

RESOLUTION OF THE GOVERNING BODY OF
THE THREE AFFILIATED TRIBES OF THE
FORT BERTHOLD RESERVATION

- WHEREAS, This Nation having accepted the Indian Reorganization Act of June 18, 1934, and the authority under said Act; and
- WHEREAS, The Constitution and By Laws of the Three Affiliated Tribes authorizes and empowers the Tribal Business Council to engage in activities for the welfare and benefit of the Tribes and Tribal members; and
- WHEREAS, In 1942 the Elbowoods Warriors, a team composed of tribally enrolled members of the Three Affiliated Tribes of the Fort Berthold Reservation, played in the North Dakota State Class "B" Championship game against the Lakota Warriors; and
- WHEREAS, The Lakota Raiders won the 1942 title at Minot but were disqualified for using an ineligible player, Orlin Billings, one of three brothers on the 1942 team, who was older than the maximum 19 years; and
- WHEREAS, Elbowoods couldn't play its star player because of the age ruling. Guard John Rabbit Head reached his 20th birthday the day of the title game; and
- WHEREAS, Initially, Elbowoods was declared the winner, but its championship was voided a year later. Rather than give the title to Elbowoods, the North Dakota High School Activities Association simply declared it vacant. The listing of Class "B" winners has "No Champion" after the year 1942;
- NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Three Affiliated Tribes' Tribal Business Council hereby supports the petition in support of returning the 1942 State Class "B" Championship trophy to the Elbowoods Warriors; and
- BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Three Affiliated Tribes' Tribal Business Council request the North Dakota High School Activities Association to reconsider its decision and declare the Elbowoods Warriors as the 1942 State Class "B" Champions.

C E R T I F I C A T I O N

I, the undersigned, as Secretary of the Tribal Business Council of the Three Affiliated Tribes of the Fort Berthold Reservation, hereby certify that the Tribal Business Council is composed of 11 members of whom 7 constitutes a quorum, 10 were present at a Regular Meeting, thereof duly called, noticed, convened and held on the 8th day of April 1982; that the foregoing resolution was duly adopted at such meeting by the affirmative vote of 9 members, 0 members opposed, 0 members abstained, 1 members not voting and that said resolution has not been rescinded or amended in any way. Chairman (Voting) (~~Not Voting~~).

DATED THIS 8th DAY OF APRIL 1982.


SECRETARY, TRIBAL BUSINESS COUNCIL

ATTEST:


CHAIRMAN, TRIBAL BUSINESS COUNCIL

The N.D. Class B tournament — 40 years ago

Lakota cagers won — and lost — 1942 title

By ED KOLPACK
Sports Editor

The 50th North Dakota Class B high school basketball tournament will be held in Fargo this week. But only the 49th champion will be crowned Saturday night. Lakota won the 1942 title at Minot but it was taken because

Second in a series

the Raiders used an ineligible player. The ineligible player was Orlin Stevens, one of three brothers on

the 1942 team, who was older than the maximum 19 years.

"We found out later that Orlin had registered for the draft that spring," said Cliff Hendrickson, the leading scorer on that Lakota team. "None of the other players knew he was that old, outside of his brothers. But you would think the coach or someone at school would know."

Lakota edged Elbowoods 32-31 in the final on a free throw by Forrest Billings with 29 seconds to play. It was the only point scored by Forrest in the title game. Ironically, Elbowoods couldn't

play its star player because of the age ruling. Guard John Rabbit Head reached his 20th birthday the day of the title game.

Rather than give the title to Elbowoods, the North Dakota High School Activities Association simply declared it vacant. The listing of Class B winners has "No Champion" after the year 1942.

"We didn't know anything about the ineligible player until after the tournament," said B.F. Stevens of Devils Lake, N.D., the Lakota superintendent then.

"There was a man in town who seemed to know something about

the age of this Billings boy and he volunteered the information. The record we had in school was wrong but we checked with the Lakota American, which was the weekly newspaper. They had the birth records."

Stevens said he went to the Activities Association (then the N.D. High School League) with the information that Orlin Billings was 21.

"They didn't do anything right away," said Stevens. "We forfeited the state and regional trophies and later the board declared the title vacant."

Hendrickson's most vivid memory of the 1942 season was that Lakota survived several close games.

"I don't think we won any game in the state tournament by more than two points," he said. "And before that, in the district or regionals, we had some games that went into overtime."

The Raiders edged Minot St. Leo's 38-36 in the first round. In other openers Fargo Sacred Heart (now Shanley) beat Assumption

LAKOTA

(Cont. on Page B-3, Col. 6)

Class B basketball tournament unites N.D.

By Mike Jacobs
Herald Staff Writer

Once a year, I indulge myself and write a column about a sports event, North Dakota's Class B Boys Basketball tournament. But this is not a column about basketball; it is a column about an event.

The Class B tournament is one of only two statewide events in North Dakota and it is the only one that clearly reflects the enthusiasm North Dakotans have for the state. Like no other event, the tournament represents the "North Dakota consensus."

This year's tournament was played last week in Fargo. Like its predecessors, it brought people from every corner of the state and from every age and economic circumstance. Other events do this, too, but without the spirit of self-esteem and good will that the Class B tournament evokes.

Take the Legislature, for example. Its members represent every class and section. But a legislative session is often a disputatious affair. And sometimes, legislators do things the people are not proud of.

matters
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hand



By contrast, the most serious argument the Class B tournament prompts is about where the event should be held. And who can be embarrassed about young athletes performing well?

Other pretended statewide attractions appeal to special interest groups. Political conventions, for example, attract the party faithful. Farm organizations draw only their own members to their conventions. The state fair is spread across eight days and hundreds of activities and so has no focus. And the Winter Show at Valley City is of interest chiefly to farmers, especially livestock raisers.

Nor do other athletic events rival the Class B tournament as a statewide attraction. Fighting Sioux hockey has a regional appeal, but statewide, inter-

est in it is limited largely to alumni of the University of North Dakota. Likewise, the chief interest in the football and basketball rivalries between UND and North Dakota State University is among alumni of the schools. The Class A basketball tournament also does not qualify as a truly statewide event. Interest in it is confined to the state's cities.

That leaves the Class B tournament. The tournament is successful because it is a celebration of the people and small towns that are the backbone of the state. It attracts a large following because North Dakotans retain their ties to small towns no matter where they live.

There is a lot of boastfulness at Class B tournaments. This year, at halftime of the final game, a Fargo-based acrobatics team was introduced as "goodwill ambassadors" for North Dakota and a long list of its appearances at national events was read. Response to the group was a spontaneous demonstration of pride in the state.

Sometimes, there are unexpected glimpses of less attractive parts of

North Dakota's psyche. At the beginning of the championship game, Sidney Fox, who now lives in Crookston, Minn., was introduced as the captain of the Elbowoods team, which played in the 1942 state championship game. Lakota won the game but was disqualified for using an ineligible player. Initially, Elbowoods was declared the winner, but its championship was voided a year later. Fox still wonders if his team was denied the trophy because it was the first Indian team to compete in a state basketball tournament. Of course, the public address announcer didn't mention that — nor that Fox intends to ask the North Dakota High School Activities Association to reconsider its 39-year-old decision. But the introduction was a reminder that there is tension between races in North Dakota.

This is intended as praise of the Class B tournament as a sociological phenomenon, not as a sports event. As a sports event, this year's Class B tournament was less absorbing than its predecessors. But as a reflection of North Dakotans, it was as fascinating.

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Lakota — (Continued from Page B-2)
Abbey of Richardton 47-23,
Elbowoods stopped New England
29-27 and Alamo won over the
Benson Aggies of Maddock 35-30.
In the semifinals it was Lakota
over Alamo 29-27 and Elbowoods
over Sacred Heart 29-28.
Sacred Heart topped Alamo 42-
29 for third place and St. Leo's
downed Abbey 40-30 for fifth
place.
Seeing most of the action that
year for Lakota were
Hendrickson, Orlin and Forrest
Billings, Kay Anderson and Mike
Fahey. Other squad members
included Dennis Billings, Malcolm
Thal and Dick Wert.
Coach of the Raiders was the
late Milo Lodoen, who went on to
several successful years at
Bottineau High School.
On the all-tournament team
were Hendrickson, Sidney and
Isaac Fox of Elbowoods, Eugene
Trepanier of St. Leo's and Jim
Carvell of Sacred Heart.
Hendrickson, now on the faculty
at Mankato (Minn.) State,
attended Jamestown College. He
coached at high schools in
Fessenden and Williston, N.D.,
before serving as an assistant to
Chuck Benison at North Dakota

4/13
82

Recognition sought for Elbowoods team stripped of title

By ED KOLPACK
Sports Editor

Sidney Fox won't let it die.

Fox is searching for the championship trophy awarded in the 1942 North Dakota Class B high school basketball tournament. He thinks it belongs to Elbowoods.

The record shows that Lakota defeated Elbowoods 32-31 in the 1942 Class B title game at Minot. Later it was revealed that Lakota used an ineligible player and the title was declared vacant.

A story in The Forum last week recounted the 1942 state tournament and one of the interested readers was Sidney Fox. Sidney, now living in Crookston, Minn., was captain of the Elbowoods team 40 years ago.

Fox, in Fargo for this year's Class B tourney, is prepared to take his case to the North Dakota High School Activities Association — again.

The Elbowoods school, which has since closed, was located on the Fort Berthold Indian Reservation. It was later inundated by Garrison Dam, but Fox believes recognition of its basketball team is long overdue.

Elbowoods lost two games in the 1942 season, Fox recalls, before that fateful state final. On that day John Rabbit Head, the team's star guard, reached his 20th birthday and he could not play against Lakota because of the 19-year age limit.

However, when Lakota officials discovered that Orlin Billings had played as a 21-year-old, they forfeited the championship.

"If we could have used Rabbit Head we would have won, even if we had to play against five players and two officials," says Fox.

A year ago Fox wrote to the Activities Association, seeking information on the 1942 tournament. The reply was from Duane Silseth of Dakota High School, an association director.

Silseth said directors in 1942

voted to strip Lakota of its title and award it to Elbowoods. But a year later that action was rescinded "because the above action did not represent the philosophy and procedure of the board."

The board's view was that since Lakota used an ineligible player to win its district tournament, that district was not represented in the state tourney. Thus Elbowoods, in effect, played a non-entity.

The report that Elbowoods was given the trophy after it was taken from Lakota also bothers Fox.

"No one has seen that trophy," says Fox. "I heard once that it was hidden in the furnace room of the Lakota school and I went there one day to look for it. If they gave us the trophy, where is it?"

Fox transferred to St. Leo's the next year and was a member of that Minot team which won the 1943 state Class B title.

"We were the first Indian team to reach the state championship," said Fox about the Elbowoods unit. One white member of the team was Harold Odermann but, says Fox, the "regulars" were Indian youths.

"We want to be publicly recognized as state champions while we can still walk," said Fox. "If we get that trophy we're going to have a big pow-wow."

Game at Casselton

CASSELTON, N.D. — The Minnesota Vikings will meet area coaches in a benefit basketball game at 8 p.m. Friday in the Central Cass High School gymnasium. The game is sponsored by the Red Baron softball team.

Fargo Forum, March 27, 1982

