

# SPORTS

East Otter Tail Focus

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Covering Sports in the Greater Perham & New York Mills Area



Photo by Paul Gregersen for the FOCUS

Jordan Cresap, left, Perham's two seniors, Nick Tobkin and Desmine Duffy and Mark Schumacher, right, lead the celebration after Perham's 45-37 state championship victory over Rochester Lourdes.

## Yellowjackets State Champs!

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### MINNEAPOLIS

A season with an undefeated start and a nightmare in the middle came to a dreamy and storyline conclusion, as the Perham boys basketball team, in their first ever trip to the state tournament, head back to Otter Tail County state AA champions.

All season, Perham has adapted to their opponents, most of the time, ending in blowouts. It took awhile in the state AA championship game versus Rochester Lourdes for the Yellowjackets to find the path to victory but as the game aged, the Perham lead spread, culminating in a 45-37 victory.

A slow-paced defensive affair saw five minutes tick off the scoreboard before both teams put up points in the first half, but it was late in the game when Perham's star senior and leading scorer, Nick Tobkin, as he did in the semifinals, took a tenuous part of the game and made it his.

With 6:43 remaining in the game a Tobkin three-pointer put Perham up six, 29-23.

"It feels great to be going out on top," Tobkin said. "This was our goal."

Sam Stratton, who teamed with Tobkin to put Waterville-Elysian-Morrison away in the semis, got to the free throw line on a transition break and then magnetically stuck to two loose balls feeding the ball to Jordan Bruhn, who hit Mike Wiskow streaking to the basket.

Wiskow stretched Perham's lead to their largest, eight points, 33-25.

The Yellowjackets spread the offense out to eat some time off the clock.

A frustrated Chris Eickemeyer picked up his fourth foul hacking Tobkin and from there Tobkin would nail the coffin shut on any Eagle hopes at the title.

Tobkin sank both free throws for the first double-digit lead of the game, 35-25, with four minutes remaining. On the next possession, Tobkin scored again, putting

the Jackets up 12, but he really did damage stepping into a three-pointer and hitting nothing but net, sending the Perham crowd into a frenzy with a comfortable 15-point lead.

"The community supported us throughout the season," Cresap said.

Tobkin led all scorers with 15 points.

Rochester Lourdes tried to make the game a half-court battle and found the patience of the Yellowjacket offense too much to handle, while Perham was willing, when given the opportunity, to get out in transition.

"We struggled through the first half," Mark Schumacher said. "We knew that they were going to try to slow the pace down and run the zone. Personally, I hate zones. We scouted it pretty well and got some shots that we wanted."

The Eagles lone chance at the title was to win the match-up down low. Perham was outscored 26-12 in the paint and 13-2 on second chance points.

But the main focus of the

Yellowjackets, all season, has been to control the tempo and own the boards.

"We wanted to get good shots and not rush things," Cresap said.

Perham took the battle of the boards out-rebounding Rochester Lourdes 33-24 and when they got out in transition they outscored the Eagles 14-8 in points off turnovers.

Eickemeyer got Rochester Lourdes up a bucket three minutes into the game. The Eagles dropped back into their zone defense trying to corner the Yellowjacket big men while still getting out to cover the deep threats of Cresap and Tobkin.

The Eagle defensive effort lasted two more game minutes before Tobkin got the Jackets on the board with a three. Taking a 3-2 lead, the game tied at five, before a Cresap three gave Perham the lead for the remainder of the first half.

Cresap, who has filled the starting role of Zach Gabbard since January, scored 12 points. Stratton scored nine.

"The adversity we faced

throughout the season was incredible, but we used that to motivate us," Cresap said.

Schumacher only scored two points, but had two big blocks in the early minutes to set a defensive tone. Schumacher had three blocks in the game.

"I'm on top of the world right now," Schumacher said. "It's been a roller coaster of a season."

The Yellowjackets finish the season with a school record 31 victories and one loss.

Three Yellowjackets, Nick Tobkin, Sam Stratton and Jordan Cresap, were named to the 2011 Class AA Minnesota State Boys' Basketball All-Tournament Team. Members of the media attending the tournament selected the team. Shane McGrath, Alex Kapraun and Nic Jensen made the team from Rochester Lourdes. The other nominees were Conrad Masberg and Tate Harmon from W-E-M, and Michael Busack and JT Radel from Redwood Valley.

Zach Gabbard, after appearing at both the quarterfi-

nals and semifinals, did not attend the state championship game.

"I'm excited to see Zach and hear his thoughts on the game," Cresap said. "Zach's working as hard as he can down there, and we knew we had to do the same. Zach's one of the hardest workers I know."

"Zach was so worn out yesterday," Schumacher said. "Hopefully, we'll get to see him tonight or tomorrow even."

Hopefully, we'll all see him back on the court soon, as well.

PERHAM: Schumacher 0 2-2 2 Tobkin 5 2-2 15 Bruhn 1 1-3 3 Stratton 2 4-4 9 Cresap 3 4-4 12 Wiskow 1 2-2 4 Hein 0 0-0 0. Totals: 12 15-17 45.

ROCHESTER LOURDES: Lentz 1 0-0 Kapraun 3 2-2 10 McGrath 4 1-3 9 Eickemeyer 6 0-2 12 Jensen 2 0-4 4. Totals: 16 3-7 37.

Half: P 18 RL 13. 3-pointers: P, 6 (Tobkin 3, Cresap 2, Stratton 1). RL, 2 (Kapur 2). Rebounds: P, 24 (Stratton 11) RL, 33 (McGrath 11).

## CHAMPIONSHIP TROPHY



Photo by Paul Gregersen for the Focus

Dan Cavanagh, left, and Jordan Bruhn, join Nick Tobkin and Desmine Duffy in showcasing the AA state basketball trophy at center court of Target Center.

## COACH OF THE YEAR



Photo by Paul Gregersen for the Focus

Enough cannot be said about Head Coach Dave Cresap's, and the entire coaching staff's, handling of a fairy tale season with plenty of pitfalls before a happy ending. Cresap was named the 2011 Minnesota State AA Coach of Year.

INSIDE

Cresap fills big shoes

Today in Twins History, March 31, 2003: The earliest opening day in Minnesota Twins history takes place at the Twins beat the Tigers 3-1 in Detroit.

Focus

- DID YOU KNOW? -

This week in 2003, renovation to the Perham Lakeside Golf Clubhouse was nearing completion.

INSIDE

Zach Gabbard appearance

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