (5-4): Gabi Bednar 21 points. Molly Knight 16 points.
Rich Township 39, Thornwood 11
Richards 43, Eisenhower 10
Richards (4-4, 3-0 SSC Red): Kailey Moore 12 points. Iyanah Crosby 11 points.
Serena 38, Indian Creek 31
Streamwood 69, Elgin 55
Streamwood (5-3, 2-2 Upstate Eight): Jamia Gatlin 26 points. Ayumi Ishikawa 21 points.
Elgin (6-3, 2-2): Izzie Castro 26 points.
T.F. South 63, Hillcrest 34
Tri-Point 49, Illinois Lutheran 35
Waubonsie Valley 79, Metea Valley 16

WRESTLING

Batavia 52, St. Charles North 17
Dundee-Crown 45, Burlington Central 24
Kaneland 42, Morris 35
Lincoln-Way Central 31, Lincoln-Way East 24
Oak Lawn 45, Hillcrest 36

West Aurora 35, Oswego 30

LOCAL COLLEGES

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

Triton 81, Prairie State 50

MEN'S SOCCER

NCAA DIVISION II SEMIFINAL

Franklin Pierce (N.H.) 3, Lewis 2

Lewis (13-4-6): Charles Carlback goal. Arturs Gorodnickis goal.