

Press Clippings 09/18/2021 to 9/20/2021

---Elgin Courier-News---09/18/2021

Class of 2020 graduates to be feted as part of U-46's homecoming celebrations

By Mike Danahey; Note: This story also ran at [chicagotribune.com](https://www.chicagotribune.com)



Larkin High School's homecoming celebration, like this one in 2019, will be held at Elgin High School's Memorial Stadium and will include a special recognition for the class of 2020, which was unable to attend their own homecoming because of the COVID-19 pandemic. (Layla Wisser / HANDOUT)

Plans for **School District U-46's** homecoming games and related festivities are in place, and they all include ways to recognize the class of 2020, whose senior years were upended by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Superintendent **Tony Sanders** said it was right to include those former students in this year's events because they missed so much during their last year of high school, including having to celebrate their graduations virtually.

Each of district high school has planned its own activities for last year's graduating class at their respective homecomings.

When Elgin High School plays West Chicago at 7:30 p.m. Friday, Sept. 24, they'll be doing a special recognition of the grads during the game and a tent set up for alumni will be serving free hot dogs. The game takes place at Memorial Field, located at 1200 Maroon Drive.

The South Elgin Storm takes on Streamwood High at 7:30 p.m. Friday, Oct. 1, at their home campus stadium, 760 E. Main St. Prior to the game, the class of 2020 will be recognized at a gathering in an end zone alumni tent.

South Elgin High School also will have a homecoming parade Thursday, Sept. 30. The time and route will be announced on the school's website,

Larkin High School's homecoming parade will be held in Elgin at 2 p.m. Friday, Oct. 8. The parade route can be found at www.u-46.org/Page/18544.

At 5 p.m. that evening, there will be a student and alumni tailgate and yearbook pickup at Elgin's Memorial Field, which is where Larkin plays its home games. The homecoming game starts at 7:30 p.m., with the Royals taking on East Aurora. At halftime, alumni will be invited to march onto the field while "Pomp and Circumstance" plays.

Streamwood High School's homecoming was Friday night, when the team took on Elgin High School. A tailgate event recognizing that class of 2020 was to be held before the 6 p.m. game.

Bartlett High School will do something similar when it plays Fenton High School for homecoming on Friday, Sept. 24. A tailgate for last year's graduates will start at 5 p.m. followed by the game at 7:30 p.m.

Athletes, staff, and participants are required to follow the district's COVID-19 rules, including mandatory mask usage and social distancing as much as possible.

---Elgin Courier-News---09/20/2021

Five U-46 seniors names Semifinalists in National Merit Scholarship Program

Submitted by Elgin Area School District U-46



Five seniors from Elgin Area School District U-46 were recently named as semifinalists in the National Merit Scholarship Program. *Courtesy of Elgin Area School District U-46*
Submitted by Elgin Area School District U-46

Five high school seniors in **Elgin Area School District U-46** have been named semifinalists in the National Merit Scholarship Program. **Bartlett High School's Evan Bulatek, Agilan Gunashankar, Anthony Martin, Ronit Nagarapu, and Jessica Pearce** are among about 16,000 semifinalists nationwide.

They will continue in the competition to be awarded one of 7,500 National Merit Scholarships worth more than \$30 million that will be offered next spring.

The U-46 students placed among the top 1 percent juniors nationwide who entered the 2022 National Merit Scholarship Program by taking the 2020 PSAT, which served as the initial screening.

To be declared a semifinalist, students must have an outstanding academic record through high school, be endorsed and recommended by a high school official, write an essay, and earn SAT or ACT scores that confirm the student's earlier performance on the qualifying test.

To become a finalist, the students will need to submit a detailed scholarship application including information about their academic record, participation in school and community activities, demonstrated leadership abilities, employment, and honors and awards received.

Drawing from the group of finalists, National Merit Scholarship winners will be announced in stages starting in April 2022.

---Daily Herald---09/18/2021

South Elgin remains unbeaten with big win vs. Larkin

By Allen Oshinski, Daily Herald Correspondent

Another week, another all-around effort for **South Elgin**. The offense scored 7 touchdowns, the defense pitched a shutout and added a safety, and the special teams made a few big plays as the Storm surged past **Larkin** 51-0.

Anthony Marshall scored three times, Jordan Jones added a pair of rushing TDs for South Elgin (4-0, 3-0) in the Upstate Eight Conference matchup at Memorial Field.

With regular quarterback Jake Sullivan dinged up, the Storm turned to the running game early and often, racking up nearly 400 yards on the ground.

Marshall led the way with 108 yards in a half plus 2 carries. He scored on runs of 1, 14 and 1 yards. Jordan Jones started under center for South Elgin and was efficient, completing 3 of 5 passes and running for 44 yards and the 2 scores.

"We just came out and wanted to get our running game going early," Marshall said. "The offensive line did a good job of opening holes and I found them. All the credit goes to them, and to the plays that the coaches called."

The Storm recovered back-to-back onside kicks to help open a 23-0 edge after one quarter. After Jones scored the game's first TD, Kai Paz dribbled the kickoff and the Storm pounced on

it. Five plays later, Marshall scored from a yard out. Then Paz and the Storm did it again, with Isaiah Alejandre falling on the kickoff.

The Storm couldn't immediately take advantage, the drive stalling at the Larkin 10. But South Elgin sacked Larkin quarterback Dontrelle Maxie on back-to-back plays, with Salvi Macaluso pulling him down in the end zone. Following the free kick and a long return by Jalen Jones, Marshall and the Storm struck again, making it 23-0 with 96 seconds left in the half.

"I thought Jordan (Jones) played really well," said South Elgin coach Dragan Teonic. "Up front we played well. Our offensive line handled its business. Our defense shutting a team like this out is incredible. If you look at the last two games Larkin's played, they've scored over 90 points. They have some really explosive athletes, and to keep them out of the end zone I think is incredible."

Denver Davis and Josh Pou-Kamradt added rushing scores for South Elgin.

Maxie was pretty much the offense for Larkin (2-2, 2-2). Under pressure all night from the Storm defense, he completed four passes -- all to Jamarion Stubbs -- and rushed for 27 yards.

South Elgin's Jalen Jones picked him off in the first half and the Storm pass rush sacked him five times.

---Daily Herald---09/18/2021
Elgin stuns Streamwood in final seconds
By Craig Brueske, Daily Herald Correspondent

Elgin football coach Anthony Mason left little doubt what player was going to get the ball as his team faced a fourth-and-goal from the Streamwood 2-yard line Friday night.

Senior quarterback Clem McCullough scored on a 2-yard keeper with 8.4 seconds remaining to lift the Maroons (1-3, 1-3) to a 34-30 victory over host Streamwood (1-3, 1-3) at Millennium Field.

The touchdown run capped a 12-play, 47-yard drive in the final 4:47 for the Maroons, who trailed by 10 points early in the third quarter.

"Heck, no," Mason said when asked if he thought about kicking a field goal with his team down by 2 in the final seconds. "We missed a field goal in our first game, and we've missed a couple PAT kicks.

"I trust Clem (McCullough), our offensive line and our running backs there. Jesse Villagomez was our right tackle on that play and Clem ran behind him."

McCullough, who accounted for 319 yards of offense -- 107 yards passing and 212 yards rushing -- was pleased to come through in the clutch.

"I was just looking for any open holes," said McCullough, who had 24 of his 36 carries in the second half. "The line did a great job.

"We've been working hard all week -- actually the last three weeks after those losses. We're not going to stop until the final whistle. That's what we did, and we got a win."

Elgin took a 20-0 first-quarter lead on a pair of McCullough touchdown runs covering 1 and 18 yards, respectively, and Adyn Avina's 23-yard fumble recovery for a TD.

However, the Sabres answered with 30 unanswered points, 24 of them coming in the second quarter.

D'Nico Lewis scored on a 1-yard run, Isaac Martinez (10 carries, 94 yards) scored on a 39-yard run, and Michael Estrada (20 carries, 175 yards) added a 6-yard run as Streamwood led 24-20 at halftime.

Estrada's 33-yard TD run on the Sabres' opening series of the second half helped extend the margin to 30-20 before Elgin cut the deficit to 30-28 on McCullough's 36-yard TD run and a 2-point conversion pass to Matt Lawson midway through the third quarter.

McCullough, who also played in the secondary on defense, finished with 4 touchdowns and a world of praise from his coach.

"He's a playmaker," Mason said of his quarterback. "He is as tough as nails."

Playing without starting quarterback Kevin Lunz (broken arm), Streamwood struggled throughout with snap exchanges -- dropping the ball to the turf 9 times with a pair of fumbles lost.

---Daily Herald---09/19/2021

Cross country: Diamond, Parisi help Benet keep pace behind Crystal Lake Central

By Kevin McGavin, Daily Herald Correspondent

Louisa Diamond and Amelia Parisi are essentially in a new arena for the girls cross country season.

Two years removed from being indispensable contributors to a historic Benet state-championship team, Diamond and Parisi are in the process of mentally and physically acclimating themselves to competing at the highest level.

The first state title in program history in the fall of 2019 made the Redwings' stay in Class 2A a short one.

Benet was immediately reclassified to the highest level, Class 3A, in the aftermath.

Saturday at the Eddington Invite in Maple Park on the Kaneland High School campus course, Diamond and Parisi finished second and fifth, respectively, for Benet.

Crystal Lake Central, expected to be a formidable obstacle in Class 2A, denied the Redwings the team title behind individual champion Hadley Ferrero and four complementary teammates in the top 20 to secure a 45-58 triumph over Benet.

"I think it's experience," said Diamond, who navigated the 3-mile course in 18 minutes, 19.82 seconds. "The seniors from last year were all on varsity since freshman year. Now we have a relatively new team. We are trying to teach the freshmen how to compete in 3A."

"The last time I was in 3A I had a giant (team) pack running with me," Parisi said. "I have to learn to race with myself again."

Mary Weber, Terese Tully and Grace Andringa were also in the top 20 for Benet in respective slots Nos. 15, 17 and 19.

Parisi and Diamond were the Redwings' fourth- and fifth-counting runners for the 2019 champions.

"We are getting our act together," Parisi said.

Timothy Christian, the only other local program, was ninth (261 points) as Cailey Schuurmann led the way in slot No. 42.

Kaneland was fourth with 149 points as Alli Gonnella snared the final top-10 berth with her 19:57.59 clocking.

"I normally like to come into this with a good attitude and have fun," Gonnella said. "It's my home course, and I just enjoy seeing the spectators and all the people running."

Jacobs' sixth-place finish (156) was flavored by Adeline Gorman in the No. 18 spot; Hampshire, No. 11 overall, was led by Kassidy Papa.

Larkin had no margin for error with only five girls in the race.

But the Royals' Heather Durrant, a South Elgin transfer, continued turning heads in her rapidly ascending junior campaign.

Durrant was third in 18:44.13 as the Royals (197) finished seventh overall.

"I am proud of what I have done so far this season," Durrant said. "I am focusing on my pacing. This is helping me get my all-time PR. I am almost there."

In the boys race, Benet was also the local standard-bearer with its third-place finish (133).

The Redwings, led by Aiden Hulett and Dom Ullmer, edged Jacobs on a sixth-runner tiebreaker.

"I thought I would do well but not (on) varsity," said Hulett (No. 18), on his freshman expectations. "I am real happy with my time. I kind of set goals to beat (my opponents') times."

Ullmer, 22nd, was making his season debut.

"It was a good first race, but I'm not happy with my performance," Ullmer said. "The problem was that I kind of went out like I did last year. I am not at that level yet."

Glenbard West was fifth at 134; Downers North was 10th with its frosh-soph team substituting for the varsity, and Timothy Christian finished 14th.

Glenbard West senior Michael Miller was eighth in 16:16.65.

"I knew I wasn't going to be 100 percent at this meet," Miller said. "This is probably the most competitive -- at least for individuals -- it has ever been."

Jacobs' Aidan Demuth was the unquestioned leader with his seventh-place effort in 16:10.32.

Like the Benet girls from two years ago the boys field included the de facto Class 2A reigning state champions in the host Knights.

Senior Christian Phillips' 16:17.59 was good for ninth in pacing the seventh-place Kaneland (143) finish.

"I did not feel any added pressure of doing better than I needed to," Phillips said. "This year is a new season, with new people (for Kaneland). We have to do the best we can."

Aidan Gonzalez was seventh to frame the collective Hampshire effort (eighth, 167).

Burlington Central fielded only three runners, but it did not have any negative repercussions on star senior Yusuf Baig, who was runner-up in 15:30.16.

"That is a true story," Baig said of his coach, Vince Neil, claiming the reigning all-state track athlete was the second-slowest athlete in the program when he joined the squad as a sophomore. "I really wanted to get better coming into (the program) as a 6:55-miler. I have done the miles (to get better)."

Crystal Lake Central, as well as its freshman sensation Ferraro, captured major invitational titles in as many weekends in succession.

Ferrero missed eclipsing the 18-minute barrier by seven one-hundredths of a second.

"The team winning the title was definitely better," Ferrero said. "We all did very well today with our times. That was really important. I didn't think my times would be this good, this early."

In the wake of their team title last weekend in Wauconda, the Tigers were further bolstered by Bryann Mattheai and Annie Ferrero placing sixth and seventh.

Emma Macke and Addison Bechler rounded out the championship effort by placing Nos. 11 and 20.

"Before the season started it was a lot harder but now good for her," Annie Ferrero said of being bested by her little sister. "It helps the team. We have a shot at doing great things this season."

The Burlington Central boys were sixth (139) behind Karson Hollander and Daniel Hamill.

"I wanted to do better," said Hollander, who was six places better than Hamill in fifth. "I think the whole team wanted to do better today. It was exciting to go out and run with new guys (from other schools)."

With its DuPage Valley Conference brethren hailing not terribly far away, DeKalb served notice of its intent -- not to mention potential -- this fall.

Riley Newport, a junior, vanquished all comers in crafting an ideal morning.

The Barbs turned back traditional Class 2A power Belvidere North, 77-85, as Newport toured the course in 15:19.32.

Alex Boyden, the Barbs' senior fulcrum, was third -- second overall among team runners -- in 15:47.78.

Angel Fernandez (12th), Jack Harrison (28th) and Zander Ward (37th) rounded out the Barbs' contributors.

"This is not a fast course, but it's a fun course," Newport said. "It's very well-marked. We all had goals and executed them very well. We lost a lot of seniors last year but may be even better. We threw time out the window. Our only goal is to progress to that state meet, the sectional and conference."

Boyden has one paramount thought.

"A DeKalb team has not made it to state since the '70s," Boyden said. "It is new to me. I was just focusing on the guy on the opponents' team that I was trying to beat."

In the girls' division, Sycamore (250) was eighth as Lily Baker was heads and shoulders above her teammates with a ninth-place showing.