

Finals Flashbacks

1977

Warren Cousino downed Mt. Clemens, 7-15, 15-9, 15-13, in the **Class A** title match hosted at Schoolcraft College University Center.

Sturgis, led by Coach Carol Velasco, earned the **Class B** crown with a victory over previously unbeaten South Haven, 15-1, 15-8. The Trojans had finished as runner-up in 1976. Susan Wegner led the victors with 15 kills and one ace.

Edwardsburg grabbed the **Class C** honors with a 15-10, 3-15, 15-10 victory over Grand Rapids Forest Hills Northern.

In **Class D**, Coach Bill Herrmann's Flint Holy Rosary squad extended its winning streak to 89 matches over three seasons with an 11-15, 15-3, 15-5 come-from-behind decision over Battle Creek St. Philip. Teresa Shaheen served five straight points in the second game to lead the comeback, while sophomore Colleen Shaheen served for seven straight points in the finale.

1982

The Portage Northern Huskies capped a 54-5 season with a 15-11, 15-10 triumph over Walled Lake Western in **Class A** action at Howell High School. Kim Gentry led Northern with 10 kills and five blocks. Teammate Lisa Fink totaled five kills and four blocks in the championship game.

In the **Class B** contests, also at Howell, Battle Creek Lakeview dumped defending champ Stevensville Lakeshore. The top-ranked Spartans, led by first-year coach Linda Marick, trailed Lakeshore, 14-3, in the first game, but knotted the score at 14-14 before losing, 14-16. After winning the second game, 15-4, the Spartans battled back from an 11-8 deficit to secure the title with a 15-11 win. The hitting of Jackie Campbell and Kim Edwards was pivotal down the stretch.

Berrien Springs earned its third MHSAA title in four years with a 15-10, 16-14 win over Battle Creek Pennfield in the **Class C** title match played at Battle Creek Central High School. Trailing 14-12 in the second game, the Panthers rallied back, highlighted by a pair of aces from Vicki Backus and a point by Rhonda Thran following a furious volley and a sideout save. With the win, Berrien Springs ended the year with a 55-6 record.

In **Class D** at Battle Creek, Saginaw Lutheran earned its first volleyball title by beating traditional power

Leland, 15-7, 15-12.

In **Upper Peninsula** action at Watersmeet High School, Robin Burton served 12 straight points in the final game of the title match as Brimley defeated Ironwood, 16-14, 8-15, 15-4 for the **Open Class** crown.

1987

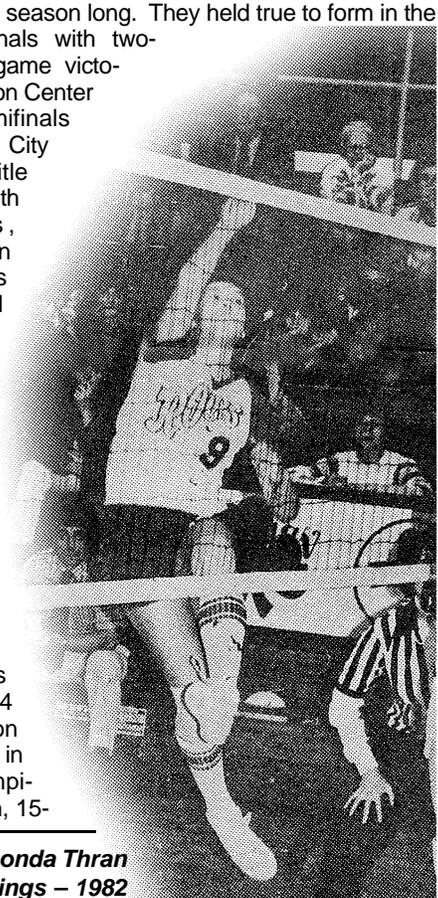
Portage Northern became the first school to win three straight Lower Peninsula MHSAA volleyball titles as it defeated Birmingham Marian, 15-6, 15-13, in the **Class A** Finals. In the first game, Northern was ahead 10-0 before Marian scored. The second game was a different story, with Marian taking a 13-9 lead. However, the Huskies recorded the last six points to win the game and title, finishing the season with an impressive 75-1 record.

Comstock was overpowering in the **Class B** tournament. Coach Jeff Borr and his team collected their second straight title by defeating Jackson Lumen Christi in 29 minutes, 15-1, 15-5, in the Semifinals, and Grand Rapids Forest Hills Central in 37 minutes, 15-5, 15-3, in the Finals.

Hanover-Horton earned the nickname "Cardiac Kids" because of the way they kept fans on the edge of their seats all season long. They held true to form in the **Class C** Finals with two-point, three-game victories over Byron Center in the Semifinals and Rogers City

in the title match. In both instances, Coach Karen Clark's Comets had to bounce back from opening-game losses to win big in the second contest, and then hold on for thrilling Game 3 victories. The final game score of the Semifinals was 16-14 over Byron Center, and in the championship match, 15-

Rhonda Thran
Berrien Springs – 1982



Battle Creek Enquirer

13 over Rogers City.

The **Class D** Finals were a breeze for Concord. Coach Marty Andrews' Yellow Jackets won in the Semifinals, 15-8, 15-2, over perennial power Battle Creek St. Philip, then took the crown with a 15-6, 15-3 blitzing of the Suttons Bay in the Finals. It was the second consecutive Class D title for the Yellow Jackets (see "Legends", page 4).

The Brimley volleyball team, ranked second in the state all season long in Class D media polls, topped off its best season ever by taking the program's sixth **Upper Peninsula Open Class** MHSAA championship, held in Escanaba. Brimley never gave Escanaba a chance in the championship match, winning 15-3, 15-5. The victory marked the sixth time in the Upper Peninsula's eight-year Finals history that Brimley had won the title, including a string of five straight from 1981-85.

1992 In 1985, Berrien Springs coach Jim Birmingham became the first coach to win five MHSAA Lower Peninsula Girls Volleyball titles. In 1992, Jack Magelssen and Sheila Guerra joined Birmingham and Comstock's Jeff Barr in the elite group.

Magelssen's Portage Northern Huskies, with just one senior on the squad, blitzed through the tournament to win the **Class A** title, culminating with a 15-3, 15-7 win over Temperance-Bedford in the Finals. Big-time shots came from Katie Bekker, Kerry Ginter and Magelssen's freshman daughter, Jennifer. His other daughter, Heather, was the team's setter.

Pinconning also was used to volleyball success, having reached the Quarterfinals the previous five years. It was advancing to, and winning in, the Finals that had been a hurdle the Spartans could not clear. Coach Jeff Williams made sure 1992 would end on a winning note as Pinconning defeated Fenton, 15-5, 15-10, to capture its first **Class B** crown. Comstock's powerful teams had been a major factor in stopping the Spartans

in previous years, but Pinconning pulled off a huge 15-13, 7-15, 15-13 upset of the top-ranked Colts in the Semifinals before beating Fenton for the championship. Pinconning was led by setter Becky Miller and the experience of five senior starters.

Concord had won MHSAA titles before in volleyball, just never in **Class C**. The Yellow Jackets had previously won two Class D championships. It had been five years since they had made as far as the Semifinals, but they took just 40 minutes to oust Burton Atherton, 15-6, 15-6, in the Final and take the Class C crown.

Battle Creek St. Philip had become a perennial favorite in **Class D**, but Coach Sheila Guerra had failed to capture a title since the Finals had moved to Kalamazoo Central. Her teams had gone home disappointed the previous two years, falling just short of their goal. Thanks to some tall middle hitters, not even the Kalamazoo Central jinx could stop the Fighting Tigers as her talented team edged Dryden, 16-14, 15-12, in the **Class D** Final. Senior Beth Crawford (6-2) and junior Megan Reetz (6-0) led the charge to St. Philip's sixth crown.

In **Upper Peninsula** play at Escanaba High School, seniors Angie Jenko and Laura Newberry combined for 22 points on serves to lead Ironwood to the **Class A-B-C** title with a 15-13, 15-2 win over the host Escanaba squad. It was the second consecutive crown for the Red Devils, who overcame a 7-2 deficit in the opening game.

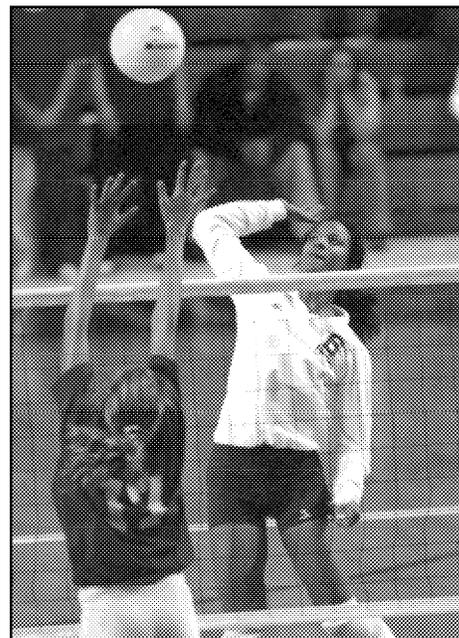
Always a bridesmaid, Cedarville shed the role with a 15-6, 15-5 defeat of defending champion Brimley in **Class D**. It was the school's first volleyball title after finishing second the previous four years.

1997 Upsets were few and far between as all four tournament winners were ranked No. 1 in their respective classes in the final coaches' association poll.

Sophomore Kim Taskey had 12 kills and sophomore Kaitlyn Martin added six kills and five service aces to lead Portage Northern to its ninth **Class A** title, all under the leadership of Head Coach Jack Magelssen. The Huskies' 15-4, 15-5 victory over Romeo in the Finals was also their fifth title in six years.

Marysville became just the second team in MHSAA volleyball history to win a

**Becky Chubb
Pinconning – 1992**



Gary Shook, Osseo

**Shyann Robinson
Portage Northern – 1997**

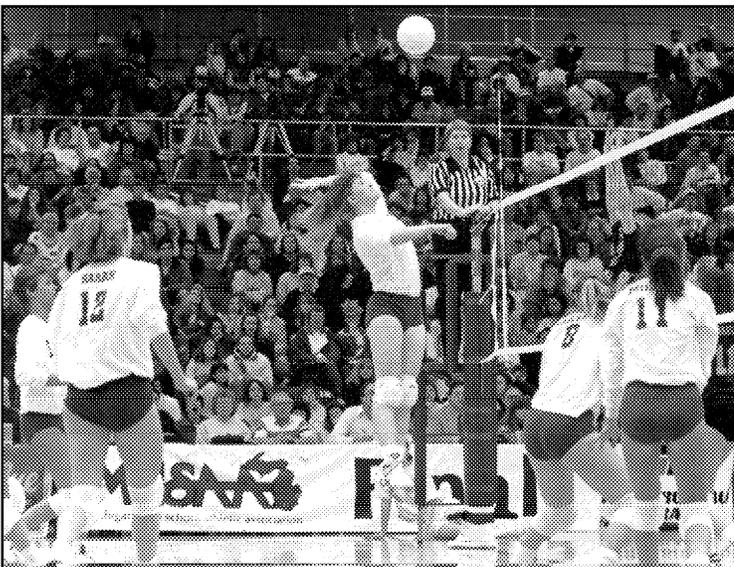
title with an unbeaten record. The Vikings finished 57-0 on the way to their first ever **Class B** crown (beginning a streak that has now reached five straight). The first school to finish undefeated with a title was Portage Northern's 1995 team, which was 82-0. Jenny Conger had seven kills and Kelly Harrison four, while Jennie Williams had five kills and eight assisted blocks for Marysville, as the Vikings defeated Charlotte, 15-10, 15-12, in the Finals.

Coach Bill Abbott's Hanover-Horton Comets won their second straight **Class C** title, beating Lake Fenton 15-13, 15-9. Proving that taller is not necessarily better; the shorter Comets had 41 kills to Lake Fenton's 26. Tahny Dean, a 5-10 middle hitter, led the way with 15 kills. Rillie Spink, a 5-8 senior outside hitter, added 14.

After a one-year absence, Battle Creek St. Philip's Sheila Guerra won her ninth **Class D** title – the school's 10th overall – when her Fighting Tigers beat Center Line St. Clement, 15-6, 15-9. The seniors, Brooke Formsma, Mary Chadwick, Sarah Reetz, Megan Markovich, and Teresa Bess all played big roles in the championship match. Reetz was virtually unstoppable, hitting kills from the middle to the right and left. She had 15 kills and a .565 hitting percentage.

In the **Upper Peninsula**, Ironwood captured its third **Class A-B-C** title overall, and first in five years with a 15-5, 15-3 win over Rudyard. The **Class D** Final in the U.P. went to Cedarville for the sixth straight year, as the Trojans toppled Iron Mountain North Dickinson, 15-3, 15-10. The six straight is still a record for consecutive volleyball titles in Michigan.

— Compiled by MHSAA Intern
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Gary Shook, Otsego