

Press Clippings 01/11/20 to 01/13/20

---Daily Herald---01/13/2020

Over 200 U-46 seniors named Illinois State Scholars

Submitted by: Elgin Area School District U-46

In recognition of their academic performance, more than 200 seniors at Elgin Area School District U-46's five comprehensive high schools have been designated as Illinois State Scholars.

The award reflects approximately the top 10 percent of academic achievers among the Class of 2020 at each participating high school.

A total of 202 students at Elgin, Bartlett, Larkin, South Elgin, and Streamwood high schools recently received notification of the honor from the Illinois Student Assistance Commission, the state program that administers the scholar program and works to make college more affordable through financial aid planning.

The U-46 honorees were among more than 17,000 students from 726 schools across the state who earned the designation this year, the 61st for the State Scholar program.

The scholars are selected based on their ACT and SAT exams and sixth semester class rank.

"We are so incredibly proud of our students for this achievement," said Lela Majstorovic, assistant superintendent for secondary schools. "Their hard work and dedication has earned them the recognition they deserve. We are grateful to our parents, schools, and communities for supporting them along their journey."

State Scholars receive a congratulatory letter and a certificate of achievement. They also receive a digital "badge" noting their award that can be displayed on social media platforms or can be shared through online profiles with friends and family as well as prospective colleges or employers.

The 2020 State Scholars from District U-46 high schools are listed below by high school:

Bartlett High School:

Margaret Arendt, Ishika Ashta, Victor Becerra, Lucy Beck, Allison Belliveau, Ryan Blake, Shreya Boyapati, Christopher Brumbaugh-Cayford, Samuel Burch, Ariel Byun, Kelli Carlos, Riyana Chacko, John Chang, Apoorv Chauhan, Ian Corsiga, Ishan Desai, Madelyn Donnelly, Ritwick Dwivedi, Anuj Gandhi, Nicolas Gomez, Kailey Halterman, Stephanie Hayes, Brian Hodge, Abigail Hultquist, Ashwin Jacob, Andrew Kasper, Sydney Kelly, Jack Kline, Krystian Kresso, Cameron Kunzer, Ryan Leo, Andrew Long, Miguel Luna, Sahithi Manne, Allyson Marchese, Anna Martucci, Victoria Martynko, Zev Meyer, Sharon Nguyen, Raj Parikh, Adesh Patel, Dev Patel, Jhil Patel, Mahir Patel, Pooja Patel, Rayna Patel, Sudip Patel, Urja Patel, Darien Perkins, Madelyn Polly, Jesse Purice, Ahmad Rajwany, Garrett Raver, Ethan Reif, Sharliz Reyes, Suleika Ruiz, Samuel

Sampey, Julia Savov, Adam Schoenrade, William Schultz, Kaushik Selvakumar, Garima Shah, Priya Shah, Riya Shah, Rushabh Shah, Sareena Shah, Sonia Shah, Mikolaj Sordyl, Shriya Srikanth, Samra Syed, Jason Thompson, Tommy Ton, Jacob Anthony Valdez, Sean Watson, Jake Weihe and Dillon Williams.

Elgin High School:

Nada Abuomar, Shakira Acosta, Lindsey Anderson, Asiyah Arastu, Jan Misel Aygul, Armaan Bajpai, Joshua Benitez, Erie Berri, Roshan Betkerur, Shuchir Bhanage, Ramarko Bhattacharya, Ryan Blount, Lindsey Brownfield, Josephine Chavez, Maximillian Coryell, Esha Dahal, Edgar Espinosa, Grecia Espinoza, Matthew Esses, Nina Gambino, Yousif Giyo, Rohan Govind, Isabella Hernandez, Trevor Heydt, Alicia Horn, Jasmine Jacobson, Brendan Lemezis, Kushi Madadakere, Jaanve Mehta, Annabelle Mique, Finley Musser, Alfonso Napoles, Lorena Ortiz, Prem Patel, Shivam Patel, Nathan Patino, Mariam Rahman, Joshua Reyes, Edith Rivera, Tamara Sarmiento, Maja Stachnik, Ravi Thakkar, Jessica Thomas, America Torres, Geri Velinova, Sarah Welch and Elizabeth Wynn.

Larkin High School:

Abigail Anderson, Natalia Benesiewicz, David Betz, Nayeli Castillo -Tristani, Adriana Dinello, Chelsea Edemni, Isaac Exline, Brynne Farnsworth, Eduardo Gonzalez, Alexandra Kiss, Gillian Lee, Elianna Nielsen, Chelsea Pena, Victor Sanchez, Sara Spade, Julia Williams and Rebecca Winer.

South Elgin High School:

Yusra Ahmed, Thomas Alakkatt, Julius Andres, Jocelyn Aranda, Kira Baasch, Derryl Barnes, Kaitlyn Borgardt, Dominick Caldrone, Rylan Cruthers, Tristan Cruz, Allison Cunniffe, Mahima Dave, Kristin Delaney, Nicholas Delisi, Jayme Fortino, Haley Frazer, Zachary Gutierrez, Ryan Harvey, Andrew Jo, Penny Kapadoukakis, Pranav Khare, Rachel Kirby, Ryan Kuchta, Kaleigh Larue, Elijah Lopez, Arif Mahmudi, Kennedy McDonald, Makenna Metoyer, Samuel Miller, Emma Morano, Sophia Moreno, Angelina Negron, Meghan Niziolek, Ayush Patel, Dilan Patel, Kaitlyn Petratos, Paula Romanowski, Joshua Serpico, Daniel Skrzypchak, Sophia Smyth, Brandon Snipe, Alexandra Spires, Haley Szymczak, Kelly White, Trevor Wills, Anna Winterhalder and Emily Zozokos.

Streamwood High School:

Zoe Becker, Tyler Garza, Abril Gomez, Samuel Harris, Peyton Hedger, Chloe Herby, Sophia Inorio, Dominika Kedzior, Mikaela Koehler, Victoria Kopko, Jenna Manzano, Sonya Padilla, Charles Marvin Palapala, Ariana Ruth Vega and Angelo Santos.

---The Courier-News---01/12/2020

Ethics complaints filed against Elgin council members

City attorney probing alleged electioneering with city resources and conflicts of interest

By: Gloria Casas

The city is investigating complaints against two Elgin city council members citing ethics violations, including electioneering using a city-issued email and conflicts of interest.

Councilmen Terry Gavin and Rose Martinez were named in the complaints filed Jan. 8 by former city council candidate Anthony Ortiz and Josue Bosque, a political activist.

In one complaint, it's alleged Gavin used his city email to tell a voter who he supported in the March 2019 election. In the other, Martinez is cited as having a conflict of interest when she voted on School District U-46 issues while she was a district employee.

City Attorney William Cogley, who also serves as the city's ethics officer, said he is investigating the legal questions raised and could not comment further.

"I'm going to issue a legal opinion to the city council on both matters. I want to wait to speak publicly (in order to) give the council the benefit of my opinions" first, Cogley said.

His opinions should be released sometime next week, he said.

Electioneering charge

The Gavin complaint states he violated a state election law on March 28 when he "knowingly and intentionally used city property (email account/servers) to do electioneering. Another instance of this ethics violation also happened on April 28, 2019," the complaint said.

Copies of the emails were obtained through Freedom of Information Act requests filed by Ortiz and Bosque.

"I would be more then (sic) happy to suggest candidates in this historical election," he wrote using his city email address, gavin_t@cityofelgin.org .

Gavin wrote that he supported Dave Kaptain for mayor and council members Martinez and Toby Shaw. He said he did not support Councilwoman Tish Powell because she is "the biggest problem on this council today attacking the police departments & stirring up the protesters threatening the city over Lt. Jensen."

He was referencing the lieutenant involved in the fatal shooting of Elgin resident Decynthia Clements in March 2018.

Gavin gave a tepid endorsement to Councilman John Steffen, who “is okay to work with but he is supporting some bad candidates in this race,” he wrote.

In the race for a two-year seat, Gavin said he supported Steve Thoren over candidates Jerri McCue and Baldemar Lopez, who was ultimately elected.

“Now the most contested race is the 2 year race. I am totally supporting Steve Thoren,” he wrote. “I know Steve well for nearly 20 years & he wants what’s best for Elgin. The bad actor in this race is Baldemar Lopez (illegal immigration attorney) who has no true links to Elgin but has support from democrats from Chicago & here to join with Powell & others. They hope to radically shift this council to the far left.”

The email ended, “The future of the city is very much up for grabs. Thank you for asking!”

In the April 28 email, Gavin weighed in on the election results. All the candidates he supported won other than “Steve Thoren & without a 3rd candidate in that race he would have won too. Sadly Mr. Lopez bought a Council seat in my opinion.”

Under state law, “state employees shall not intentionally misappropriate any state (city) property or resources by engaging in any prohibited political activity for the benefit of any campaign for elective office or any political organization” Someone violates the provision can be charged with a class A misdemeanor, the complaint states.

It’s also a violation of Elgin city code, which prohibits the use of state property or resources for political activities, the complaint said.

Gavin denied any wrongdoing.

“I may have made a mistake. I didn’t realize it was a city email. I was responding to a friend of mine who asked me a straight question, and I gave him an honest answer,” Gavin said. “I’ve been in office for 11 years and never been accused of any unethical behavior. I have always been honest about what I do for a living. I’m very forthright and open and honest.”

Conflict of interest

The complaint against Martinez focuses on two instances in which she voted yes on issues related to U-46 despite being employed as a district school bus driver. She no longer holds that job.

“There are many times that Councilwoman Martinez has voted for U-46 agenda items,” the complaint said, citing among them a request for council approval in July 2019 for “planned development as a Map Amendment to Establish School District U-46 Bus Operators’ Offices with School Bus Parking and Other Administrative Offices.”

Martinez did not abstain from the vote although the petition directly “affects her employment with School District U-46. This is a violation of 2.08.080: Rules of Procedure line ‘Q’ and ‘R,’” the complaint said.

Elgin City Code, which can be viewed on the city’s website says “The Mayor or any Council member who in good conscience believes he may have a conflict of interest in any matter before the Council shall disqualify himself from voting thereon” and “Any Council member who does not vote on any matter for which the roll is called shall be counted as having voted with the prevailing side. This rule shall not apply when a Council member has disqualified himself as a result of a conflict of interest.”

Another section of the city code says, “All conflicts of interest and circumstances giving rise to a perceived conflict of interest or the appearance of impropriety shall be avoided. Members must avoid the appearance of favoritism toward people and organizations with whom a member is affiliated. Examples include if a member serves as a volunteer board member for a service organization, the member must not vote on any matter which will directly affect that organization.”

In addition to the July vote, Martinez also is cited in the complaint for voting yes in September on an agreement to continue having a police officer assigned to U-46 as school resource officers at a cost of \$505,242.

“These are just two instances Councilwoman Martinez violated these rules. There are many more through her tenure on the city council,” the complaint said.

Ethics reform

Mayor Kaptain said he thought it was “legitimate” for Ortiz and Bosque to raise the issues, although “these things happened once in a while. I think they (councilmen) have to use their judgment.”

There’s always a potential of a conflict of interest while serving on the council, Kaptain said. Council members receive a lot of email and there’s always a danger, particularly when using different devices, where some responses are accidentally sent using city email, he said.

“I’m not defending anyone here, but that kind of stuff can happen,” he said.

Kaptain said he’d like to strengthen the city’s ethics ordinance and plans to introduce amendments by the end of January. “Some of these things go back 10 years and have just been sitting there, I thought it was time to do something,” he said.

“I want everyone to do what’s right. I want to be transparent,” Kaptain said.

Ortiz spoke at Wednesday’s council meeting and thanked Kaptain for giving him a platform to speak about the ethics issues. An “ethics overhaul from top to bottom” is warranted, Ortiz said.

SPORTS

---Daily Herald---01/12/2020

Girls Basketball

An ace in Ashley

Miller marks double-double as Larkin erupts in first quarter to down Elgin

By Paul Johnson



Larkin's Ashley Miller looks to pass against the defense of Elgin's Margaretha Troyke in an Upstate Eight Conference game on Friday.

As her senior season continues, Larkin forward Ashley Miller is coming into her own. She put together another solid performance Friday night as the Royals rolled to a 57-33 Upstate Eight Conference victory over crosstown rival Elgin.

Miller scored a game-high 19 points and grabbed 13 rebounds for Larkin (5-11, 3-5).

"I'm just finding open spots on the court," Miller said. "I try to get the ball as much as I can and take good shots. I like to push myself as much as I can to get the ball."

Miller got going quickly as Larkin erupted in the opening eight minutes. Miller scored nine points, including a 3-pointer at the end of the first quarter to give the Royals a 23-6 lead.

"It was pretty big," Miller said. "It definitely gave us momentum to keep going the rest of the game."

Larkin ended up holding a 39-12 lead at halftime.

"We played pretty well in the first quarter," Larkin coach Stephen Knapp said. "We have size. I know that hurts Elgin pretty bad because they don't have it."

"I feel like we had 10 offensive rebounds in the first quarter. We'd miss a shot, we'd get another chance almost every time."

Elgin (2-14, 0-9) didn't give up, though. The Maroons outscored Larkin 21-18 in the second half.

"We knew coming out of the box we would be at a disadvantage," Elgin coach Nick Bumbales said. "We've struggled with teams like that so far this season. It kind of threw us off our rhythm a little bit."

“But I thought in the second half we came back and played strong. I’m proud of the girls for that.”

Senior forward Giana Kilbert paced Elgin with 17 points.

“She’s been playing great,” Bumbales said. “She’s a super athlete. She’s really found her niche here. She’s been fabulous — maximum effort.”

Aaliyah Dixon added 15 points for Larkin. She is now 17 away from reaching 1,000 career points. Miller spent her first two seasons at St. Edward before transferring to Larkin. She has been a solid complement to four-year varsity players Dixon and Brianna Young this season.

“She’s been having a lot of big games,” Knapp said of Miller. “She played really well against East Aurora the other night, too. She’s probably averaging 20 the last few games.

“She’s definitely a developing player who is starting to learn the game. She has the inside-out presence, which is nice.”

Knapp confirmed winning against the rival Elgin never gets old.

“It’s always great to win this,” Knapp said. “This is the best win of the year, except for the playoffs.”

Boys Basketball

Royal court

Wheeler-Thomas scores 18 as Larkin overpowers Elgin

By: Paul Johnson



Larkin’s Jashon Johnson-Neals, center, grabs a rebound away from Elgin’s Jeffrey Lomax, left, and Darien Jackson in an Upstate Eight Conference game Friday. Larkin beat crosstown rival Elgin 66-45



Elgin’s Jeffrey Lomax gains control of an errant pass in the game.

Larkin coach Deryn Carter said nobody is harder on sophomore point guard Damari Wheeler-Thomas than himself.

So when he wasn't playing up to his standards, Wheeler-Thomas wanted to improve more than anybody.

The results of that hard work were on display Friday night for the Royals in a 66-45 Upstate Eight Conference win at crosstown rival Elgin.

Wheeler-Thomas scored a game-high 18 points and grabbed seven rebounds for Larkin (2-12, 2-4).

"It was big for me, not performing how I wanted to," Wheeler-Thomas said of his recent games. "I just had to pick it up on defense and it got me started."

Carter was happy to see another step in the development of his sophomore floor leader.

"He's as hard on himself as anyone can be on him, which is the best sign that he's going to be a really good player," Carter said. "He wasn't happy with the way he's been playing.

"He really showed up. This is as big an environment as we've had all year."

Elgin (5-12, 1-6) came out strong. After Jeffrey Lomax hit two free throws to start the second quarter, the Maroons owned a 14-8 lead.

But Larkin took over from there, particularly on the defensive end. The Royals outscored Elgin 37-8 over a span of nearly two quarters to take a 45-22 lead late in the third.

"I just have to tip my hat to those guys," Lomax said. "Those guys played a great game.

"Defensively, you could tell that they really wanted the ball and wanted to get the ball back to the offensive end. We just have to execute better on offense. It just comes down to execution."

Competing with his full 12-player roster for only the second time this season due to various injuries, Carter was happy with his team's defense, particularly in the third quarter as Elgin turned over the ball 10 times.

Larkin finished the game with only 11 turnovers.

"It was the best defense we played since the first game against Rockford Jefferson, to be honest with you," Carter said. "We took care of the ball better.

"If we take care of the ball like we did the first three quarters, we can beat a lot of teams."

Lomax paced Elgin with 17 points. Darien Jackson added 11.

Jashon Johnson-Neals scored 16 points and Fernando Perez had 12, joining Wheeler-Thomas in double figures for Larkin.

Dealing with an extremely young roster that has gone through ups and downs all season, Carter is pleased with the development Larkin has made.

He also was pleased the Royals put it together against Elgin.

“I’m happy,” Carter said. “(Most of these guys) are still only sophomores. I’m excited to see what we did after what we’ve been working on.”

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Sophomore duo steps up for South Elgin

By: Bob Narang



South Elgin's Lane Mvcar (23) goes to the hoop as Romeoville's Trayton Trice (40) defends on Saturday, Jan. 11 in Downers Grove.



South Elgin's Kendis Wiley (32) lays the ball up over Romeoville's Dakoda Joachim on Saturday, Jan. 11 in Downers Grove.



South Elgin's Drew Cwik heads downcourt against Romeoville on Saturday, Jan. 11 in Downers Grove.

After struggling shooting the ball from the perimeter in recent games, Drew Cwik immediately went to work on establishing another streak on Saturday.

The South Elgin sophomore guard canned three 3-pointers in the first quarter to finish with a game-high 16 points in a 55-41 rout of Romeoville in the Winter Classic at Downers Grove North.

Cwik finished with four 3s to form an unstoppable inside-outside combination with Kendis Wiley. Wiley, a sophomore center, scored eight of his 13 points in the opening quarter.

"Drew did a good job shooting the ball but also learning what shots to take and those first-quarter shots were huge because they were off passes," South Elgin coach Brett Johnson said. "He has confidence in himself and been waiting for a game like this, he needed this confidence builder.

Cwik said he gained about "15 pounds" since the end of last season, filling out his frame to add more distance to his jumper. His strength was evident throughout Saturday's game, as he was able to shed defenders while penetrating and bringing the ball up the court.

"I just haven't been getting into a rhythm, but this was a good team win, helping to contribute to a big win," Cwik said. "Today was a huge confidence builder with my shot."

Cwik credited his offseason workouts with Wiley for helping to push him to be prepared to play a bigger role with more responsibility on the varsity this season.

"All that work with Kendis is paying off now," he said. "I also was working on my game this summer. I'm quicker and stronger, especially in my legs which helps get that acceleration that I need."

The Storm (7-11) pulled away in the second half behind a strong defensive effort, limiting the Spartans (8-7) to one shot many possessions, forcing turnovers and crashing the boards. The Spartans went nearly seven minutes in the second half without registering a point.

"We've had games where we've lost leads late in games and not been able to finish, but today we did a great job finishing, especially at the end of the third quarter," Johnson said. "We defended well, did a good job stopping a quick, athletic and fast Romeoville team even if they didn't have all their guys."

The Spartans played the last quarter and half without starting point guard Dakoda Joachim, who suffered an apparent hip injury on a drive to the basket. Diego Durr led the Spartans with eight points.

"We just had a crazy second half, had some injuries and just fell apart when our point guard went down," Romeoville coach Marc Howard said. "I don't know what happened, just fell apart. But that's a good South Elgin team. They were patient, looked for good shots and played well."

Girls bowling: South Elgin a solid 3rd at Prospect

By: Bill Esbrook

South Elgin junior bowler Breanne Augustine really appreciates the support of her teammates.

"They're awesome," said the junior. "We support each other, and this is like a second family to me."

Saturday afternoon at the Prospect New Year's Invitational, Augustine and her family excelled with a third-place finish with a 6-game total of 5,920.

Lockport won the invite while Minooka finished second.

"The kids were awesome today," said Storm coach Mike Anzalone. "They worked well together, they supported each other, and did really well."

"Breanna is very consistent and very passionate about the game. She loves doing what she does, she loves her teammates and has a great time."

Rebecca Howard of Buffalo Grove also excelled at the invite, posting an 1,199 pinfall to finish 13th overall.

"I really tried to work hard in the offseason," said Howard, a senior, "to get to where I am at this point."

"She's been top two in every tournament she's bowled in this year," said BG coach Chris VanGrondelle. "Rebecca has bowled really solid. She definitely wants to bowl in college and she has the ability."

"It's way more for her than just being a bowler. She's a coach to the other kids and she's an incredible leader."

It's the 31st year of the well-run Prospect New Year's tourney and Knights' coach Ashley Ruszczak says that she has a good mix of teams in the invitational.

"It's a huge tournament for us," said Ruszczak. "Our girls work really, really hard and it's fun to see the girls put in the hard work and perform. We've got some of the more competitive teams (in the state) and we've also got some middle of the pack teams as well and it gives everyone a chance to shine."

After the first 3 games were in the books, the teams were seeded into groups for the afternoon session, and Elk Grove won the Knights Division championship, led by senior Lillie Zahn, while Conant (2,543) took first in the Queens Division.

Karlea Cesario of South Elgin was eighth overall in the meet with a 1,252; Haylie Frick of Schaumburg shot an 1,184 to place 14th, while Conant's Jemma Skweres finished at 1,173, good for 17th individually.

"She's been phenomenal," said Cougars coach Jennifer Mikrut of Skweres. "She leads our team, she's in the top six in the (MSL) conference, she's a leader and works so hard on her game. Just a great attitude, very positive and a great teammate."

"This year is different from the last two years," said Skweres. "Nice to be an upperclassmen, and I came out today knowing I had my team behind me. We want to go to state as team, stay connected and stay bonded."

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Bartlett bests South Elgin on senior night

By: Mike Garofola

Bartlett continues to state its case as a serious contender for the Upstate Eight crown later this month at the conference tournament.

The Hawks moved their league record to 5-1 following a 46-30 victory over South Elgin Friday night before an appreciative Senior Night crowd.

The home side was able to keep visiting South Elgin at arm's length during a pin frenzy stretch that saw the Hawks (11-9) hold a 34-30 advantage with two bouts remaining.

But consecutive pins under two minutes from Tyler Rivelli (170) then Brian Caputo (182) at 182 closed out the Storm for good -- much to the delight of coach John Glorioso.

"Just a terrific effort from the guys tonight -- especially from our heavyweight (Joey Latrofa) and some of our younger guys (like) Alex Brown at 113."

"I can't tell you how good it feels to get a win on our Senior Night, when the four of us honored, wrestling for the last time at home, leave the gym with a great team win," said a thrilled Rivelli, who needed just 1:34 to clinch victory with a 10-point advantage with just Caputo's match remaining.

"This is a great sport and program to be a part of. It's taught me a lot about life, hard work and competition, and right now, I feel like our team is coming together at the right time (which) should give us a great chance to win conference in a couple of weeks," added Rivelli.

The two clubs traded pins at 195 and 220 to start things out before the home side scored the next 16 points after a pin from Latrofa and a major decision by Brown was sandwiched between victories by Antonio Morell (106) and Jack Kanshiro at 120.

However, South Elgin would not go away despite chasing a 22-6 deficit.

Andre Rios (126) recorded a fall for the Storm, as did Joey Clinite (138) and teammate Logan Swangren to keep the visitors within 34-24.

"I really liked the way we fought to stay in this match. Tonight (we) battled, and worked hard to stay close but it just wasn't enough," said junior Michael Roath (220), who was a UEC champ, sectional qualifier, and frosh-soph state champion a year ago, finishing with 24 victories overall.

South Elgin's top man, Elijah Lopez, registered a pin at 160, as did Joey Clinite (138) while the Hawks trio of Drew Bruskin (132) and seniors Gavin Moretti (152) and Jacob Cwenar at 195 did the same.

Bartlett is at the Glenbard West Invite Saturday, while South Elgin goes to the Downers Grove quad.

Hare hits 1,000 as Bartlett wins battle of UEC unbeatens

By: John Lemon



Mackenzie Hare

Both Bartlett and South Elgin entered their rivalry game Friday night unbeaten in the Upstate Eight Conference, and the Storm could not have drawn up a much better start.

South Elgin hit six 3-pointers in the first quarter and a half, dominated the Hawks on the glass and played lockdown defense on Bartlett's two star players, Lexie Sinclair and Mackenzie Hare.

But Bartlett had the answer.

Trinity Reyes swished a pair of 3-pointers just before halftime, Cierra Thomas provided a spark off the bench, and Danielle Hedeem and Kylie Walker combined for 10 points and 14 rebounds.

Bartlett erased an early 21-9 deficit, taking the lead for good with a 12-0 run in the third quarter on its way to a 56-45 victory and sole possession of the conference lead.

"Other girls stepped up huge," Bartlett coach Joe Eirich said. "Made huge shots. Did the dirty work. Cierra, the energy she brought off the bench, she won us that game."

South Elgin (15-6, 8-1) put Madison Waichunas on Hare and Caroline Croft on Sinclair, face guarding the two with help quick to come if either got free for a second.

It worked early. Hare scored just 3 points in the first half and Sinclair 6, and when Ella Winterhalder buried her third 3-pointer of the first half the Storm led 26-16.

"I'm super proud of the way we came out," Storm coach Dan Mandernack said. "Flying around, playing great defense, rebounding, knocking down shots."

But the Hawks (15-7, 10-0) used an 8-0 run in the final two minutes of the half, starting with a Sinclair spin move and then two 3s from Reyes, to pull within 26-24 at halftime even after getting outrebounded 26-14 and making just 9 of 30 shots.

"That was a big swing," Mandernack said. "We won that first half by more than 2 points but at the end of the day it's 2 points."

The Hawks' full-court pressure bothered the Storm in the third quarter, creating six turnovers as they took the lead for good 31-29 when Hedeem assisted Sinclair for a layup.

Hare grabbed a rebound and took it the length of the court for a score, and Sinclair found Hedeem for a 3-pointer and a 38-29 lead.

"We rely so much on our athleticism and our pressure," Eirich said. "They had a great game plan, but eventually our pressure and effort wore them down. They were tired."

Leading 40-34 going to the fourth quarter, Hare scored on a baseline drive and then sank a deep 3-pointer to make it 45-36. South Elgin never got closer than 8 points down the stretch, hurting itself with four straight missed free throws and a couple layups that spun out.

After her slow start, Hare still finished with a game-high 19 points, and Sinclair had a double-double with 15 points and 12 rebounds.

Hare's final points came with 12 seconds to go at the free-throw line and pushed her over 1,000 for her career -- becoming the rare player to reach the milestone as a sophomore.

"It's pretty cool," said Hare, who is averaging 20.3 points per game. "I'm thankful for my teammates and coaches, they definitely helped me through this from freshman to sophomore year they have been so welcoming and great."

Raina Yang and Croft scored 10 points for the Storm, Winterhalder and Megan McClure had 9 and Waichunas 7.

McClure also grabbed 16 rebounds. But after hitting those six quick 3s at the start, the Storm made just two more.

South Elgin gets another shot at the Hawks on Feb. 7.

"Their heart and hustle was there the whole time," Mandernack said. "When you lose a big game as a coach I learned a lot about my team. They kept fighting until the end, and it bodes well for the future."

Larkin knocks off Elgin

By: Jerry Fitzpatrick

A young Larkin boys basketball team plagued by injuries had experienced little success to this point in what coach Deryn Carter termed a "a weird season."

Friday's 66-45 victory over rival Elgin at Chesbrough Field House served as a beacon of hope for a squad that had all 12 players on the roster available for only the second time since the campaign began.

The Royals entered Friday's Upstate Eight Conference game with one victory to their credit, but a full lineup that included recently activated junior guard DJ Jones and talented sophomore Fernando Perez Jr. dominated the middle two quarters and propelled Larkin (2-14, 2-5). Elgin (5-12, 1-6) led 12-8 after one quarter as 6-foot-5 junior forward Jeffery Lomax scored 6 of his team-high 18 points and grabbed 3 of his 8 rebounds.

The Royals countered by outscoring the Maroons 23-8 in the second quarter to build a 31-20 halftime lead. Perez drained 3-pointers on consecutive possessions as Larkin closed the half on a 13-2 run.

Elgin turned the ball over six times in the second quarter.

"Defensively, you could tell they really wanted the ball," Lomax said. "They really wanted to get it back on the offensive side. I just have to tip my hat to them, and we have to execute better on offense. We couldn't really get into our sets. We were trying to go to fast. They kind of sped us up in that stretch."

Larkin pressure forced 9 more third-quarter turnovers by Elgin, which managed only 6 field-goal attempts in the period as a result. Larkin outscored Elgin 14-4 to take a commanding 45-24 lead through three quarters.

"We played with good energy in the first half but maybe a step slow on a rotation and a step slow on the second rotation," Carter said. "The second half, that's the best we've played defense probably since the first game at Rockford Jefferson."

Sophomore point guard Damari Wheeler-Thomas led the Royals with 18 points. Senior Jashon Johnson-Neals finished with 16 points and 7 rebounds. Perez contributed 12 points and 4 rebounds and Jones scored 9 points on three 3-pointers.

"This was the most important game of the year for us so far," Johnson-Neals said. "Hopefully, we can keep it going."

Larkin committed only 8 turnovers in the game's first three quarters and finished with 12.

"If we take care of the ball the way we did the first three quarters, we can beat a lot of people," Carter said.

Junior guard Darien Jackson scored 9 points for Elgin.

The Royals have won 18 of the last 19 games against the Maroons but still trail the all-time series 80-58.