

50 Years Ago

1953 Tournament

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Swain Hall, on the Minot State campus, was the scene of the 1953 State Class B Basketball Tournament with Minot State basketball coach, Herb Parker, and Minot High basketball coach, Ace Hovdal, acting as tournament managers. Three officials: Cliff Nygard, Earl Hoffman and W.A. Odne were assigned to work the tourney's 11 games.

Minot Model, under new coach, Vince Elgie, was back to defend their 1952 title, as well as preserving an unblemished season mark of 28-0. The Beaver Kits would also be attempting to extend their current winning streak to 43 straight wins while winning Model's 5th State Title in seven years. 1952 runnerup, Rugby, with Melly Johnson continuing as their coach, was another returnee from last year and it would be the Panthers' ninth state tourney appearance. Kenny Ulland's Lisbon Broncos, state champions in 1951, were making their sixth straight visit to the final eight. The Beach Buccaneers of coach Jerry Moriarity, who came into the 1952 State with a perfect record, only to lose their quarter-final game against Kenmare, were back with another perfect record.

Coach Al Keck's Garrison Troopers were making their first appearance in the state classic and carried a 28-3 record, with all three losses coming at the hands of Minot Model. This would be the Troopers' first visit to the state tournament. West Fargo would also be making their first and last class B appearance and coach George Galloway's Packers were 21 and 6 in pre-state tournament play. Killdeer would be their second state appearance and coach John Bartholome's Cowboys had won 22 pre-state tournament games while losing 10. Coach Paul Baertsch's Harvey Hornets who were back for the second time - and first since 1945 - held a record of 23 wins and 5 losses prior to state tourney play.

In the tournament opener, Killdeer and West Fargo were never separated by more than four points and went into overtime before the Packers picked up a 48-47 victory. Killdeer made 17 of 49 field goals attempts for 34.7% and were led in scoring by Dale Dolezal with 18 points and Anton Dinius with 16. For the Packers, who scored on 20 of 59 field goals for 33.9%, Leon Berkild counted 14 points and Curt Quenette had 13. In the second quarter-final, Rugby took the lead in the third quarter and held it until 3:00 remained. At that point Garrison took over, scoring nine of the last 11 points for a 53-45 victory. The coach's brother, Bud Keck, paced the Troopers with 25 points while Lee Robinson counted 12. Gary Torgerson, with 13 points, was the only Panther in double figures.

For the second year in a row, an undefeated Beach team suffered their first defeat of the year in the first round of the State Class B Basketball Tournament. This time it would be the Harvey Hornets, with a strong fourth quarter, who'd come away with the victory, 53-45. Beach led 18-10 at the end of the first period, 27-19 at the half and 39-37 at the end of three. The Hornets scored the next 10 points, however, in driving toward their final margin of victory. Sophomore, Howard Theige, led the Hornets with 19 points while Marvin Bender had 12 and Dick Gross 10. Beach, with regular center Bob Raisler sidelined, were led by Bill Bares 14 points and Larry Bares 10. Minot Model built up a 17 point margin at the half in racing to a 74-50 win over Lisbon in the final game of the first round. Henry Milkey topped the Beaver Kits in scoring with 21 points while Jim Peterson totaled 19 and Bud Rice 10. LeRoy Foss and Dallas Kopp each scored 13 for Lisbon while James Boock added 10.

Rugby took advantage of a cold shooting Killdeer team (8 of 34: 23.5%) in scoring a 67-24 win in the consolation round of the tournament. Gary Torgerson led Rugby's well-

balanced scoring with 13 points while Whitey Aus counted 12 and Doug Spillum 11. Killdeer had no player in double figures. Lisbon took Beach out of the tournament with a 57-55 overtime win in the second consolation game of the day. Ed Rotenberger led the Bronco with 16 points and LeRoy Foss added 14. For the Bucs, Larry Bares scored 21 points and Jerry Haigh 12.

Before 3,400 fans at Minot State's Swain Hall, Garrison cruised to the state championship game with a 63-51 win over West Fargo in the first semi-final game. The Troopers, who claimed a 33-20 advantage at halftime, were never threatened. Garrison made 23 of 63 field goal attempts for a 36.5% average and were led in scoring by Bud Keck's 20 points. Perl Keys and Lee Robinson added to the Trooper with 14 and 12 points, respectively. The Packers were held to 26.4% shooting on 19 of 72, with Curt Quenette the only one in double figures. Behind 26-25 at halftime, the Minot Model Beaver Kits scored 7 in row in the third quarter to take the lead in the night's second semi-final. Harvey was behind by only 6 points, 45-39 with 4:11 to play, but went down by a final score of 60-45. Henry Milkey led Model with 19 points while 6'6" Jim Glasoe had 13 and 6'4" Jim Walker scored 12 points. Howard Theige and Dick Gross each had 10 points for the Hornets.

Rugby captured fifth place with a 56-46 win over Lisbon. The Panthers were led by four players in double figures: Jim Fetting with 14, Gary Torgerson with 12, Whitey Aus with 11 and Jack Monson with 10. Jim Bock, with 12 points was the only Lisbon player in double figures. West Fargo shot just 31.8% on 14 out of 34 from the field, but it was good enough to beat Harvey's 20.8 shooting percentage in the battle for third place. The final score was 39 to 38 with just two players in double figures: West Fargo's Curt Quenette with 15 points and Harvey's Marv Bender with 13.

Four thousand fans packed Minot State's Swain Hall as Minot Model attempted to win their 46th straight game over a two year period. They were also looking for their second straight State Class B title and Model's fifth title in the last seven years. Standing in their way were the Garrison Troopers whose only three losses that year were at the hands of the Beaver Kits. The Troopers kept it close with a five point separation or less throughout most of the contest. With the score 45-41 and just 3:20 remaining however, Model's Bud Rice proceeded to score his only two baskets of the night to expand the lead to 49-41. Garrison closed once again to 49-45 with 1:12 remaining, but finally fell to the defending champs for the fourth time that year - this time by a score of 51-47.

Only one of the 1953 qualifiers (Beach) would return in 1954. Model would come back again in 1957 and 1958, but would close their school a short time later. Garrison didn't make it back until 1976, and again in 1993. Harvey re-appeared again in 1957, but has not had state trips since then. Killdeer has not been back since 1953 and two of the 1953 entrees, Rugby and Lisbon, spent some years in the class A ranks. Rugby re-appeared in the B Tourney in 1997 and Lisbon had back-to-back appearances in 1998 and 1999. West Fargo, of course, has gone permanently to the Class A ranks and holds three state titles in that division.

The 1953 State Class B All Tournament Team as selected by the Bismarck Tribune:

FIRST TEAM
 Jim Walker, Model
 Curt Quenette, West Fargo
 Rub Keck, Garrison
 Henry Milkey, Model
 Perl Keys, Garrison

SECOND TEAM
 Gary Torgerson, Rugby
 Jim Peterson, Model
 Rub Glasoe, Model
 Tom Wiedmeier, Harvey
 Larry Bares, Beach

Excerpted from Bismarck Tribune files

1953 State B Champion Minot Model



Front Row (l. to r.): Gerald Rice, Henry Milkey, Jim Peterson, Jim Glasoe, LeRoy "Bud" Rice. Back Row: Principal Sid Bjorlie, Jerome "Wheaties" Peterson, Claude Odland, Ron Nelson, Bob Esterby, Mel Opstad, Head Coach Vince Elgie.

1953 State B Runner-Up Garrison



Seated (l. to r.): Russell Willits, Harold DeHaven. Front Row: Dennis Thompson, Gordon Gilles, Dennis Huber, Harold Krausert. Back Row: Coach Al Keck, Ernest (Bud) Saylor, Elmer Keck, Lee Robinson, Perl Keys, Robert Fisher, Lynn Hummel. Not Pictured: Asst. Coach Bob Misslin