

1963 North Dakota Class C Basketball Tournament

The 1963 State Class C Basketball Tournament would mark the final year of that class's existence as all of North Dakota's Class B and Class C high schools would be re-organized into one division, beginning with the 1963-64 season. This would be the 18th year of the Class C program, including the four years that they were combined with the Consolidated League, a small school organization with its own 29 year history. The State Tournament would be played in Jamestown with Jamestown Superintendent, Bill Gussner as the tournament manager. The officials would be Dick Koppenhaver, Dallas Kopp, Fred Humphrey, and Gordon Riffe.

The eight Class C Regionals were four team affairs and, in 1963, they were played on Monday, March 11 and Tuesday, March 12. The state tourney would be played on March 21 through 23 and the first round pairings were as follows: Afternoon games (upper bracket) Flaxton vs Fordville and Sharon vs Oriska. The evening games (lower bracket) would have Butte meeting Mandaree, and undefeated Mapleton playing North Central of Rogers. Butte (1952) was the only previous Class C champion in this year's field although Sharon was a two-title winner (1941 & 1946) in the Consolidated League program. Mandaree was the only returning team from the 1962 tournament.

In the tournament opener, Fordville jumped off to a 9-0 lead, but Flaxton fought back to tie it up at 15 each at the end of the half. Flaxton pulled away in the second half, however, and advanced to the tournament's semi-finals with a 41-30 win. Craig Schultz was Flaxton's leader with 20 points while John Hagen led Fordville with 11. In the other afternoon game, Sharon outscored Oriska 18 to 4 in the last quarter to advance with a 50 to 39 win. Dan Evenstad scored 17 points for Sharon and Glen Netland added 12 points to their total. Oriska's leaders were Bob Paeper with 18 and Eugene Baumgartner with 17 points.

Butte shot a respectable 42% on 21 for 50 field goal attempts in defeating Mandaree by a 59-50 margin in the

evening's first contest. Neil Herring (6'7H") paced Butte with 28 points while Ron Nechiporenko added 10. Ray Good Bird with 21 points and Arnold Good Bird with 11 led Mandaree, who were held back by 26.7 (4 of 15) shooting from the free throw line. In the first round's final game, undefeated Mapleton led North Central of Rogers by a 35 to 22 margin with 3 minutes to play, only to hang on for a narrow 36-34 victory. Ron Merrigan led Mapleton with 15 points and Bob Wilson was the North Central scoring leader.

In Friday's consolation play, Oriska burned the nets with a 54.7 shooting average and stopped Fordville by a score of 77 to 55. Oriska enjoyed a third quarter lead of 60-27 and had four players in double figure scoring: Eugene Baumgartner had 25, Bob Paeper had 22, Kent Baumgartner scored 17, and Keith Baumgartner had 13 points. Gerald Cost scored 23 points and Pat Hagen had 10 for Fordville. In the second consolidation game, Mandaree scored the first 12 points only to have North Central storm back to win it by a margin of 40-37.

Sharon led Flaxton 30 to 22 going into the last quarter of the first semi-final game but were forced into overtime when Flaxton outscored them 12 to 4 in that final period. Sharon survived in overtime, however, and went on to win it by a count of 40 to 37. Mike Ostenson scored half of Sharon's points with 20 while Craig Schultz and Tom Frick had 19 and 11, respectively, for Flaxton. Mapleton was hit with a 31 points output from Butte's 6'7H" Neil Herring, but survived for a 63 to 50 win over Butte in the second semi-final. Paul McKinnon scored 18, Ron Merigan 14, and Mel Scherweit and Neil Thompson had 11 apiece for Mapleton.

North Central defeated Oriska for the third time in the 1962-63 basketball season and picked up fifth place with a 65-49 win. Oriska had an 18 to 9 lead when 6'3" Eugene Baumgartner, averaging 25 points a game, sprained his ankle and sat out the remainder of the game. North Central's scoring leaders were Tom Berge with 17 and Bob Wilson with 12. Bob Paeper and

1963 State C Champion Mapleton



Front: Coach Harry Cline. Standing (l. to r.): Mel Scherweit, Roger Magemeister, Paul McKinnon, Rick Waxler, Larry Akason, Ron Merrigan, Dave Miller, Tom McKinnon, Neil Thompson, Lee Otos, Frank Witte.

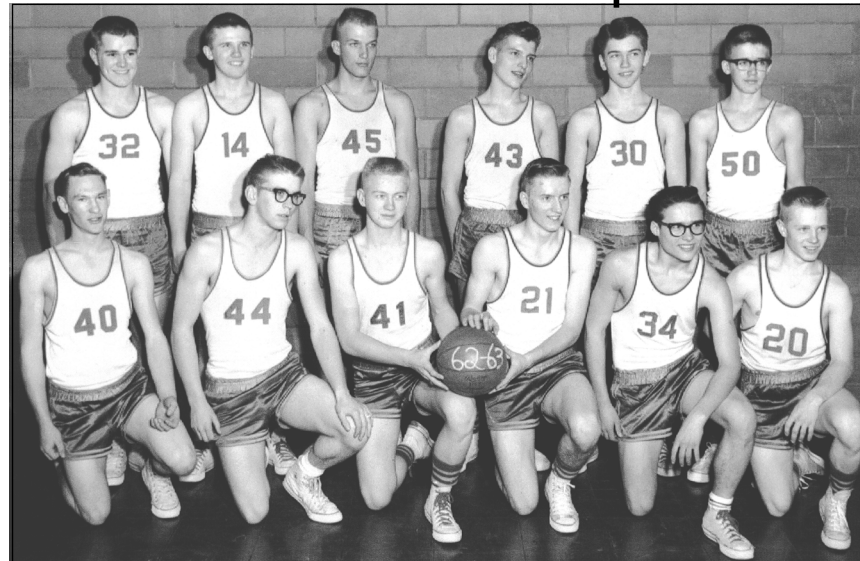
Keith Baumgartner had 20 and 11, respectively, for Oriska. Butte's Neil Herring scored 31 (90 for the tournament) to break Lynn Schneekloth of Tower City's scoring record of 86 established the previous year. Aided by that effort, Butte went on to capture third place in this tourney by defeating Flaxton 45-42. Craig Schultz was the scoring leader for

Flaxton with 15 points.

Mapleton completed an undefeated season as they won the 1963 State Class C Championship with a 57-45 victory over Sharon. Mapleton led at all of the quarter stops: 14-10, 28-22, and 40-30. Their scoring leaders were Paul McKinnon with 18 points, Mel Scherweit with 15, and Ron Merrigan with 13. Mike Ostenson and

Dick Karlgaard
Excerpted from Bismarck Tribune files

1963 State C Runner-Up Sharon Knight



Front Row (l. to r.): Dana Frojen, Charles Antonson, Nathan Nygaard, Douglas Evenstad, David Gylten, Jack Vig. Back Row: Glenn Netland, Douglas Lund, Michael Ostenson, Donovan Evenstad, James Nelson, Dwight Ostenson.