

Finals Flashbacks



1979

After dropping the first game, 11-15, Warren Cousino rallied back to oust Livonia Churchill 16-14, 15-10. It was Patriots' second Class A title in three years. The championships were hosted at the Gerald Ford Center of Grand Rapids Junior College.

Battle Creek Pennfield eliminated defending champ Livonia Clarenceville in the Semifinals, 15-13, 15-9, then cruised to the Class B championship with a 15-6, 15-10 win in the Final over Saginaw Eisenhower. Strong defense and blocking keyed the win. Katrina Coats, Kaye Stevens, and Sharon Borsum served six points each in the title match.

Considering that the games were played on St. Patrick's Day, it was only fitting that the Shamrocks of Berrien Springs knocked off Napoleon, 15-8, 15-12, in the Class C matchup. It was the first volleyball crown for Berrien Springs, but Coach Jim Bermingham's squads would make six trips to the Finals in seven years, becoming the first school in MHSAA tournament history to win five volleyball titles.

Following trips to the Semifinals in 1976 and 1978, and to the Finals in 1977, Coach Becky Emrich and her Battle Creek St. Philip squad latched onto their first volleyball crown, defeating reigning champ Leland, 12-15, 15-9, 15-13, in Class D. The Tigers were led by four-year starters Cathie Petrucco and Julie Flees. Petrucco finished with eight spikes for points and seven for sideouts for St. Philip, while Flees contributed stellar defense. The Tigers have made 21 trips to the Semifinals, and have earned 10 MHSAA championships and five runner-up trophies in 28 years of MHSAA tournament action.

1984

High-lighted by the net play of 6-2 junior Karen Histed, Flint Kearsley topped Livonia Stevenson, 15-17, 15-5, 15-11, before a crowd of 1,700 fans at Howell High School. It was the 51st consecutive win and second Class A title for the Hornets, while Coach Jo Lake added a third MHSAA volleyball crown to her resume. Lake's Flint Holy Rosary team earned the Class C-D title in 1976, the first

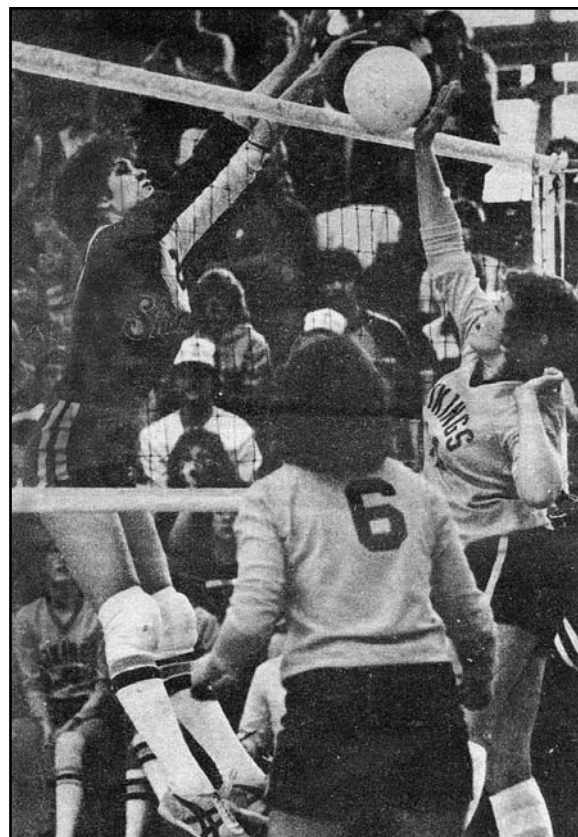
year of MHSAA tournament play.

After splitting two hotly-contested games, top-rated Saline prevailed, 16-14, 13-15, 15-2, over Battle Creek Lakeview in a Class B showdown at Linden High School. In game three, the Hornets jumped out to a quick 6-1 lead, then scored the final nine points for the win.

Berrien Springs continued its domination of Class C with a thrilling 10-15, 15-11, 15-13 triumph over Morenci at Linden. Trailing 13-2 in the deciding game, the senior-dominated Shamrocks rallied back for the victory, capturing their fourth MHSAA title in six years.

In a rematch of the 1983 Class D Final, Battle Creek St. Philip again downed Dryden to claim its second straight crown, 15-1, 15-10. Senior Kathy Bond, whose block of a Cardinal spike gave the Tigers a 14-10 lead in the final game, delivered the match point on a beautiful set by junior Vicki Guerra. Bond had missed her junior year due to a knee injury. The contest was played at Howell.

Upper Peninsula powerhouse Brimley, under the guidance of Coach Charles Compo, earned its fourth consecutive U.P. open class title over Bessemer, 15-3, 15-11.



Battle Creek Enquirer

1979— Berrien Springs' Jackie Backus

1989

The MHSAA used a three-site format for

the Lower Peninsula Finals, with Class A and D played at Kalamazoo Central High School, Class B played at Comstock High School, and Class C at Corunna High.

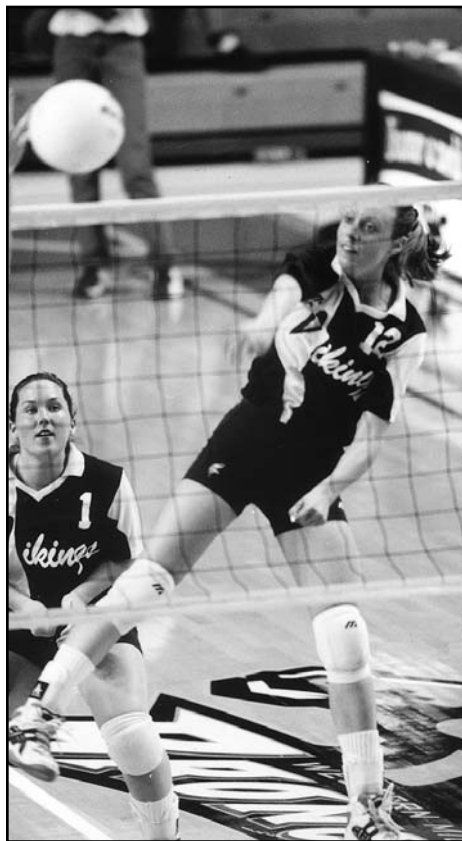
Coach Tom Teeters and his Livonia Ladywood Blazers grabbed their second consecutive Class A crown with a 15-1, 15-10 victory over Harper Woods Regina.

Comstock, playing in the cozy confines of its own gym, earned its third title in four years with a 15-5, 15-12 win over Fenton in Class B. The Colts were led by seniors Connie Thomas and Becky Carlson.

Horton-Hanover fell to Burton Bentley in the opener, 12-15, then roared back to 15-8, 15-12 wins to snag the Class C title. Stacey Legault tallied 30 kills in the three-game match for the Comets.

Coach Sheila Guerra and her Battle Creek St. Philip squad toppled reigning champion Potterville, 15-1, 15-8, in a replay of the 1988 Class D title game. Left-handed junior Eileen Crane recorded five blocks and nine kills, while Shannon Lucas, another junior, added seven kills.

In Upper Peninsula open class play, Escanaba downed Cedarville, 15-11, 15-10, for its first-ever volleyball crown. Juniors Jenny Howard and Judi Skradski paced the Eskymos.



Gary Shook, Otsego

1999 – Marysville's Randi Kettlewell

1994

At Kalamazoo Central High School, heavily

avored Portage Northern picked up its third consecutive Lower Peninsula Class A crown with a convincing 15-4, 15-1 win over Bay City Central. It was the seventh title in nine years for the Huskies (65-2), who were led by Heather and Jennifer Magelssen, later top players at Indiana University.

Kathy Pratt and Laura Rhode paced the Blue Devils of Richland Gull Lake as they defeated Holland Christian, 15-0, 15-6, for Class B honors.

Runner-up in Class C in 1993, Holton emerged victorious over Pewamo-Westphalia, 16-14, 15-8. Jennifer Thorton led the Red Devils with 24 kills.

Battle Creek St. Philip grabbed its third of four straight Class D titles, topping Rochester Hills Lutheran Northwest, 15-6, 15-9. Senior Jessica Dull, playing on her third title team, sparkled on the front line for the Tigers. Trailing 7-4, Elizabeth Geiger, the only other senior on the squad, helped rally the team in the second game with a spike for the lead point, 10-9, before exiting the game with a cut on her hand.

In U.P. play, Iron Mountain defeated Marquette, 16-14, 15-5 for the Class A-B-C title at Escanaba High School. Marquette seized a 13-4 lead in the opener before the Mountaineers roared to life. In the closing contest, Leslie Jerks launched a thundering spike to the back row for the match point.

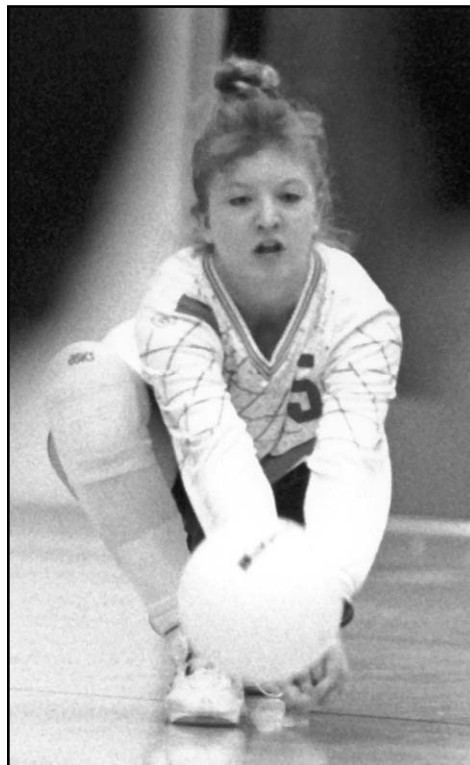
Cedarville, the state's top-ranked team in Class D, captured its third consecutive U.P. title, besting Brimley, 15-1, 15-9. An ace by Maria Costello in the finale sealed the win for the Trojans.

1999

In a rematch of the 1998 Lower Penin-

sula Class A championship contest, familiar foes Portage Northern and Temperance Bedford squared off for the title. This time, Northern scored a decisive 15-3, 15-1 win over the defending champs at Western Michigan's University Arena in Kalamazoo. Senior Jenny Green served six straight points in the opener, while Kaitlyn Martin, another senior starter, delivered five straight service points to begin the second contest. It was the fifth meeting between the schools during the 1999 season, all won by the Huskies. Northern ended the year with an 81-1 mark.

Marysville overpowered Stevensville Lakeshore, 15-5, 15-0, to finish a third straight undefeated championship season in Class B. With the win, the Vikings stood at 174-0 over the three years, including a flawless 58-0 mark in '99.



Gary Shook, Otsego

1994 – Holton's Dawn Long

In Class C, Bridget Baxter, the lone senior on the St. Louis squad, led the Sharks to a 15-13, 15-1 win over Maple City Glen Lake. Baxter finished with eight kills and six digs for the first-time champions. Glen Lake, with nine straight visits to the Semifinals, came away empty handed in the championship match for the fourth time in five years.

Mendon repeated as the Class D champ, defeating top-ranked Potterville, 15-8, 15-13. Traci Skrzypek, one of four returning seniors, dominated the net with 22 kills to lead the Horents.

In the A-B contest at Escanaba, Ishpeming Westwood's strong defensive play highlighted the action as the Patriots stunned the hometown Eskymos for the top U.P. honors, 15-6, 15-13. Three straight service points by the Patriots' Danielle Thiebault sealed the win in the final match.

St. Ignace topped Houghton, 15-10, 15-13, in U.P. Class C. Runner-up in the fall in Girls Basketball, Rapid River captured the Class D crown with 13-15, 15-10, 15-7 performance against perennial power Cedarville in the ninth straight appearance in the U.P. championship game by the Trojans.

— Ron Pesch

Ron Pesch is the historian for the MHSAA. To submit story ideas and potential statistical records, write to Pesch at 1317 Lakeshore Drive, Muskegon, MI 49441.