

Amherst Romps, 82-41, Clinches Tie for Title

By JIM BAKER

Amherst doubled runner-up Frontier's score, increased its lead to three games and clinched at least a tie for its first ECIC Division I basketball championship since 1965 Tuesday night with an 82-41 victory over the visiting Falcons.

While Bob Hettler's Amherst five was enjoying every minute, the conference's other two division leaders were suffering. Both were upset.

Cleveland Hill's combination man-for-man and zone limited invading Clarence to nine field goals and a Division II season low point total in a 52-28 shocker. Clarence (11-2) now leads Springville, idled Tuesday, by just one game. Springville has a 10-3 record and seven-game victory skein with three games to play.

Hettler Won 18 Titles

Hettler's teams in his 24 years at Amherst have won 18 titles and the current group looked every bit a champion Tuesday. This was Hettler's 378th triumph and the Tigers made it their biggest rout of the season. Their record is 12-1.

Amherst had a 61-29 advantage after outscoring Frontier, 22-5, in the third quarter. Duke McGuire, 19, John Schaefer, 17, and Gary Hess, 15, paced Amherst. Frontier (9-4) dropped into a second-place tie with West Seneca.

McGuire also had 19 rebounds in leading a 43-22 Tiger bulge. Amherst shot 49 per cent.

FRONTIER				AMHERST			
	G	F	T		G	F	T
Dietz f	6	2	14	Hess f	6	3	15
Trusko/ski f	2	0	4	McGuire f	9	1	19
Granger c	1	0	2	Johnson c	3	2	8
Cooper g	1	0	2	Murray g	4	3	11
Hope g	3	1	7	Schaefer g	8	1	17
Belscher	2	1	5	Gesi	0	2	2
Pemberton	1	1	3	Huber	2	0	4
Just	0	1	1	Gural	1	0	2
Kaeney	1	1	3	Goldstein	1	0	2
				Brown	1	0	2
Totals	17	7	41	Totals	35	12	82
Junior				Varsity	53	12	82
Frontier 46.				Amherst			

TIGER TITLES

The basketball club can clinch the Division I title Thursday, pending the outcome of the Amherst-Frontier game, by knocking off Lackawanna in the steel city. The last game between the teams was stormy on and off the court as both players and coaches were upset with each other . . . The ball club moved a step closer to the crown by downing third place West Seneca 60-56. Duke McGuire with a hot night notched 21, John Schaefer chipped in 19, and Gary Hess 14. After the game Red Replogle remarked "I don't mind sitting out the close ones, but when I'm counted as part of the official paid attendance that gets me down."

High school sports create memories that last a lifetime

I've always resented the idea that all sports writers are frustrated athletes. It suggests that we're a bunch of bitter, vengeful failures who take delight in cutting jocks and coaches down to size.

Sure, I've taken some shots over the years, but it's not the reason I do this for a living. I've loved sports since I was old enough to roll a ball across the living room floor. When I was a boy, playing them was an endless joy, even if it meant confronting my own physical limitations on a daily basis.

I was a mediocre athlete, and ever-grateful for the opportunity. That's different from being frustrated. It was hard and disappointing knowing you weren't among the best. But striving in the face of failure is the best lesson a child can take from sports.

Mediocre wasn't good enough in Newport, R.I., which had 2,000 students in its only high school. I tried out for baseball and basketball, and was cut from both. I'll never forget the coach, a guy named Duke, pulling me aside at the final baseball cut-down, because the game meant

so much to me.

But I was young and got over it soon enough. I found my first job and started playing softball. I'm still playing softball more than 25 years later.

I wasn't frustrated or bitter. I admired the athletes for their talent. Many of them were my friends. I cheered them on, wrote about them in the school paper, and reminded them to savor the experience because some people would give anything to be in their place. I shared in their victories and defeats, and I share some of their memories, too.

Once, our basketball team pulled a big upset against a team from Providence. Later that night, there was a huge fire on the most famous block in town, the one that houses the Tennis Hall of Fame. We stood across the street, in our parking lot hang-out, and watched in the cold.

It was a horrible fire. My father, a fireman, was somewhere in there fighting it. But to us students, still basking in the glow of a great hoop upset, it seemed almost like a victory bonfire.

High school memories matter to people. I'm constantly reminded of it when I'm out with friends here and they get to reminiscing. I envy them. One of the advantages of staying in your home town is that the memories are close by, too.

Some people never get over their high school glory. But for most, it's reassuring to reach into a scrapbook and retrieve a simple moment from a teen-aged past.



**JERRY
SULLIVAN**

It's said that Buffalo affirms its identity through the Bills and Sabres. They connect us to the big time. There's some truth in it. Still, some of the fondest memories are the ones created in high school, the ones you share with old friends over a beer after playing pickup ball on Tuesday night. Those memories connect us; they deserve to be honored, too.

So a while back, while listening to a friend carry on about his high school days, I decided it would be fun to assemble a list of some of the top high school sports years in the area's history.

Trying to pick the best high school athletic years was a daunting task, to say the least. When I first raised the idea in a column, I asked for help and was largely directed by the public response. This was not a scientific study. There was no panel, no point system, no presumption that it would be perfect.

Most schools were picked because they had an unusual number of fine athletes in a given year, regardless of their class, and flourished in a variety of sports. Some made it because they had a particularly memorable player, coach or team.

People will wonder how a certain year at their school could have been left off. Graduates of a school on the list will swear that wasn't even the best year at *that school*. I'll be accused of bias against certain towns or counties or time periods. Since girls sports didn't exist to any great extent until the 1970s, women might feel slighted, too.

It's understandable. I only hope that in honoring a few high school classes, we'll honor them all. In each story, there's something universal. You all remember a hard-nosed coach, a big game on a Friday night, a boy who always came through in the clutch, a girl who started running for fun and became a star.

Look closely, and you might even find a piece of yourself in there, too.