

## **Press Clippings 3/5/2022 to 3/7/2022**

### **Chicago Tribune/The Courier-News**

#### **Elgin News Digest: U-46 celebrates All-State Musicians; U-46 providing free supply kits to elementary students --- 3/4/2022**

By Mike Danahey

#### **U-46 students honored for being All-State Musicians**

Seventeen **School District U-46** high school students received "Accent on Achievement" certificates Monday in recognition of being named All-State Musicians.

The honors were bestowed by the U-46 School Board on the students who were selected by the Illinois Music Education Association to be All-State Musicians, the highest musical achievement for high school students in Illinois. Selected students performed at the association's annual music education conference in Peoria in January.

Those chosen from Elgin High School were Nathan Lopez, senior, All-State Chorus - tenor I; Shaun Tupaz, senior, All-State Chorus - bass II; and Madeline Conter, junior, Honors Chorus - alto I.

Chosen from Larkin High School were Ariana Mattos Cruz, senior, All-State Orchestra - violin; Jackson Baker, senior, Honors Band - trumpet; and Katherine Wynn, junior, composition.

South Elgin High School students were Jacob Pangilinan, senior, Honors Chorus - bass I; Kiera Moore, sophomore, All-State Chorus - alto II; Nathan Shue, junior, Honors Chorus - bass I; Mark Berg, senior, Honors Chorus - bass II; Alejandro Diaz, junior, Honors Chorus - tenor II; and Elijah Clarke, senior, All-State Chorus - bass II.

#### **U-46 providing free supply kits to elementary students**

**District U-46** plans to spend \$1.04 million in federal COVID-19 relief money to purchase 19,581 school supply kits from EduKit Inc. to be distributed to elementary school students at the start of the 2022-23 school year.

An 18-member staff committee reviewed supply lists for grades kindergarten through 6th and recommended the purchase of kids that ranged in price from \$48.03 to \$87.74, depending on grade level.

Superintendent Tony Sanders said the purchase is intended as a means of saving parents time and money.

## Daily Herald

### Robert Feder: Robservations --- 3/4/2022

By Robert Feder

**Madhu Krishnamurthy**, assistant city editor and diversity editor for the Daily Herald, is among six prominent Chicago area journalists highlighted in a thoughtful and timely new video exhibit. [“Celebrating Today’s Women Journalists”](#) is featured throughout March at [Gail Borden Public Library](#) in Elgin. Also reflecting on the some of the challenges and accomplishments of their careers are **Carol Marin, Julie Mann, Brandis Friedman, Amy Carr** and **Stacey Wescott**. ([Here is a link to video highlights.](#)) All were interviewed for the exhibit by **School District U-46** students.

## Chicago Tribune/The Courier-News

### Big game, best game: Fernando Perez Jr. scores 25 points as Larkin downs DeKalb for sectional title: ‘It feels good.’ ---

**3/4/2022**

By Paul Johnson for the Aurora Beacon News



Larkin's Fernando Perez Jr. (1) passes as DeKalb's Lane Mcvicar (23) defends during the Class 4A Huntley Sectional championship game on Friday, March 4, 2022. (H. Rick Bamman / The Beacon-News)

Fernando Perez Jr. has had a lot of big games in his four-year varsity career at **Larkin**. He picked the biggest game of his career to play his best game.

“I’m just blessed,” Perez said. “We work hard every day. It feels good.”

The senior guard felt it Friday night, scoring a game-high 25 points to lead the Royals to a 70-56 victory over DeKalb in the Class 4A Huntley Sectional championship game.

Larkin (31-3) gets another crack at the state’s best team in Glenbard West at 7:30 p.m. Monday in the Class 4A NIU Supersectional. The Royals lost 64-43 to Glenbard West on Jan. 12.

But first things first.

“This is my best game because of the situation,” Perez said. “We’re one win away from state.”



Larkin's Jamarion Stubbs (5) and Fernando Perez Jr. (1) react in the closing seconds after defeating DeKalb in the Class 4A Huntley Sectional championship game on Friday, March 4, 2022. (H. Rick Bamman / The Beacon-News)

Perez scored only three points in the first quarter but started heating up as the game moved along. He scored the first seven points in the second quarter to push the advantage to 24-16. Larkin led 33-22 at halftime.

Then, Perez scored the final five points of the third quarter as part of a 15-2 burst that broke open the game. It earned the Royals a 50-31 lead over DeKalb (23-10) with 6:18 left.

“Special players play big in special games,” Larkin coach Deryn Carter said of Perez. “He’s a special player. He’s so overlooked from the outside, but not inside our program.

“I’m proud as heck that he gets to put on a display like this in a big game. The senior class didn’t get this last year. To get it this year and do it in this way, we’re proud as heck.”

Defensively, Larkin’s approach was limiting the Barbs’ 3-point shooting. The Royals held DeKalb to two 3-pointers in the first three quarters before the Barbs got hot in the fourth with the game out of reach.

“That was the focus,” Carter said. “Our focus was to take away their shooters, and for three quarters we did.

“In the fourth quarter they hit some more shots because they were playing free. They had nothing to lose at that point.”



Larkin's Damari Wheeler-Thomas (10) brings the ball up the court on a fast break against DeKalb during the Class 4A Huntley Sectional championship game on Friday, March 4, 2022. (H. Rick Bamman / The Beacon-News)

Perez was a big part of that defensive pressure applied by the Royals.

“We couldn’t let them get hot early because the game would be different,” he said. “They’re a good team.”

Damari Wheeler-Thomas added 24 points for Larkin. Jamarion Stubbs had 13.

“‘Mari’ is the best point guard in the state,” Carter said. “‘Jamo’ is playing awesome. He’s playing aggressive.”

DeKalb was led by Lane McVicar, who scored 20 points to go with 10 rebounds.

McVicar started his career at South Elgin before transferring to DeKalb, so Larkin had familiarity with facing him.

“He’s one of the best players I’ve played against,” Perez said. “I love playing him because he brings the best out of me, and I think I bring the best out of him.”



Larkin's Dontrell Maxie (22) and DeKalb's Darrell Island (22) battle for a rebound during the Class 4A Huntley Sectional championship game on Friday, March 4, 2022. (H. Rick Bamman / The Beacon-News)

Larkin will take a program-record 31 wins into its second supersectional appearance.

The obstacle in the way of the Royals’ second-ever trip to state is Glenbard West. The Hilltoppers’ only loss this season came at the buzzer against Bronny James-led Sierra Canyon from California.

“We get another crack at them,” Carter said. “They’re the best team in the state, one of the best teams in the country. We’re in the Elite Eight. We’re so proud.

“(Glenbard West) is going to be ready. They’re going to be awesome, but we’re going to try our best.”

Perez knows the Royals will be up for the challenge.

"This feels good, but we're not done yet," Perez said. "We're just excited. We're ready. Everyone's time is due. I think their time is due."

## Daily Herald

### Larkin denies DeKalb for sectional crown --- 3/4/2022

By Eddie Carifio for Shaw Media



Above: Larkin coach Deryn Carter hugs Damari Wheeler-Thomas with under 30 seconds to go of the Royals' 70-56 win over DeKalb Friday in the Class 4A sectional final at Huntley. Below: Larkin's Jamarion Stubbs makes a shot in the first quarter. *David Toney / Shaw Local*

In its run to a sectional final, the DeKalb boys' basketball team shot lights out from long range to dispatch St. Charles North and Rockford Auburn.

**Larkin** keyed in on the Barbs' 3-point shooters on Friday in the Class 4A Huntley sectional championship, stymying the Barbs in a 70-56 win.

"That was the focus," Larkin coach Deryn Carter said. "We knew [Darrell Island] and [Lane McVicar] are really good, but we think they got to this spot because those guys were making a lot of shots around them. Our focus was to take away their shooters. For three quarters we did. In the fourth, they made some more shots because they were playing free. They had nothing to lose."

The Barbs (25-10) were 2 of 13 from long range through the first three quarters as the Royals (31-3) focused on staying in the faces of sharpshooters Sean Reynolds and Tyler Westberg. DeKalb had shot at least 54% in each of their last two games.

That defense helped the Royals build a 50-31 lead in the fourth before DeKalb's shots started falling. They were 6 of 10 from 3 in the fourth but never got closer than 12.



DeKalb coach Mike Reynolds said the Barbs didn't do enough inside to open up the shooters on the outside.

"The other night against Auburn we were able to play through contact at the rim and finish," Mike Reynolds said. "They had to suck in and we were able to get Sean and Tyler open. Tonight we couldn't finish through contact and therefore they never had to leave their help position to the very end."

In the regional final against the North Stars, Westberg was 9 of 12 from long range. That got the Royals' attention, said senior Fernando Perez Jr.

"We stopped their shooters from catching it and getting good looks," Perez Jr. said. "We felt like we did our job early and that's where the game turned. ... Those type of shooters, you give them any space they are going to hurt you. I think they had one person have like nine 3s in the playoffs. So we had to make sure to stay with the shooters."

DeKalb never led, and the game was only tied once, at 4-4. Perez Jr. and Damari Wheeler-Thomas handled a brunt of the scoring for the Royals, with Perez Jr. pouring in a game-high 25 and Wheeler-Thomas, a North Dakota State recruit, scoring 24.

"Give the credit to them, they were really, really good," Mike Reynolds said. "I thought [Wheeler-Thomas] controlled the game. That's what a Division I guard looks like. He controlled it, tried to get his teammates involved. We were choppy, they were able to take away our shooting for a while. We couldn't shake loose until the end."

The Royals became the second team to score at least 70 on DeKalb this year. Glenbard West put up more than 70 in a 73-36 win over the Barbs on Nov. 30. Glenbard West and Larkin will meet at 7:30 p.m. Monday for the Class 4A DeKalb supersectional at the NIU Convocation Center.

With Wheeler-Thomas getting a lot of attention this year, Carter said he was glad to see Perez Jr. step up on the big stage.

"Special players play big in special games, and he's a special player," Carter said. "He's so overlooked from the outside, but not inside our program. I'm proud as heck he gets to put on a display like this in a big show."

Jamarion Stubbs added 13 points and three steals for the Royals, while Dontrelle Maxie had four points, eight rebounds and five blocks.

McVicar led the Barbs with 18 points. Sean Reynolds and Westberg each had five after three quarters, but Westberg finished with 13 and Reynolds 11. McVicar added 10 rebounds and three steals while Demarrea Davis had eight rebounds for the Barbs.

"Our guys have been so special defensively all year long," Carter said. "They don't care what happens offensively, they share the ball on offense. But defensively they grind out and they compete. It's fun to watch."

Mike Reynolds said he's happy with how the year went for the Barbs, who won a regional for the first time since 2010 and won the DuPage Valley Conference for the third straight year.

"Four weeks ago we were struggling," Mike Reynolds said. "But we went on a big run here, won the DVC for the third year in a row, won a regional to get that off our back. There's 16 teams left in the state, you're going to play someone really, really good. It's nice to be mentioned as one of the really, really good teams and I think it's deserved."

"We made our mark," he said. "We got the third conference championship in a row, we got the regional, then we were in the Sweet 16. We made a big run but it would have been nice to get one more. ... DeKalb's not going away. We were able to beat the best team in Rockford on the way. We were able to beat the best team in St. Charles along the way. We got beat. They were better than we were tonight."