

Lions use two good halves for 81-64 romp —

Riggins dominates as Lyons rolls to C title

Sports

of the

Times

By NORM JOLLOW
 ROCHESTER — If there was any question last night that the Lyons Lions were going to put two good halves together, it was quickly answered by Al DiSanto and Elgin Riggins.
 The Lions, who had survived three New York State Public High School Athletic Association tournament games by playing just one good half in each game, owned a six point lead at halftime and were ahead by four, 35-31 in the opening minute of play in the se-

cond half when Cuy Evans scored from the side for Hastings.
 DiSanto grabbed the ball out of bounds after the basket while Riggins trotted toward mid-court. Suddenly, Riggins exploded toward the other end of the court and DiSanto fired a strike that Riggins grabbed near the foul line and blasted into orbit.
 As he started coming down, Riggins slammed the ball through the hoop. Even the usually quiet and unflappable Riggins showed some emotion with that

play and it obviously affected the rest of the Lyons who went on a 6-0 scoring spree to open a 43-31 lead.
 It was never a contest after that as the Lyons, going on to lead by as many as 21 points (57-36) cruised to an 81-64 victory over Section 1's Hastings and captured the NYSPHSAA Class C state championship.
 The Lions are the first team from the Wayne and Finger Lakes Leagues to win a public school title.
 Riggins, who finished with 29 points, was the difference as far as Hastings coach John Costello was concerned.
 "That big guy was terrific. He's as good as they said he was," said Costello, referring to Riggins. "It was very discouraging for our guys to have the ball slapped in their faces by the big guy," said Costello, who considered Riggins the best big man he's seen this year.
 "There's a boy out of Alexander Hamilton that is a good shot blocker, but he's not as good as Riggins," said Costello.
 While Riggins was the scorer and the intimidator, it was, as Lyons coach Rod Verkey noted, "a whole team effort against their two men."
 A good many of Riggins' points came on assists from everyone as the Lyons consistently drove on the Yellowjackets, and then looped a pass in to Riggins for the easy two pointer.
 And when Hastings made an effort to deny Riggins the ball, Kenny Kemp popped for 15 points and DiSanto pumped in 13 more. Tony Johnson produced nine while Kim Morris scored eight and Dave Simmons added six.
 For Hastings, it was a two-man show with Tom Fleming scoring 30 points and Evans 24.
 Even though those two scored all but 10 of the Yellowjackets' points, Verkey "thought we did a good job on those two horses." Evans had scored 43 points in the Eastern Conference final at West Point against Greenwich last week.
 Hastings led only twice in the game, taking leads of 10-8 and 12-10 in the first period. Then Kemp converted a three point play at 1:16 for a 13-12 lead and the Lions added the next four points

on a jumper from the key by Morris and a driving lay-up by Kemp for a 17-12 first period lead.
 The Lions, behind eight points from Riggins, opened a 12-point lead at 29-17 in the second period, only to have Hastings, behind five points from Fleming, pull within six at the half, 33-27.
 But in the second half, "we came out and blew them out," said DiSanto, who noted that "it's the first time all season Mr. Verkey got mad. He said we could beat them if we played our game."
 Verkey declared that "I told the kids at the half that they had played mediocre in the first half and still came out with a six point lead."
 Then Hastings "came out and started gambling on their press and we were able to take it to the hole pretty good."
 At times, when Hastings would make a tentative run at the Lions, Verkey would have his team go into a five corners offense. That brought the Yellowjackets out of their zone defense and the Lions were able to go to work again.
 The Lions wound up hitting on 30 of 59 shots for just over 50 percent. Hastings was 28 for 78.
 At the foul line, the Lions were 21 for 24 while Hastings was eight for 17, which was a key factor, as far as Costello was concerned.
 "Our free throw shooting hurt us," noted Costello, especially in the first half when the Yellowjackets were five for 13.
 In that first half, the Yellowjackets had a chance to score six points when they trailed 33-25 and Fleming was fouled.
 Verkey, upset at the call, was given a technical foul. Fleming, however, made only one of two and Evans, shooting the technical fouls, did the same.
 Hastings then had the ball out of bounds at midcourt but wound up turning it over on a traveling violation.
 Last night's victory has advanced the Lions to the finals of the Super Sixteen tournament that winds up today.
 The Lions face St. Dominic's of Oyster Bay for the Class C overall state championship at 4:15 p.m. in the Rochester War Memorial.



As Al DiSanto (2) of Lyons dribbles, Frank Varcasla (21) of Hastings tries to reach from behind to steal the ball during Super Sixteen basketball action at Monroe Community College last night. Lyons won the NYSPHSAA state championship with ease 81-64. (Times photo by Art Foxall).

Reaching

Press Box Patter

Big and fast

By Norm Jollow



"They're big and they're fast," is the word Lyons coach Rod Verkey got this morning on his team's final opponent of the 1979-80 high school basketball season.
 The "they" in this case is St. Dominic's of Oyster Bay, a team with a 22-5 record after a 69-51 romp over Niagara Falls Catholic last night.
 St. Dominic's boasts Tim Kempton, a 6-8 sophomore, who had 22 points last night. The Oyster Bay team also has 6-6 Mike Vaughn (8 points), 6-3 Rich Dye (9), 6-1 Don Ranaldo (4) and 6-0 Bob Pavinelli (11).

Verkey's report also notes that "their inside people are adequate for their size but they have two good guards. They like to play city style, running a lot," added Verkey.
 With nowhere near the size to compete with St. Dominic's, the Lions will "come out and try to trap them a little," said Verkey, who also can be expected to have his team "try to keep the tempo our way if we can."
 That probably means that the Lyons, who can run and run with the best of them, probably will go more to a five-corners offense if St. Dominic's insists on playing a zone defense.
 To do that, however, the Lions will have to get the lead early and hold it.

Elgin Riggins the big guy for the Lyons, is listed at 6-5, but Lyons assistant coach Dean Schott confirmed last night what everyone has known.
 Riggins is about 6-3, but "he has the arms of a 7-footer," said Schott.
 Schott also commented that "it's the first time in four years I've ever seen him show any emotion."
 And Schott wasn't referring to Riggins' emotion after a slam dunk early in the third period. He was referring to a whack on the head Riggins got from Hastings' Tom Fleming in the fourth quarter.
 Riggins was visibly upset by the blow and needed his teammates to calm him down before he went to the foul line.

One of the spectators at last night's game at Monroe Community College was South Seneca's Jack Guinan, who could only think of what might have been.
 Guinan's Falcons lost a heartbreaker to Lyons, 66-64, in a Section 5 playoff to determine the section's Class C representative.
 Guinan felt that his team could have been right, where Lyons is today had it not been for Riggins' desperation basket in the final seconds of their game.
 Only Emerson, against whom Lyons rallied to overcome a 16 point halftime deficit, "might have been a problem," said Guinan, considering the quickness of Emerson.
 Riggins figured "it's about time," the Lyons put together two good halves, while Al DiSanto and Kenny Kemp each contended that Lyons was the better team.

One of the big things as far as Verkey was concerned was his team's foul shooting last night. The Lions hit on 21 of 24 attempts. "We shot free throws tonight the way we had until the last five or six games," he noted.
 The Lions are the only Section 5 and Western Conference champion still in the title chase. Section 5's other entry, Rush-Henrietta Roth dropped a 63-61 heartbreaker to Bellport of Section 11.
 That section has three state public school champions, Bellport being joined by Ward Melville in Class A and Bridgehampton in Class D.
 The other four Super Sixteen finalists are all from the Catholic High School Athletic Association, which swept the state championships last year.

With the game well in hand late in the final period, Lyons coaches Dean Schott (second from left) and Rod Verkey (third from left) break out their smiles. At the ends are team scorer Bob Bickel (left) and player Kenny Kemp (right). The Lyons, with a devastating 26-11 third period, rallied to their easiest State tournament victory, downing Hastings 81-64 to capture the New York State Public High School Athletic Association championship. (Times photo by Art Foxall).

"We knew we were the better team," said DiSanto. "They weren't that good," said Kemp, adding "we were too quick for them."

The Lyons will be giving it their all this afternoon, but they already have the prize they really wanted, the state public high school championship.
 As far as the Lions are concerned, the Super Sixteen title would just be icing on the cake.

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Reason to smile

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Lions carry Upstate hopes

ROCHESTER, N.Y. (AP) — It will be public against parochial schools tonight in the finals of the Super 16 high school basketball tournament here, with seven of the eight finalists from New York City or Long Island.

In Class A, Long Island's Ward Melville (Setauket) and Holy Trinity (Hicksville) square off in the finals.
 In Class B, Bellport will play Tolentine of the Bronx.
 In Class C, Oyster Bay's St. Dominic's will meet Lyons and in Class D, Bridgehampton will play Savior Lutheran of the Bronx.

Ward Melville earned its trip to the final with a 56-51 win over Union-Endicott Friday night. Errol Frazier, a 5-foot-11 guard scored 18 points to offset a 16-point performance by Union-Endicott's center Sean Kerins.
 With the win, Ward Melville (21-5) wins the New York State Public High School Athletic Association title, replacing two-time winner Mount Vernon. Melville got to the Union-Endicott showdown by beating C.B.A.-Albany, winner of sectional play over the state's top-ranked team, Shaker of Latham.
 Holy Trinity advanced to the A final with a tight 60-57 win over Adlai Stevenson High of the Bronx. Doug Poetzsch poured in 20 points to lead Holy Trinity, now 26-2, over Stevenson.
 Poetzsch's performance overshadowed the work of highly regarded Holy Trinity center Matt Dougherty. The 6-foot-7 center, who's bound for North Carolina, hit only four of 17 shots. Stevenson, now 22-5, got 20 points from Clarence Moss.
 In Class B, Tolentine of the Bronx (now 27-3) put five players in double figures — led by Ernest Meyers' 21 points — to knock off Manhattan's Murry Bergrtrum 83-71. It was the first loss of the year for Bergrtrum in 25 games.
 In the other Class B game, Bellport's George Darryl and Wesley Correa combined for 40 points to give the Clippers a 63-61 win over Rochester-area Rush-Henrietta Roth. Bellport wins the Class NYSPHSAA title.
 In Class C, another Long Island team, Oyster Bay's St. Dominic's, scored an easy 69-51 win over Niagara Catholic. Tim Kempton scored 22 points to lead St. Dominic, now 22-5, to the win. Niagara Catholic got a team-high 14 points from John LaPorta.
 The only upstate team to survive — Lyons — won in the other Class C pairing. The Lyons, now 25-1, led from the start in disposing of Hastings 81-64.
 Lyons, a suburban Rochester team, was led by Elgin Riggins' 29 points as it replaced Cuba as Class C winners of the NYSPHSAA crown. Tom Fleming had 30 points for the 22-4 losers.
 In Class D, Bridgehampton of Long Island clinched the NYSPHSAA phase of the title by edging Oppenheim-Ephratah 71-70. The win puts Bridgehampton, 20-4, into the finals of the Super 16 tourney for the second year in a row.
 Fulton County's Oppenheim-Ephratah, 21-4, held a 33-27 halftime lead, but Bridgehampton used the scoring of Carl Johnson (28 points) and Wayne Hopson (25) to get back in the game and win at the wire.
 Bridgehampton will meet unbeaten Our Savior Lutheran in the Class D finals. Unbeaten Savior got a record 40 points from guard Richard Pass to whip Archbishop Walsh of Olean 77-54. The Bronx team also got 18 points from Greg Booker.
 Archbishop Walsh was led by Joe Sorochin and Jim Ryan, who each hit for 20 points.

Adirondack nips Nova Scotia

(The Associated Press)
 Don Larway scored a goal with 2:15 left in overtime to give the Adirondack Red Wings a 6-5 American Hockey League win over the Nova Scotia Voyageurs in Glens Falls, N.Y. The win also pulled the Red Wings out of the cellar of the Northern Division and gave them a tie with Springfield with six games remaining.

Adirondack jumped out to a quick 4-1 lead in the opening minute of the second period on goals by Rich Shinske and Jody Gage. But, within the next 11 minutes, Nova Scotia scored four

unanswered goals to take the lead, 5-4. Jim Malazdrewicz tied the game three minutes remaining in the second period.

Further west, over in Syracuse, the Hershey Bears snapped a 5-5 tie in the third period and went on to beat the Syracuse Firebirds, 7-5. Hershey got out to an early 3-1 lead on power-play goals by Harvey Pocza and Eddy Godin. Errol Rausse and Lou Fanceschetti ran Hershey's tally to five goals, before Syracuse began banging away, finally tying the score in the third period. Player-coach Doug Gibson got the tie-breaker and game-winner for Hershey.