

PAGE FOUR

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EARLINGTON IS NOW NO. 1

Jackets Could Have Danced All Night

By JIM WALKER
SPORTS EDITOR
LOUISVILLE, Ky.—Prior to the Kentucky High School Championship tip-off here Saturday night, the Freedom Hall organist was playing "Somewhere Over The Rainbow" and "I Could Have Danced All Night".

Following the final horn, Earlington's Yellowjackets were the ones that could have danced all night and Covington Catholic was wondering if Tyrone Hopson came from somewhere over the rainbow after stealing their pot of gold.

The Second Region champs, winning their 38th game in 39 starts this year, capped off the most brilliant final victory in state tournament history when Hopson, a 6-2 junior, outmaneuvered muscular 6-4 George Schloemer and 6-6 Handy Noll for the winning rebound basket a split second before the final horn, giving Earlington its first state tournament title with a 54-53 victory.

The dramatic shot came after Earlington blew a 3-point lead with a 1:04 left to play.

It all started with Earlington leading 52-51 with 16 seconds to go and Catholic had the ball.

Jim Cooper missed on a 15-footer, but teammate Joe Fritz grabbed the rebound and dropped in a 10-foot basket, leaving only six seconds to play.

Earlington called time out and Coach Bob Fox went to work planning his strategy.

Sophomore Greg Martin, who forgot about his bad ankle which he hurt in the opening game against Russell, and led all scorers with 20 points, took the ball out of bounds under Catholic's basket.

Almost waiting too long before throwing the ball inbounds, Martin whipped a strike to Sharp near midcourt. Turning and driving within 35 feet of the basket, Sharp cut loose with a jump shot which hit high on the backboard and fell off the front of the rim.

Fighting off Schloemer and Noll, Hopson went up to the rim, pulled down the ball, went back up and dropped it in not over as the horn sounded. With that, the official standing at midcourt motioned the basket good and Earlington was No. 1.

The two teams battled like champions and both drew praise for coming back when left up.

Earlington's sticky defense, eliciting the tip to five points.

Not only did Hopson score the final basket, but he scored the final point of the night to put Earlington out to a 1-0 lead and the title belt was on.

After Catholic went ahead, 6-1 Earlington started its first comeback and Martin's two buckets tied it at 4-4.

Then came the Jacket press which proved fatal to the opposition once more. Sharp rebounded with a steal, Martin bombed another 25-footer and Earlington was on top, 10-8. Sharp's rebound

bucket saw Earlington taking the first quarter lead, 12-8.

After missing a couple of easy scoring chances early in the second quarter, Earlington rolled out to a 22-12 lead with 3:32 to go in the first half and appeared to have Catholic at the break point as Sharp and Martin took over.

Sharp started the rally with a 15-footer. Martin came up with a steal and led Sharp for a 25-footer. Martin followed with a 20-footer. Sharp got a 10-foot hook and Martin ripped in for a lay-up.

But then Catholic came roaring back and outscored Earlington 6-3 with Fritz leading the charge to cut the count to 25-18 at halftime.

Earlington got the second half tip, but couldn't cash in on Cooper, a standout for Catholic all through the tournament, got his only field goal of the night against Earlington's sticky defense, eliciting the tip to five points.

But more trouble was still coming for the Jackets.

Schloemer got a tip-in, Noll hit from 25 feet and Earlington's margin was only one point, 25-24 with 5:05 to play.

Jim Hicks, who carried a big load for Earlington in its first three wins, but had trouble finding the basket in the final contest, came up with a bucket from under, but Schloemer matched that for Catholic.

Then came Martin with his first of two big 3-point plays and

Hopson's 25-foot jumper put Earlington in command, 32-24. But Catholic wasn't about to give in and with 2:44 to go in the third quarter, Dan Overmann tied it on a long jumper at 33-33.

Fritz then got a tip-in and followed with a watermelon from the side as the Colonels were controlling the boards and leading 37-33. Seconds later Schloemer's basket moved Catholic out to a 39-35 margin after Martin's driving basket closed the gap to 37-35.

But neither were the Jackets about to roll over and play dead. Hicks popped in a jumper and Sharp drilled a 20-foot basket as the two teams were all dead.

locked at 39-39 at the third quarter stop.

With the greatest show on earth down to the final 8 minutes, Earlington drew first blood in the fourth frame as Martin hit one of two free throws and Sharp followed with a driving hook to send Fox's five on top, 42-39 with 5:52 now left to play.

Overmann meshed a long range 20-pointer from out front, but Hopson came up with a steal and Sharp rammed in his seventh bucket of the night for a 44-41 count with the time down to 4 minutes.

Hopson then came up with another steal, but Martin missed a underhand shot from the side.

Committing a floor mistake to give Catholic the ball again after the Colonels missed their

first attempt, Fritz bagged another long one from the corner.

Hicks then got one of two free throws on Noll's foul, but Noll got a tip-in to tie it at 45-45.

After Hicks and Noll traded baskets, Martin roared under for a layup and was fouled on the play by Fritz.

The basket was good and Martin cashed the free throw for a Earlington 50-47 lead with 1:04 showing on the clock.

Schloemer then canned a 15-footer jumper to slice the gap to 50-49 with 52 seconds as both Earlington and Catholic fans were surging forward with seconds ticking off the clock.

Then what appeared to be the killing blow for Earlington came when Johnson was called for taking the ball back across the 10-second line.

That almost rocked Freedom Hall as Catholic fans were set for Northern Kentucky's first championship and Earlington hopes were all but down the drain.

Fritz put Catholic on top, 51-50 from 20 feet out, but Sharp, the "old pro", came up with one from 15 feet away with 16 seconds to go and Earlington scurrying for dear life, leading, 52-51.

When Fritz grabbed a rebound and dropped in a 10-footer, it was all but clinched with Catholic leading 53-52 and 8 seconds to go.

Earlington called time with 6 seconds left, the biggest six

seconds in the history of the Second Region.

Then came the heartstopping four seconds and then the most beautiful one-second you'll ever see in basketball.

Sharp's 16 points followed Martin in scoring for Earlington, while Hicks had 8, Hopson 7 and Johnson 3.

Noll backed up Fritz for Catholic with 11, while Schloemer was held to only 8.

Earlington finished the game hitting 23 of 50 shots for 46.4. The Jackets posted the victory margin at the charity stripe, 8-7.

Catholic held a big rebound margin, 51-25 with Noll leading all players with 13. Hicks and Sharp had 6 for Earlington, Martin and Johnson 5 and Hopson 4.

THE CHAMPS				
	FG	FT	PF	TP
Earlington	8	0	2	16
Sharp	3	1	4	7
Hopson	3	2	1	8
Hicks	8	4	2	20
Martin	1	1	2	3
Johnson	0	0	1	0
Leavey	0	0	1	0
TOTALS	23	8	12	54

PERSON FOULS				
	FG	FT	PF	TP
Covington	2	0	0	4
Kreinberg	9	0	2	18
Fritz	4	0	4	8
Schloemer	4	3	4	11
Noll	1	4	1	6
Cooper	3	0	0	6
Overmann	0	0	0	0
Droege	23	7	11	33
TOTALS	Person fouls: Earlington 12, Catholic 11.			



MAN OF HOUR... Earlington's Tyrone Hopson is the man of the hour in this photo after Saturday night's State Tournament victory over Covington Catholic. It was Hopson's last-second basket that won it, 54-53. (Photo by Webbs)

Male High 59, Earlington 55

Male hit only 31.4 per cent of its shots (22 of 70) and its star Henry Bacon went 7-for-25, yet Male was able to pick up its 13th victory by taking advantage of three scoring lapses by Earlington.

The first came after Earlington star Justin Sharp had picked up his third foul with the score 18-18. Sharp sat out the last five minutes of the first half and Male spurted for eight straight points and a 26-18 lead.

Earlington recaptured the lead at 40-38 and had a 42-39 edge early in the final quarter. Again Male erupted for eight straight points—four by clutch-shooting Rick Bolus—while Earlington went scoreless and it was 47-42 Male.

Earlington's last hope came with 3 minutes, 49 seconds to play when it trailed 49-47. However, Earlington had its third 2½-minute scoreless period and Male jumped out to a 55-47 advantage.

Six of Earlington's 20 field goals came

as a result of a harassing zone press defense that Male coach Rendek called "the toughest we've faced—and we've met several—this season."

"We did a poor job handling the zone press," said Rendek. "But we seemed to pick up a basket against it at the right time."

Earlington coach Bob Fox felt the turning point "was when Male hit a couple of long one-handers (both by Bolus) when we were putting pressure on them with our defense.

"If we could have gotten a few more baskets, that would have helped since we were pressing after each field goal we made," said Fox.

"But the ball wouldn't go in."

Earlington hit 20 of 63 shots for 31.7 per cent and was outrebounded by Male 49-37. Male's Cleophus Morris led all rebounders with 12.

Bacon, who got 11 of his 18 points in the second quarter, sank one of 11 second-half shots. Bolus, though, made eight of his 13 points in the last quarter.

Earlington Romps

Rupp Calls Jackets' Press Best In High School Ranks

BY JIM WALKER
SPORTS EDITOR

LOUISVILLE, Ky. — After Earlington edged past Russell Thursday afternoon in the 50th annual Kentucky High School State Tournament, Kentucky coach Adolph Rupp called the Yellow Jacket press "the best high school press I've ever seen".

No doubt the Wildcat mentor was even more impressed after Friday night's game when Bob Fox's Yellowjackets, led by Justin Sharp, Jim Hicks, Tyrone Hopson and another outstanding relief role by little sophomore Lonnie Burgett, crushed the 7th Region champs, Louisville Atherton.

The win put Earlington into the lower bracket semi-finals this afternoon with a record of 36-1.

Should Earlington win today's round, the Jackets would be in the championship tilt tonight which will be televised in color by Louisville's Channel 3, WPSD (Channel 6) Paducah will also carry the championship contest.

Hitting 50 per cent the first half, 16 of 32, and grabbing 26 rebounds to the taller Rebels' 10, Earlington was never in trouble after going to the dressing room at intermission with a 20-point lead.



JOHNSON ON THE GO. . . . Arthur Johnson (24), Earlington's senior guard, starts Earlington fast break after taking rebound in last night's game against Louisville Atherton as teams head down court. Earlington won, 85-64. (Messenger photo).

Fox praised the play of Burgett again for his outstanding job running the team, but again called it a "team victory".

Justin Sharp, who was congratulated for his fine performance by Coach Rupp, led the Jackets with 25 points, while Hopson was close behind with 21 and Jim Hicks pumped in 19.

Rob Partin paced the Rebels with 16 and Carl Kuhl had 14.

Earlington picked off 45 rebounds to 29 for Atherton. Hicks had 14 to lead Earlington, Sharp and Hopson 8 each. Tom Frazier was high for Atherton with 9.

The Jackets finished the game hitting 52 per cent of their shots, 28 of 54, while the Rebels hit on 36 per cent, getting 39 shots and cashing in on only 19.

Earlington took the opening lead, 1-0 as Sharp got a free throw on 6-6. Gene Jackson's foul but the Jackets were cold from the field and Dave Kerchner put Atherton on top 2-1 with two charity shots.

Then came Earlington's hustling press and with 2:35 remaining in the first period, Greg Martin, Sharp and Hopson had drilled fielders for a 11-5 Jacket lead. Martin's 20-footer gave Earlington a 4-3 margin and the Jackets never looked back.

With Hicks and Sharp spearheading the Jacket press, Earlington rolled out to a 17-5 lead seconds later after two straight steals and driving layups. This forced Atherton coach Gene Minion to call his third timeout, but the Jackets were ready for this one.

Hitting from outside, inside

Burgett Praised

BY JIM WALKER
SPORTS EDITOR

LOUISVILLE, Ky. — Should Earlington win the 50th annual Kentucky High School State Tournament the Jackets should vote little Lonnie Burgett the Most Valuable Player award.

Burgett, a 5-10, 134-pound sophomore, has been a big gun in Earlington's two state tournament wins so far, over Russell Thursday and again Friday night as the Jackets dumped 7th Region Champion Louisville Atherton.

Although only scoring six points, four against Russell in Earlington's 76-72 win and two against Atherton as Bob Fox's crew rolled last night to an easy 85-64 victory, Burgett has run the offense and been a hustling demon on defense while filling in for the injured Greg Martin, also a sophomore.

Martin was forced out of the Russell game early in the first period when he was kicked on the ankle by a Russell player.

Packing the ankle in ice, Martin suffered through most of the night Thursday, but was able to start Friday night and scored

and crushing the Rebels on defense, Hicks rammed in a missed shot for a 25-11 first quarter break lead.

Hopson's 3-point play made it 30-15 with 7:20 to go in the first half, but then Earlington hit a cold streak again and made a couple of costly floor mistakes and Atherton cut the count to 33-19 with 3:07 to play. Hopson, who netted 17 points in the first half, then cashed in on a 15-footer, but Carl Kuhl matched that at the free throw line for the Rebels.

Then came the press again as Lonnie Burgett, in for Martin, who injured an ankle against Russell Thursday, came up with a steal and fed Hicks for a layup and Hopson followed with another layup after a steal as Earlington was in command 39-22.

Burgett then got a driving basket and came up with another steal, feeding Sharp, who was fouled. Hitting one of two charity shots, Sharp made it 42-24 and Hopson got two free throws to send the Second Region champs to the dressing room at halftime with a 44-24 lead.

Hicks' bucket and two free throws by Sharp pushed the count to 50-25 with 5:50 remaining in the third quarter, but Atherton then fired back, outscoring the Jackets 8-2 to slice the big lead to 52-33 with 4:49 showing on the clock, as Earlington failed to take advantage of their free throws. Sharp's two-pointer pushed the lead to 55-35.

Guess what then? Right — the press, and with 2:14 to play in the third stanza Earlington's lead was 61-38 with Burgett, who should make the all-tournament team on his hustling play alone, came up with his fourth steal and fed Hicks for a two-pointer

and Sharp followed. Hopson then got in on the act with the press row crew beginning to make Earlington the tournament favorite.

Going into the final frame with a 64-40 lead, Sharp got a 10-footer as Earlington was coasting with a 70-44 advantage with 5:33 left in the game.

Fox, named this week as the United Press International Coach of the Year, started sending in reserves midway of the fourth frame to finish up with Earlington having it wrapped up with 4 minutes to go, leading 76-52.

BOX SCORE			
ATHERTON	G	F	T
Jackson	2	0-0	4
Frazier	2	4-5	8
Kerchner	0	2-3	2
Edwards	4	4-5	12
Partin	6	4-5	16
Morin	1	1-1	3
Kuhl	2	10-15	14
Chessler	0	1-1	1

Neal	1	0-0	2
Gatterdam	0	0-0	0
Hummel	1	0-0	2
Totals	19	26-35	64

EARLINGTON	G	F	T
Sharp	7	11-13	21
Hopson	7	7-11	21
Hicks	7	5-9	19
G. Martin	1	1-1	2
Johnson	0	3-3	6
L. Martin	2	0-0	4
Smith	0	0-0	0
Leavell	2	0-0	4
Burgett	1	2-4	4
Jagoe	1	0-0	2
A. Moore	0	0-0	0
C. Moore	0	0-0	0
Totals	28	29-41	84

Lou, Atherton — 11 13 16 24.6
Earlington — 25 19 20 21.85
Fouled out: Atherton, Frazier
Jackson, Kerchner; Earlington
Hicks.
Total fouls: Atherton 28; Earlington 23.



THINGS WERE GREAT. . . . When this picture was snapped things were looking great for the Earlington Yellowjacket fans in quarter-final round against Louisville Atherton last night in Freedom Hall. The Jackets won, 85-64. See story. (Messenger photo.)

AUCTION

Saturday, March 25th, 10 A.M.

219 E. Center, Madisonville, Ky.

REAL ESTATE — ANTIQUES — HOUSEHOLD GOODS

To settle the estate of the late Mrs. Evelyn Crow Brooks.

REAL ESTATE: Well located Commercial lot fronts 96 feet on E. Center St. and is 186 feet deep. The spacious old brick home has eight rooms and bath, garage, storage area, one outbuilding.

Breathitt County Gains; Earlington Rips Atherton

By BILLY REED

Courier-Journal & Times Staff Writer

The first 31 minutes and five seconds of last night's Breathitt County-Harrison County game didn't really mean much.

With 55 seconds left, the teams were right where they started—tied up, this time at 54-54.

Then Breathitt County decided that it had better get busy if it was to earn a berth opposite Earlington in the semifinals of the State High School Tournament.

So it stunned Harrison County with seven straight points and left the floor with a 61-56 victory before 13,500 fans in Freedom Hall.

Earlington advanced the easy way by taking a big lead in the first quarter and then hustling to a 85-64 victory over Louisville Atherton in last night's first game.

Fred Combs started Breathitt County's surge with a free throw to give his

team the lead 55-54 with 55 seconds left.

Combs then missed a second free throw, but he got the rebound. And with 44 seconds left, Harrison's Charlie Brunker fouled Breathitt's B. G. Lovins, who put in two more free throws for a 57-54 lead.

Combs then stole the ball and hit a layup to break the game open. When Eugene Cundiff sank two free throws seconds later, it gave Breathitt a 61-54 lead and the ball game.

Harrison's Blaine Henry hit a jumper with five seconds left to finish the scoring.

Until Breathitt's late rally, the game belonged to either team. Neither led by more than three points after the first quarter.

Lovins and Harrison's Gary Tomlin each scored 21 points to lead their teams.

EARLINGTON 85									
Player	fg	fga	ft	fta	reb	pf	tp		
Sharp	7	15	11	13	6	3	25		
Hopson	7	14	7	11	5	4	21		
Hicks	7	11	5	9	8	5	19		
G. Martin	1	4	1	1	3	3	3		
Johnson	0	3	3	4	3	2	3		
Burgell	1	4	2	5	1	2	4		
Leavell	2	2	0	0	2	2	4		
L. Martin	2	2	0	0	1	1	4		
Jagoe	1	1	0	0	0	0	2		
A. Moore	0	0	0	0	1	1	0		
C. Moore	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Tam	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Totals	28	56	29	43	35	23	85		

ATHERTON 64									
Player	fg	fga	ft	fta	reb	pf	tp		
Frazier	2	10	4	5	10	5	8		
Jackson	2	6	0	0	4	5	4		
Kerchner	0	2	2	3	1	5	2		
Partin	6	14	4	5	4	2	16		
Edwards	4	11	4	5	3	4	12		
Morin	2	1	1	1	0	1	3		
Kuhl	2	5	10	15	0	4	14		
Chessler	0	3	1	1	3	2	1		
Hummel	1	2	0	0	0	0	2		
Neal	1	4	0	0	2	0	2		
Gaterdam	0	1	0	0	0	0	0		
Goldstein	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Team	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Totals	19	59	26	35	33	28	64		

EARLINGTON 25 19 20 21—85
ATHERTON 11 13 16 24—64
Shooting percentages—Earlington 50.0, Atherton 32.2.

HARRISON COUNTY 56									
Player	fg	fga	ft	fta	reb	pf	tp		
Tomlin	9	20	3	5	6	2	21		
Wilson	4	11	0	1	6	1	8		
Custard	3	7	0	0	7	4	6		
Brunker	5	13	2	3	2	3	12		
Henry	4	9	1	4	7	4	9		
Whitaker	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Arnold	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Ritchie	0	0	0	0	1	1	0		
Spicer	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Dixon	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Washington	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Team	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Totals	25	60	6	13	33	15	56		

BREATHITT COUNTY 61									
Player	fg	fga	ft	fta	reb	pf	tp		
Cundiff	3	12	4	5	12	0	10		
Lovins	7	14	7	9	8	2	21		
Noble	7	18	2	4	5	4	16		
Saunders	3	6	0	2	4	2	6		
Combs	3	9	2	4	3	4	8		
Team	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Totals	23	59	15	24	35	12	61		

HARRISON COUNTY 14 17 16 9—56
BREATHITT COUNTY 11 21 13 16—61
Shooting percentages—Harrison County 41.7, Breathitt County 39.0.

Earlington 85, Atherton 64

Watching Earlington play basketball actually makes you worry.

On the bench, coach Bob Fox always has the air of a man on the brink of disaster. His expression is pained. He screams, tears his hair and suffers visibly when an officiating call goes against him.

And, on the floor, his players go at the game so hard, bless their hearts, that it seems the whole bunch will surely just collapse any moment.

Earlington has a good reason for it all.

Because it doesn't have any real big players, or any real great ones, Earlington has to beat you anyway it can.

So, while Fox fidgets, Earlington hustles. It whistles and yells on defense. But, most important, it takes the ball away from you or makes you give it up.

That's how Earlington beat Atherton last night.

Harassing the bigger team with a full court press from the very first, Earlington forced Atherton into a near-record 29 floor errors and then turned those mistakes into a surprisingly easy victory.

Consider, for instance, a stretch late in the first quarter. Leading only 7-5, Earlington forced Atherton into four straight floor mistakes and then scored each time for a 17-5 lead.

Atherton never regained its cool.

The game also nearly produced a record for fouls. The total of 51 missed the record by five.

Unnerving Defense Carried Earlington to Title Tilt

By **DAVE KINDRED**

Courier-Journal & Times Staff Writer

Covington Catholic was imperturbable. And Earlington was, as always, maddening.

So they earned spots in the championship game of the Kentucky State High School Basketball Tournament.

In yesterday afternoon's semifinal games before 16,000 fans at Freedom Hall:

✓ Covington Catholic beat Louisville Central 67-55, primarily because it re-

fused to be shaken by Central's harassing defense.

✓ Earlington beat Breathitt County 69-64, thanks to a perpetual-motion press that unnerved the losers so often they lost the ball 23 times without getting a shot.

Covington Catholic 67, Central 55

Although Central's speedy defenders pressed throughout the game, Covington Catholic was charged with just 11 turnovers.

In fact, Covington Catholic won its 12th straight game—and second in three tries against Central—by capitalizing on its own defensive work.

For instance:

With a 16-15 lead early in the second quarter, Covington Catholic broke the game open when it scored nine straight points, six of them coming after steals.

Central could never get closer than seven points the rest of the way.

Another indication of Covington Catholic's tight defense shows up in the shooting statistics.

Central, which hit 56.4 per cent in its quarter-final victory over top-rated Allen County, managed just 34.4 per cent yesterday.

The most dramatic difference was in Glenn Montgomery, who made 10 of 14 against Allen County but 4 of 15 over Covington Catholic's zone defense.

Covington Catholic shot 41.8 per cent. And, led by George Schloemer, a 6-foot-4 center, Covington Catholic outrebounded Central 42-37.

Most important, Covington Catholic rebounded well on offense. It scored 10

field goals on rebounds, while Central got three.

Earlington 69, Breathitt County 64

Led by Larry Noble and crowd favorite B. G. Lovins, Breathitt County built a 41-33 lead midway in the third quarter.

But in the last 12 minutes, Breathitt County threw the ball away 12 times.

A basket by Arthur Johnson and six straight points by Jim Hicks pulled Ear-

lington into a 45-45 tie. Then, after stubborn Breathitt County moved ahead 58-57 with 3:55 left in the game, Johnson took over.

He stole the ball for one layup. Seconds later, he was on the scoring end of a fast break that started when Breathitt County fumbled the ball.

Earlington wrapped up its 37th victory against one loss by making six straight free throws.

Breathitt County outrebounded Earlington, but it lost that advantage by shooting only 35.6 per cent to Earlington's 41.9. And Earlington had nine less turnovers.

Jacket Power Explodes

BY JIM WALKER
SPORTS EDITOR

NEBO, Ky. —A sign was placed on one end of Rebel Gym here Friday night by the Earlington pep club, reading "Jacket Power".

The sign told the story as Earlington romped to an easy 72-40 victory over the West Hopkins Rebels in the lower bracket semi-finals.

Earlington led from the start and with 4:57 remaining in the third quarter, it was Earlington 50, West Hopkins 14.

Only with Earlington's probable starters for next year in the lineup, was West Hopkins able to close the gap late in the game.

Committing 27 floor mistakes against Earlington's all-court press, West started out trying for a stall, but the Jackets rolled out to a 14-1 first quarter lead and they should have stopped it right there.

Mike Barron got West's first field goal early in the second quarter, but in the mean-

time Earlington was leading 24-4.

Holding a 36-14 halftime lead, the Jackets went on top by 30 points, 44-14 as Hicks roared under for a layup with 6:38 to go in the frame and Justin Sharp's bucket made it 50-14.

With that, Earlington coach Bob Fox started sending in his reserves, on top by 57-26 at the quarter stop.

It was close the final period with Earlington winning that 8 minute battle, 15-14.

Earlington sophomore guard

Greg Martin was the best show of the night with his twisting layups, long jumpers and running the Earlington "power" attack.

Martin took game scoring honors with 17 points, followed by Arthur Johnson with 16, Sharp 13 and Hicks with 10.

Jim Beshears led West with 9 points while Bob Helm and Ricky Thorpe had 8.

The Yellowjackets cleared off 50 rebounds to 19 for West Hopkins and hit on 29 of 59 shots for 49 per cent. West canned 37 per cent of its shots.

Hicks led Earlington's rebounder with 12 and Beshears had 7 for West.

Earlington, now 30-1, meets Madisonville, 11-13, in tonight's championship game.

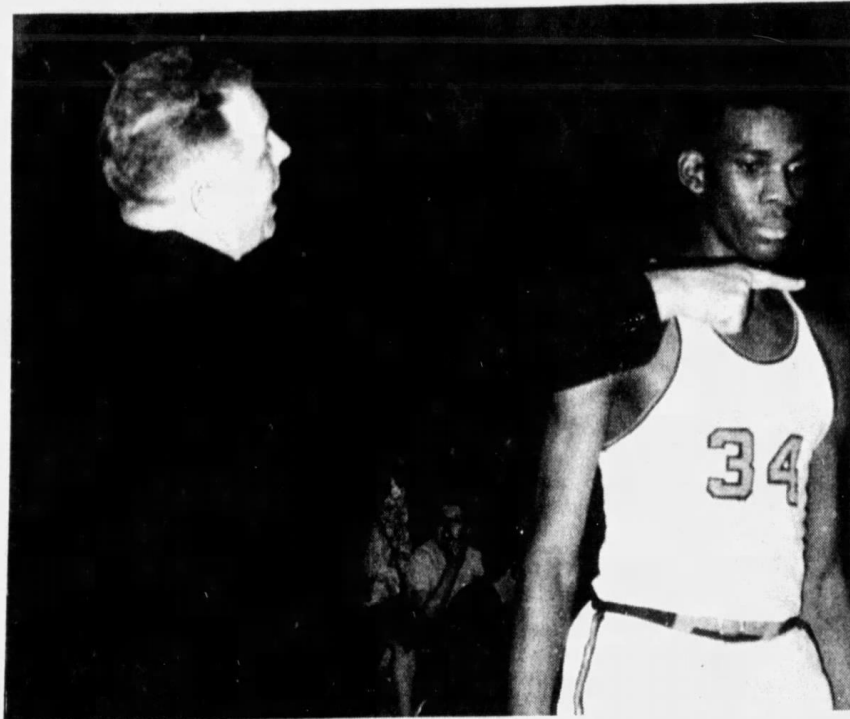
West Hopkins closed out its season with a 10-18 record.

BOX SCORE

EARLINGTON	FG	FT	TP
Sharp	6	1-2	13
L. Martin	1	0-1	2
Hopson	3	2-2	8
Hicks	4	2-3	10
Leavell	0	0-2	0
G. Martin	8	1-1	17
Burgett	1	2-3	4
Johnson	5	6-8	16
Jagoe	0	0-0	0
C. Moore	1	0-0	2
Totals	29	14-22	72

W. HOPKINS	FG	FT	TP
Kirkwood	0	1-2	1
Helm	2	4-6	8
J. Thorpe	3	0-0	6
R. Thorpe	4	0-0	8
Beshears	2	5-8	9
Barron	1	0-0	2
Riggs	3	0-1	6
Totals	15	10-17	40

Personal fouls; Earlington 13, West Hopkins 16. Fouled out, none.



FOX MAKES HIS POINT. . . . Bob Fox, Earlington's colorful cage coach, makes a point with Bob Leavell in game last night against West Hopkins. Earlington outpointed the Rebels, 72-40 for the Jackets 30th victory of the season against one defeat. (Messenger photo by Jerry Howton.)

LaSalle Pulls


ATTACHMENT #14

The Messenger (Madisonville, Kentucky) · Tue, Mar 21, 1967 · Page 4

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IN MY OPINION



My Biggest Sports Thrill

By JIM WALKER

I've had some pretty big thrills since I became connected with this newspaper some eleven years ago, but Saturday night in Louisville's Freedom Hall will remain with me for the rest of my life. It was the biggest thrill in my short sports writing career.

Although it's hard to say the Earlington Yellowjackets and coaches Bob Fox and David Jenkins were not any happier than I, but I don't know if anyone could have been any more so.

When I became Sports Editor of THE MESSENGER only five short years ago I never dreamed a thing like this would happen. You are always hoping, but happening is something else.

We stated in this column several times during the season that Earlington was capable of winning the big one that seemed destined to bypass the Second Region.

We've sent big teams, little teams, fast teams, slow teams, good teams and bad teams to the state tournament, but we had never sent a team like this Earlington team.

They had the dedicated players to do the job, but never in my life have I ever seen two more dedicated coaches than Fox and Jenkins.

It was only a week ago on Saturday night after Earlington had won the Second Region Tournament and a big victory celebration followed at Earlington.

Fox told the gathering, "we are leaving for Louisville Wednesday morning and we are going up there and do our very best to bring back that big one."

In My Opinion, that told the story. They did their very best.

They could have quit in the first game when Greg Martin got hurt and not many fans would have thought much about it had they lost. Martin was a big man in the Earlington offensive attack and the defense just seemed to be useless without him.

But that was before little Lonnie Burgett, Larry Martin and Bob Leavell came in to play like true champions.

You couldn't have blamed them had they quit with six seconds to go Saturday night, but they didn't.

Justin Sharp, one of the finest clutch players in the United States should be crowned the "quickest thinker" for calling time out when he did. Just think if he waited another split second. Earlington would have been the 1966-67 runner-up and this would have been my biggest sports disappointment.

But quitters never win and winners never quit.

Thanks — Yellowjackets for making a dream come true.