

Finals Flashbacks

1978

Flint Kearsley grabbed its first MHSAA volleyball title, while head coach Jo Lake earned her third, as the Hornets downed the defending **Class A** champs Warren Cousino, 15-8, 15-8. Lake led Flint Holy Rosary to the Class D honors in 1975 and 1976. Livonia Clarenceville, led by a strong all-around effort by Lisa Redford, ended the year undefeated in 26 matches by downing Flint Ainsworth, 15-6, 15-13, for the **Class B** title. In **Class C**, Grand Rapids Forest Hills Northern finished the season with a perfect record. The Huskies won every game of 23 matches, including their championship contests with Center Line St. Clement, 15-9, 15-4. The title games were highlighted by a series of spikes by Northern's Karen Bakeman. Strong serves by Laurie Glass helped lead Leland to a 15-11, 15-8 win over Ann Arbor Greenhills in **Class D**.

1983

The runner-up for the **Class A** title one year earlier, Wayne Memorial snagged its first volleyball championship with a 15-5, 15-4 win over East Kentwood at Howell High School.

In **Class B** at Linden, Richmond topped Fenton for the second time of the season, this one earning the Blue Devils an MHSAA title. Spikes by Richmond's front line of Mari Foster and Teri McNesky were instrumental in the team's 15-10 win in game three. Richmond won the first game 15-11, then lost the second, 15-13.

Led by Shannon Voss and Colleen Colles, top-ranked Burton Atherton survived a first-game loss to No. 2 Berrien Springs for the **Class C** title, played at Linden. Despite posting an 11-3 lead in the first contest, the Wolverines watched Berrien Springs netters reel off 12 straight points for a 15-11 win. Atherton rallied back from a 8-2 deficit in the second game for a 15-13 win, then sealed the match win with a 15-6 victory in the final game.

One point away from defeat, Battle Creek St. Philip rallied back from the brink to earn its second **Class D** championship in five years, with a 9-15, 16-14, 15-5 victory over Dryden at Howell. Trailing 14-8, the Tigers rattled off eight straight points for a win in Game 2. St. Philip's senior Angie Albrecht delivered seven spikes for points

in the final game to wrap up the match win.

In **Upper Peninsula** play at St. Ignace, Brimley downed Ironwood, 15-6, 15-7, earning the Open Class trophy.

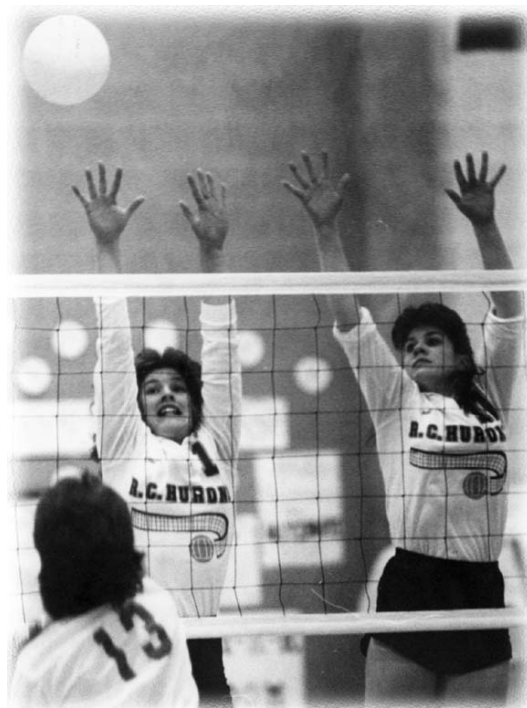
1988

There was a little changing of the guard in 1988, as all of the defending champions were gone by the Semifinal round. Teams such as Livonia-Ladywood, Redford Bishop Borgess, and Potterville were able to make their first Finals appearances in school history.

In **Class A** Livonia Ladywood defeated Sterling Heights-Stevenson in an exciting three-game match. After losing the first game, 15-17, Livonia Ladywood charged back to take the second game 15-6. Led by senior Corinne McNamara, the Blazers dominated the decisive game, 15-1, to take the championship.

After defeating Pinconning in the Semifinals, Sturgis moved on to face Redford Bishop Borgess in the **Class B** Final. Sturgis claimed its second volleyball title in school history with a hard-fought victory, 15-12, 15-11.

Rogers City had its sights set on a **Class C** championship ever since losing in the 1987 title match to Hanover-Horton in a heartbreaker. The Hurons took care of Hamilton in the Semifinals on their way to the Final, where they faced off against a successful Battle



Gary Shook, Otsego

1988 – Rogers City's Chris Bruning (1) and Heidi Brege

Creek Pennfield program. Rogers City was able to finish the job with 15-13, 15-8 win over Pennfield.

The **Class D** Final pitted the new kids on the block vs. the veterans, as Potterville, making it first Final appearance, faced off against perennial power Battle Creek St. Philip. Coach Sheryl Mox's Potterville squad was up to the task, defeating the Tigers, 15-10, 15-6, to win the title.

Brimley continued its domination in the **Upper Peninsula** Open Class. The Bays captured their second consecutive title and their seventh in school history. Brimley defeated Cedarville, 15-11, 15-9, in the Final.

1993

The 1993 Finals saw history as coaches

Jack Magelssen of Portage Northern, Sheila Guerra of Battle Creek St. Philip, and Comstock's Jeff Borr each won their sixth MHSAA Lower Peninsula Girls Volleyball titles.

Portage Northern, which returned every girl but one from the 1992 championship team, won its second consecutive **Class A** title with a win over Birmingham Marian. Led by outside hitter Kerry Ginter, Portage Northern defeated the Mustangs, 15-6, 15-9.

With four seniors leading the way, Comstock advanced to the **Class B** Final for the fourth time in five years. Battling Marysville in the Final, Comstock had to

overcome an early one-game deficit. In the second game, Jen Bell started a run with a sideout kill, followed by three straight aces. Ayanna Wilson contributed 11 kills as the Colts never looked back on their way to a 6-15, 15-1, 15-5 victory over Marysville.

In Tracy Berry's final year as coach at Burton Atherton, she didn't disappoint in leading her team to a **Class C** title. After reaching the Final in 1992, Burton Atherton was determined to not let another chance slip away. After beating Holton, 15-6, in the first game, Burton Atherton had a tougher time in the second game, finally prevailing with a 16-14 win.

The **Class D** title match held at Kalamazoo Central High School was a rematch of the 1992 championship tilt. With familiar foes Battle Creek St. Philip and Dryden each hoping to take home the crown, it was sure to be a good match, but in the end, Head Coach Sheila Guerra and Battle Creek St. Philip had too much for Dryden, 15-8, 15-6.

In the **Upper Peninsula**, Escanaba wasn't being an especially friendly host as they sought revenge against Ironwood after a loss in the previous year's Final. The Eskymos prevailed with a 15-9, 15-7 win to take the **Class A-B-C** championship.

After finally breaking through with a U.P. championship in 1992, Cedarville was primed for another. With head coach Mark Engle leading the way, Cedarville defeated Bessemer, 15-4, 15-7, to claim its second consecutive **Class D** title.

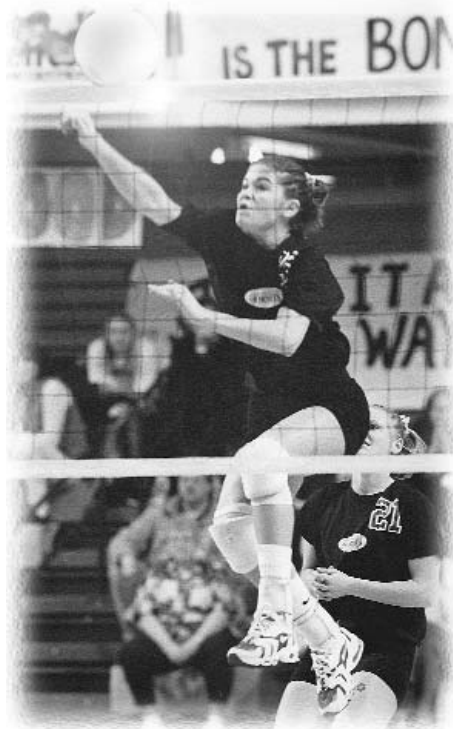
1998

Playing to near perfection, Temperance

Bedford earned its first MHSAA title in four attempts, upending perennial power Portage Northern, 15-12, 15-10, for **Class A** honors. The championships were held at University Arena on the campus of Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo. Finishing the year with an 89-3 mark, the Mules' Bree Hickman ended with 17 kills, while junior Shayna Munson added nine kills and the match-winning point on a one-armed dig. It was the ninth championship appearance for the second-ranked Huskies, who tasted defeat in a title match for the first time.

Defending **Class B** titlist Marysville earned its second in a row with a 15-7, 15-8 win over top-ranked Pinconning. Sophomore Kristen Fenton led the Vikings with 14 kills and five blocks. Senior Jennie Harrison added 10 kills and 17 digs. With the win, Marysville finished 57-0 on the year, and upped its state-record winning streak to 116 consecutive matches.

A runner-up in **Class C** in 1997, Lake Fenton earned title honors by beating Maple City Glen Lake, 15-9, 12-15, 15-8. Appearing for the first time in Class C, Glen Lake had finished as MHSAA runner-up in Class D in two of the three previous championships.



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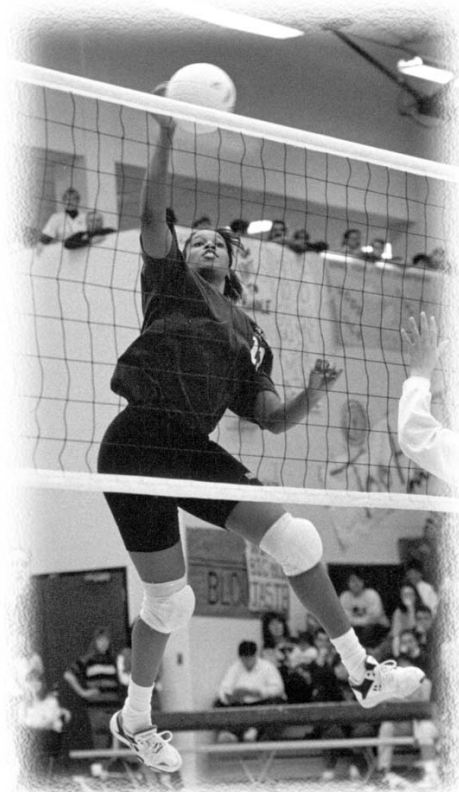
1998 – Mendon's Traci Skrzypek

In **Class D**, Mendon topped defending champion Battle Creek St. Philip, 15-12, 10-15, 15-13 in a thriller. Trailing 4-1 in the third match, Mendon knotted the score at 4-4. The teams were deadlocked again at 8-8, then yet again at 13-all as No. 1-ranked St. Philip rallied back after trailing 13-10. After regaining control of the ball, Hornets junior Traci Skrzypek served out the final two points as St. Philip's attempted kills sailed just long. Skrzypek ended with 23 kills while senior teammate Kylee Baker contributed 21 digs and nine kills.

Houghton overpowered Marquette en route to the **Upper Peninsula Class A-B-C** championship, 15-7, 15-5, in the title match hosted at Escanaba High School. Houghton setter Anna Scott finished with 14 assists, while Sara Rukkila totaled six kills.

Bessemer shocked the U.P. with a 10-15, 16-14, 15-6 defeat of six-time defending champion Cedarville for **Class D** honors. The Speedgirls had lost in the Final to the Trojans in three of the five previous campaigns. After winning the first game, it appeared that Cedarville might earn yet another title, pulling to within match point 14-13 in game two. But stellar play by Bessemer's Rhonda Roberts gave the Speed Girls a 15-14 lead, followed by the game-winning point by Megan McVey. Bessemer opened up a 7-1 lead in the match game, then held on for its first title.

— Compiled by MHSAA Historian Ron Pesch and MHSAA Intern Nick LaDrig



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1993 – Comstock's Ayanna Wilson