







Progress-Advance

sports of the week

Winning week lifts Laker cagers to second place in TBA

By RICH SWARTZENDRUBER

The Laker basketball team chalked up another win last Friday, but the quality of play nearly matched the sloppy conditions outside the gym produced by the warm-spring like temperatures last weekend.

"It wasn't a pretty one," admitted Laker coach Bill McLellan after his squad's 72-55 victory at home over Imlay City. "We didn't have much intensity. We had it Tuesday night, but you have to go out and do it every night."

He was referring to Lakers' 65-52 win at North Branch earlier in the week. The Green Machine had no trouble with motivation for that game after losing on their home floor to the Broncos earlier in the season.

**FOULS HURT:** Numerous Laker fouls helped keep Imlay City in the game in the first half. Lakers led only 12-8 at the end of the first eight minutes and needed two quick baskets at the end of the first half to post a 30-23 at the intermission.

Laker defenders held the Spartans to just six field goals in the first half, but sent them to the foul line for 13 attempts, of which Imlay City canned 11.

On the flip side, Laker shooters were only 6-14 from the foul line in the first half.

**RUN AND GUN:** In the third quarter, Lakers were successful in speeding up the tempo of the game. An aggressive full-court press

enabled Lakers to quickly score eight consecutive points and take command of the game.

Tom Beer led Laker scoring with 19 points in three quarters of play. In an unusual call, Beer was ejected from the game after a scramble for a loose ball. The official who gave Beer the thumb said he saw the Laker player throw an Imlay City player to the floor with a clenched fist. Beer explained after the game the two players' arms became entangled when going for a loose ball, and he was merely trying to free his arm.

The incident made no difference in the outcome, however, as the Spartans couldn't narrow the margin closer than 10 points for the remainder of the game after trailing 50-37 at the end of three quarters.

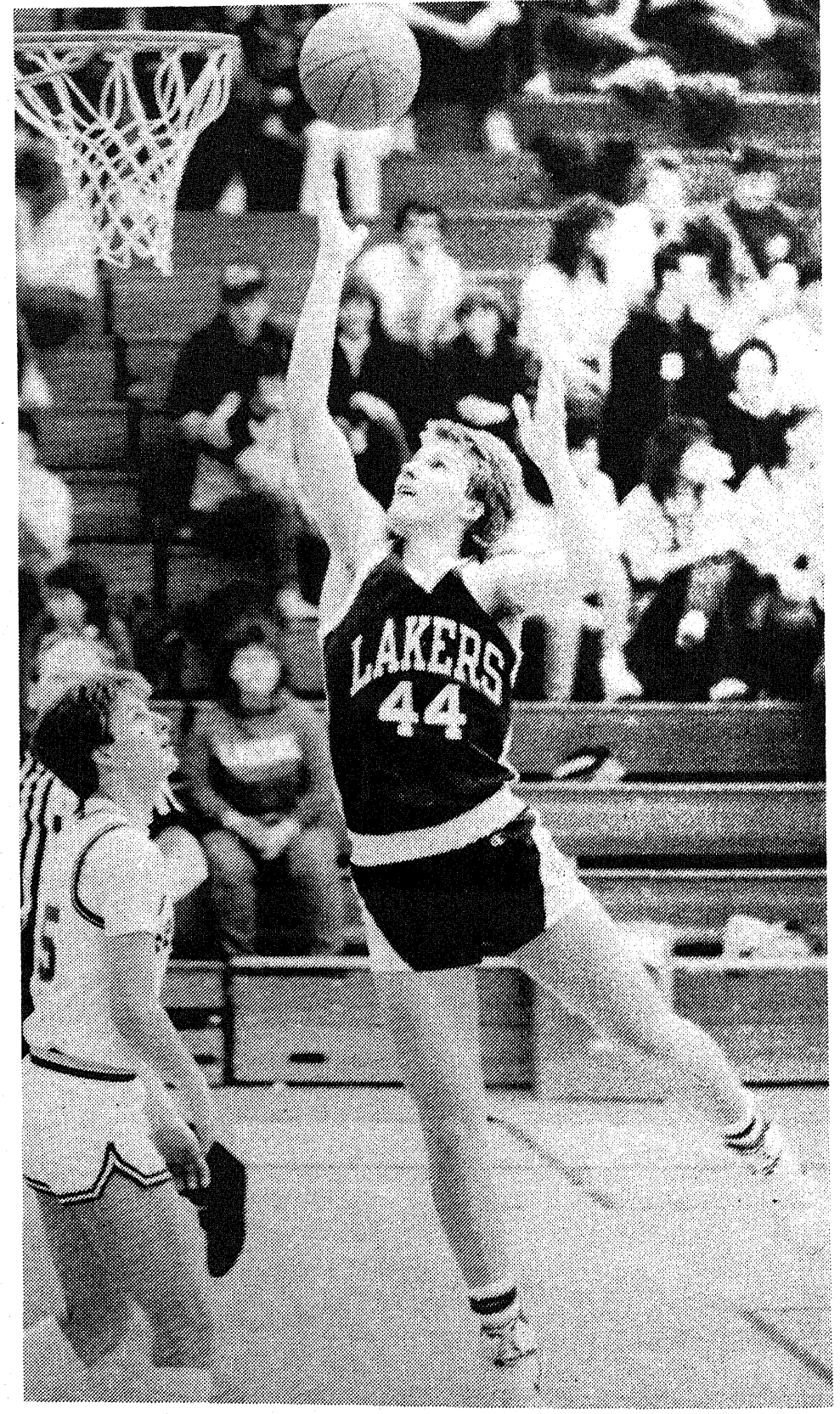
Rounding out Laker scoring leaders in the game were Kendall Wertz with 16 points and Jim Warren with 15.

Imlay City was led by Matt Shene and Ryan McFall with 15 points each. Jeff Combs added 13.

**BRONCO BUSTING:** Last Tuesday, Lakers climbed into a second-place tie with North Branch after the victory on the road against the Broncos.

After trailing 29-23 at halftime, Lakers charged back to with the game going away.

Beer hit 21 points, Paul Elenbaum netted 14 and Dean Roestel added 11 to



**SOARING SOPHOMORE:** Lakers' Kendall Wertz lays in a basket over an Imlay City defender. The Laker sophomore finished the game with 16 points.

**Standings**

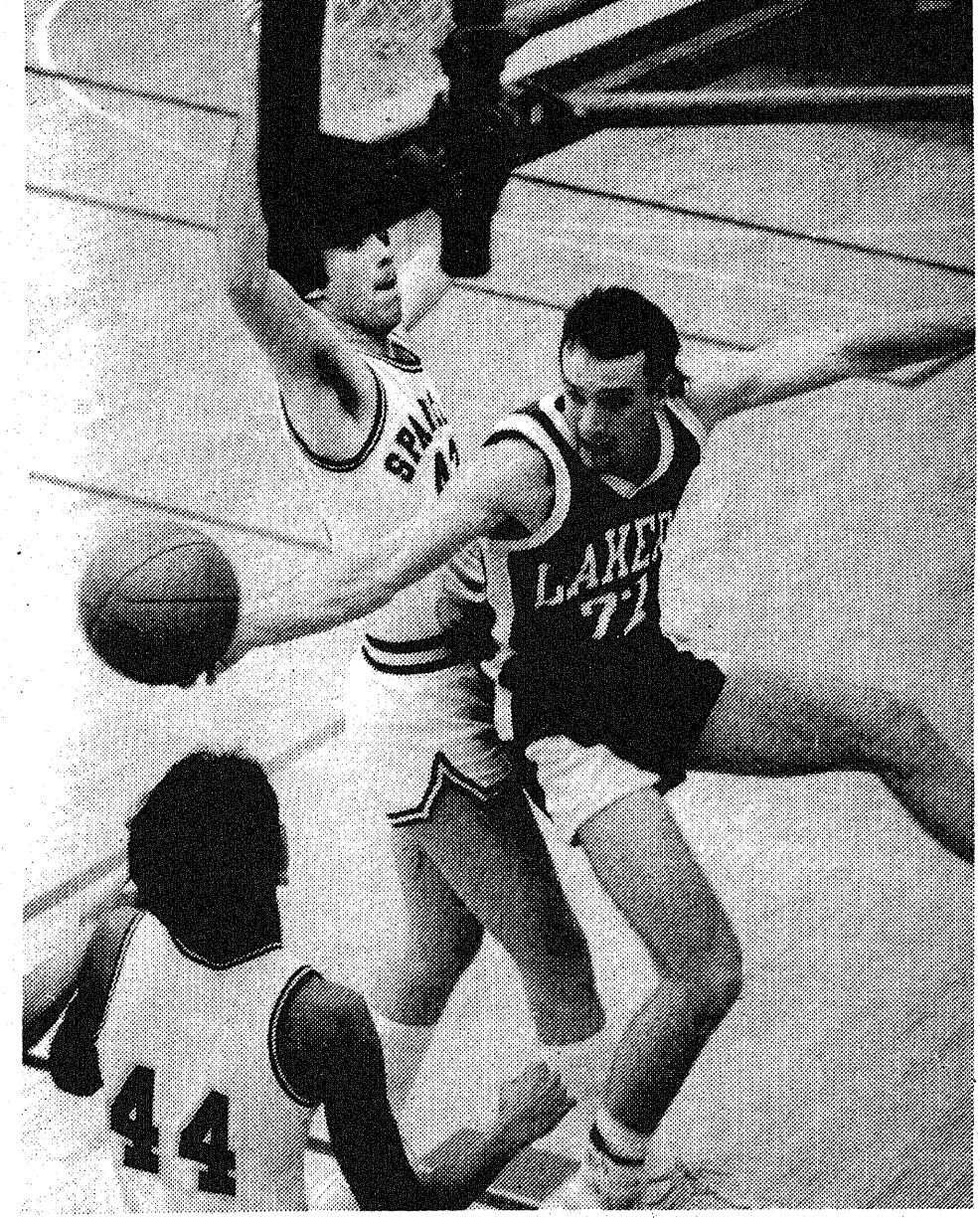
**Basketball**

**Thumb B**

| Team         | League | Overall |
|--------------|--------|---------|
| Cass City    | 12-0   | 16-1    |
| Lakers       | 8-4    | 12-5    |
| North Branch | 8-4    | 10-7    |
| Marlette     | 7-5    | 10-6    |
| Vassar       | 6-6    | 10-7    |
| Imlay City   | 4-8    | 4-13    |
| Bad Axe      | 3-9    | 3-15    |
| Caro         | 0-12   | 0-16    |

**North Central Thumb D**

| Team            | League | Overall |
|-----------------|--------|---------|
| Deckerville     | 13-1   | 14-3    |
| Port Hope       | 11-2   | 13-3    |
| Owen-Gage       | 9-6    | 11-7    |
| Akron-Fairgrove | 7-7    | 9-8     |
| Kingston        | 7-7    | 7-9     |
| North Huron     | 6-8    | 6-11    |
| Pack            | 5-8    | 5-10    |
| CPS             | 4-11   | 6-11    |
| Caseville       | 2-12   | 3-14    |



**DISHING OFF:** Laker guard Dean Roestel shovels the ball to a teammate under the basket as he finds his way blocked by a pair of Imlay City Spartans.

lead Laker scoring in the game.

North Branch was led by Mike Groce with 18 points. Lakers nearly found themselves all alone in second place in the Thumb B Friday night. Lowly Caro nearly earned its first win of the season before bowing to North Branch, 56-54 in overtime.

**COMING UP:** Lakers will travel to Caro on Friday night and are slated for another road game next Tuesday when they meet Valley Lutheran.

**JVs SPLIT:** After dropping a 51-31 loss to North Branch, the Laker junior varsity bested Imlay City, 39-38.

Mark Kretzschmer hit the winning basket with four seconds remaining in the game with Imlay City. He also led Laker scoring in the game with 17 points. Kevin Wolfgram added 10 points.

Scott Richmond hit eight points to lead jayvee scoring against North Branch.

The Laker junior varsity record now stands at 6-6 in league play and 9-8 overall.

**FROSH SPLIT:** Laker freshmen followed the example of the JVs by dropping a 75-47 decision to North Branch before beating Imlay City 61-55.

Billy McLellan hit 23 points against North Branch and also led Laker scoring against Imlay City with 15. Brian Bushey scored 14 and Matt Furness added a dozen in the victory over the Spartans.

Laker spikers win pair of volleyball titles

By RICH SWARTZENDRUBER

High school sports coaches like to have their teams peak at the end of the season so they are playing at the top of their game for post-season tournaments. That appears to be the situation for Laker volleyball coach Francie Novar.

Last week Lakers claimed a pair of championships. They won at least a share of the Thumb B title with a victory over North Branch last Thursday and a Delta Invitational championship on Saturday.

Laker players pulled all aspects of their game together to win the Delta Tourney. The championship trophy is the first earned by Laker spikers this year and Novar hopes it isn't the last.

"We hope we can continue to win tournaments. The next tournament we play will be districts, then

hopefully regionals and state finals," says Novar.

The Delta Tournament championship was especially satisfying for Lakers because they also evened their season record with arch-rival Unionville-Sebewaing on their march to the title. Each team has won two of the four matches they played this season, with the tie-breaker probably coming in the district tournament.

Lakers didn't lose a match on their way to the championship as they posted 15-1, 15-7 wins over Coleman, 15-2, 15-9 victories over Nouvel Catholic Central and 15-1, 15-9 victories over Leeland in pool play. In the quarter-finals, Lakers eliminated

USA, 15-9, 15-7. Brandon was the Laker victim in the semi-finals by scores of 15-8, 15-9.

In the championship match, Lakers defeated Traverse City 15-12, lost a 7-15 game, then rallied to claim the trophy with a 15-10 victory.

Coach Novar said her team didn't give their opponents any breaks and cited statistics to prove it. Of all Laker serves, 88% were put in play. Hitting percentages reflect the same success as 87% of Laker spikes had to be fielded by the opposition.

Julia Sturm registered the most hits with 55-66 for 45 kills, while Cathy Wurst hit 57-62 for 29 kills for the highest success rate of 92%.

Sturm also led the team in blocks with 33-38 and 15 ace blocks.

Kriste Lasceski led Laker serving with 73-82 for 89%.

Jackie Ginter had an outstanding tournament as setter with a 92% success rate and 98 kill assists.

**LEAGUE CHAMPS:** Lakers extended their record to 6-0 in the Thumb B Association with a 15-1, 16-14, 15-2 victory at North Branch.

Sturm was the leading hitter with 14 of 18 attacks, including 10 kills. Wurst served up 17 points and Ginter added 41 sets and 10 kill assists for the winners.

**THIS WEEK:** After hosting Valley Lutheran for a non-conference match on Mon-

McArdle, Shively qualify for regional mat tournament

By RICH SWARTZENDRUBER

Several surprises occurred to Laker wrestlers at the district meet in Cass City last Saturday. Laker coach Tim Blakeney was pleasantly surprised with the performance of Frank Shively in the 126-pound division. Shively finished fourth to advance to regional competition.

Blakeney expected Pat McArdle qualified for regionals in the 198-pound division, but was surprised when he earned that position by finishing second rather than first in his class.

A 12-7 loss to New Lothrop's Chris Wendling in

the championship match was McArdle's first loss of the year. McArdle earned a spot in the finals with a first round bye, a 28-second pin of Dana Forbes of Marlette and a 2:23 pin of Todd Wolschlagler of Bad Axe.

Shively started strong when he pinned Bill Nick of Goodrich and outpointed Dennis Muntz of Bad Axe, 12-7, before being pinned by Brandon Verellen of Capac. District competition then ended for Shively when he was pinned by Chris Baldwin of Burton-Bendle.

The two Laker wrestlers will compete in the regional tournament at New Lothrop on Saturday.

Candles light trail for cross-country skiers at Port Crescent State Park

A candlelight cross-country ski outing and ski clinic is scheduled at Port Crescent State Park next Sunday, March 8.

The clinic will begin at 2 p.m. at the park headquarters, organizers say, and qualified instructors will give assistance to beginners and more advanced tips to experienced skiers.

Candles will provide the light for a one-mile trail through the woods for the two-hour evening event beginning at dark.

The trail is located across the iron bridge at the west end of Port Crescent Road, five miles southwest of Port Austin on M-25.

Refreshments and a bonfire will also be part of the event. A State Park Motor Vehicle permit will be required for vehicle entry into all areas of the park except for the clinic at the headquarters, according to Park Manager Roy Elie.

Bowfishing championship slated at Beadle Bay Marina

Archers will again be retrieving their bows and arrows from winter storage in preparation for the Fourth Annual Great Lakes Bowfishing Championship. The event, organized by National Wildlife Education Foundation and sponsored by Bohning Company, Bushnell and Bowhunter magazine, is scheduled for May 30, 31 at Beadle Bay Marina near Caseville.

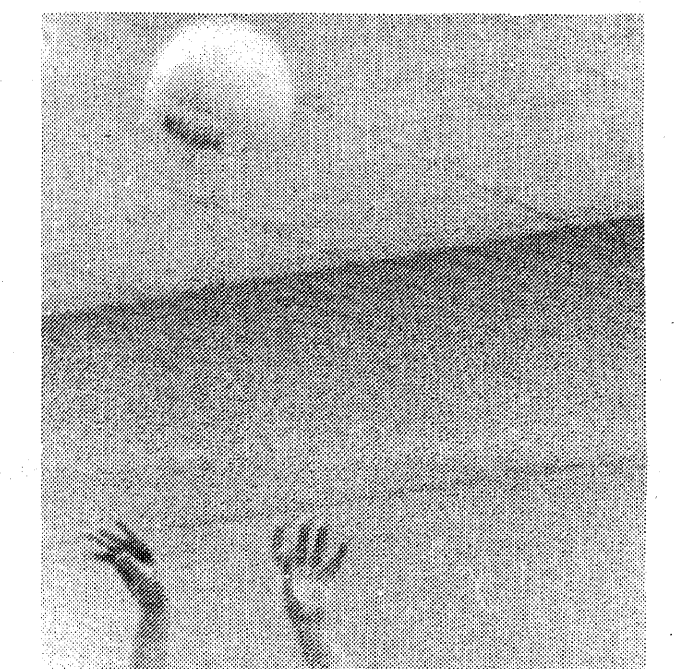
Each two-man team will compete for \$3,000 in cash prizes. Last year's tournament attracted 123 teams, according to organizer Bob Easterbrook.

Carp, gold carp, lone-nose gar and dog fish will be included in the tournament this year, with prizes offered for the largest in each category.

There is an entry fee for each team, with proceeds earmarked for the National Wildlife Education Foundation youth camp.

For more information on the bowfishing championship, write to Easterbrook in

Eagles balance wins and losses in North Central Thumb volleyball action



By RICH SWARTZENDRUBER

The Lady Eagles maintained their 500 volleyball record last week by sweeping Port Hope, but dropped a pair of matches to Akron-Fairgrove.

Last Thursday on their home floor, the Eagles needed little time to win both best-of-three matches with Port Hope by scores of 15-11, 15-4 and 15-9, 15-5.

Tina Bieri led Caseville with 24 points, 22 sets and four saves. Krista Colgin served up 17 points and Colleen Kopack chipped in 12 sets.

Top Caseville hitter was Amy Conrad with 21 spikes, including 14 kills.

Eagle Coach Cheryl Wascher said her players hustled better in the victory and showed more intensity

than they had in recent matches.

**LOSS:** Caseville started the week by dropping a pair of matches at Akron-Fairgrove by 7-15, 2-15 and 5-15, 10-15 scores.

"We didn't play well. We didn't move or talk to each other during the matches," said Wascher.

**RECORD:** The Eagles' league record now stands at 5-5, with a 9-8 overall mark.

**TOURNEY:** Wascher looks for evenly matched competition in the Caseville Invitational this weekend. She said Owen-Gage will be the team to beat, but predicted many splits in pool play because many teams are evenly matched.

"I have high hopes for my team in the tournament," Wascher said.



**ABOVE:** Caseville's Amy Conrad prepares to pass the ball to setter Tina Bieri (10). **AT LEFT:** Bieri sets the ball for a spike as teammate Colleen Kopack looks on.

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