

# SPORTS

## GIRLS BASKETBALL

### STMA blows past Buffalo in 76-38 rout

Kramer's hot shooting lifts Knights to 11th consecutive title game

By Rob LaPlante  
Sports Editor

The St. Michael-Albertville girls' basketball team used two lopsided wins during the regular season over Buffalo as a learning tool.

For two out of four halves, Buffalo proved they could play with the No. 4 ranked team in the state. For the other two halves, STMA proved why they are a legit contender for this year's Class 4A state title.

"We played them twice, and both times, we kind of let them hang with us for a while in the first half," said STMA junior guard Kenzie Kramer. "All throughout practice the past week, we were focused on getting out to a good start. We knew if we could bury them early, we could take care of the game. That was our main focus for today."

Kramer and the Knights did just that. Sparked by an 11-0 run to start the game, STMA advanced to its 11th straight section final game with a convincing 76-38 victory over the Bison in last Saturday's Section 8-4A semifinal game at Halenbeck Hall in St. Cloud.

STMA's relentless defensive effort turned into early transition baskets and open look threes. Kramer scored 21 of her game-high 29 points in the opening half, which included six-of-seven she converted from three.

Buffalo trailed the Knights 45-23 at halftime, but any doubts of an upset were erased way earlier than that.

Down 11-0, Buffalo Head Coach Grant Stewart was forced to take a timeout just four minutes into the contest. Lauren O'Connell scored the Bison's first points on a three pointer with 13:03 left in the half, but the hot-shooting from Kramer, Jadyn Hanson, and Kendal Cox helped push STMA's lead to 27-7 at the midway point of the half.

Hanson scored 13 first-half points. Cox added 12. "We felt good. We felt confident. We felt like we could play with them coming into this game," Stewart said. "It just didn't go our way. St. Michael is a very good team. They played really well and

they shot extremely well - everything was dropping for them. Hats off to them."

Bison senior guard Reese Wishart tried her best to carry her team back into the game. Wishart's three with four minutes remaining in the half capped off a 10-3 Bison run, and forced STMA into a timeout with its lead cut to 35-21.

Following the timeout, the Knights went into a full-court press, which immediately resulted in two quick baskets off Bison turnovers. Buffalo committed 14 first-half turnover, and 23 for the game.

"The pressure St. Michael gives us is always tough, and we knew coming into it they were going to give us that pressure," said Wishart, who finished with 18 points and seven rebounds. "It was the little things we needed to do better, and we didn't do them."

"We started chipping away and coming back, but we weren't able to hang on to that momentum," said Stewart, referring to STMA's 10-2 run to close the half.

Much like the first half, Kramer came out firing with a three on the first possession of the second.

Buffalo scored six straight points on a pair of buckets by Wishart and one by Zrust. As they did in the prior two meetings, the Knights frustrated Buffalo's leading scorer, as Zrust fin-

ished with only six points.

"They shut her left hand down," Wishart said. "They know she's lefty, and they know she likes to go left. When they shut that down, it's kind of hard for her to do anything."

Up big with seven minutes remaining, STMA gradually started to pull its starters, but not before one final three by Kramer that gave the Knights a 68-32 lead.

Stewart kept his starters on the floor until the final two minutes of regulation. Five (Wishart, Zrust, O'Connell, Kiera Johnson, Claire Boser) of Buffalo's six seniors are starters. Haley Braun is the sixth senior.

"We lose a very strong senior class this year," Stewart said. "I told them afterwards, it's been phenomenal working with them the last two years. We'll definitely miss them and miss their presence. Now it's time for everyone else to step up and fill their shoes."

Buffalo finished 20-8 overall, an improvement of two games from last year's 18-10 season. It's the first time the Bison reached the 20-win plateau since finishing 24-5 in the 2011-12 season.

"We had a great season - 20 wins, I'm very proud of them," Stewart said. "This particular game doesn't define us."

"I think we had a successful year. Twenty wins is



STMA's Mackenzie Kramer scored 29 points, and hit 8-of-10 three-pointers in the win.

pretty great," Wishart said. "I'm proud of my girls. Good luck to them next year. It's going to be tough. It's going to be a hard season, a hard conference, but as long as they stick together, I think they will be okay."

For the Knights (25-3), they get a rematch of last year's Section 8-4A championship game with second-seeded Maple Grove, who defeated Elk River 44-43 in the other semifinal game.

The Crimson (22-6) defeated STMA 59-56 in overtime in last year's title game, but STMA defeated Maple Grove 57-51 this year in the regular season.

Thursday's title game starts at 7 p.m. at Monticello High School.

"We want it really bad," Kramer said. "(Head Coach) Kent Hamre's never coached a player that hasn't been to a state tournament in their four years, and we have a couple seniors this year that haven't been to state. That's a huge goal for us."

#### Section 8AA Semifinals

**St. Michael-Albertville 76**  
**Buffalo 38**  
(Saturday, March 2 at SCSU)  
Bison 23 15 - 38  
Knights 45 31 - 76  
Scoring:  
Bison (38) - Reese Wishart 18 (7 rebounds, 3 steals), Jordan Zrust 6, Kiera Johnson 6; Lauren O'Connell 3; Lauren Feddemma 2; Lindsay Hartman 2; Claire Boser 1 (5 rebounds; Alyssa Sorenson 0 (2 steals).  
Knights (76) - Kenzie Kramer 29 (3 steals); Jadyn Hanson 13 (5 rebounds, 5 assists); Kendal Cox 12 (8 rebounds; Tessa Johnson 6 (2 steals); Lily Tenmyson 5; Vanessa Alexander 4 (6 rebounds, 3 steals); Erin Hamilton 3; Kaelyn Christian 2; Hailey Coulson 2 (2 blocks).



Reese Wishart (right) was one of the lone bright spots in Buffalo's 76-38 playoff loss last Saturday to STMA. Wishart scored 18 points. Defending on the play is STMA's Jadyn Hanson (left). (Photos by Rob LaPlante)

## Boys Basketball

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when I get down there."

Bouman's basket with 14:54 left in regulation gave Buffalo its first double-digit lead of the game, 48-38. The Bison starters continued their relentless attack until Ortmann pulled all five

players up 84-58 with just under four minutes remaining in regulation.

Buffalo starters scored 82 of the 85 points, led by Bouman's monster game, which also included 17 rebounds. Tony Dahl had 12

and Brandon Maatz added 19, which included five threes.

"I've never met a guy with a motor like he has," said Bouman, commenting on Maatz's value to the team. "He works his butt off all the time on defense, and he's one of the best shooters in the entire state."

With Buffalo starters giving the student section plenty to cheer about, it was senior guard Francesco Dalla Torre receiving the loudest ovation when he entered the game in the final minute. Dalla Torre ended up scoring a late free throw to give them another cheer.

"That's the best part of coaching in Buffalo - every year you get support no matter what," Ortmann said. "To get a crowd like that is unreal. That's why it's so important to get a home game in the first round. That makes a huge difference, and that crowd makes a huge difference and the kids feed off it."

Buffalo plays fourth-seeded Moorhead at 3:45 p.m. in Saturday's semifinal game at Halenbeck Hall in St. Cloud (game could be rescheduled due to pending weather). Top-seeded Maple Grove plays third-seeded St. Michael-Albertville in the other semifinal game at 2 p.m.

#### Conference champs

Prior to Tuesday's section win, Buffalo put the finishing touches on a co-conference championship with a 76-50 home win last Thursday over North Branch, and 50-48 road win last Friday at Big Lake.

Bouman scored 26 points in the home win. The highlight of the night came when all six of Buffalo's seniors registered at least a point

on Senior Night.

One night later, Buffalo pulled out another last-second win at Big Lake. Tied 48-48 with 14 seconds remaining, Dahl's bank shot at the buzzer gave the Bison the victory that tied them with Princeton as conference champs, each finishing at 11-2.

"It's our first conference title since the 2013-14 season," Ortmann said. "You want to play important games at the end of the season. You talk about a chance to play a game at the end where if you win, the conference is yours. If you lose, it's not. That's not easy to see kids work through that until they go through it, and they did. I'm proud of all of them."

**Buffalo 76, North Branch 50**  
(Thursday, Feb. 28 at Buffalo)  
Vikings 27 23 - 50  
Bison 34 42 - 76  
Scoring:  
Vikings (50) - Zach Gazda 18; Drew VanEerden 8; Austin Grovender 6; Colby Knutson 3; Trevor Johnson 3; Carter Whitman 2; Adam Rehm 2; Conner Hartmann 2.  
Bison (76) - Aidan Bouman 26; Matt Willert 13; Brandon Maatz 12; Josh Birkholtz 4; Antonio Bluiett 4; Tony Dahl 4; Franklin Huang 4; Jake Bjerke 2; Jack Munsterteiger 2; Trevor Johnson 2; Francesco Dalla Torre 2; Tanner Schmidt 1.

**Buffalo 50, Big Lake 48**  
(Friday, March 1 at Big Lake)  
Bison 23 27 - 50  
Hornets 30 18 - 48  
Scoring:  
Bison (50) - Tony Dahl 15; Matt Willert 10; Brandon Maatz 9; Aidan Bouman 8; Antonio Bluiett 6; Jack Munsterteiger 2.  
Hornets (48) - Logan Nagorski 15; DeVonne Harris 10; Spencer Hinrichs 8; Jake Ireland 8; Trey Teige 5; Jack Iverson 2.

**Section 8AA Quarterfinals**  
**Buffalo 85, Elk River 66**  
(Tuesday, March 5 at Buffalo)  
Elks 30 36 - 66  
Bison 36 49 - 85  
Elks (66) - Devon Roberts 14; Brock Burdine 12; Sam Erickson 10; Carter Behne 7; Connor Wyse 7; Dylan Fruth 6; Michael Johnson 6; Liam Carr 3; Brandon Melchior 1.  
Bison (85) - Aidan Bouman 29 (17 rebounds); Matt Willert 20; Brandon Maatz 19; Tony Dahl 12; Antonio Bluiett 2; Trevor Johnson 2; Francesco Dalla Torre 1.

### BUFFALO BISON SPORTS SCHEDULE

## GOOD LUCK BISON!

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Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu
March 7	March 8	March 9	March 10	March 11	March 12	March 13	March 14
<b>BUFFALO COYOTES ADAPTED SOFTBALL</b>							
						Opening Day	
<b>BUFFALO BISON BOYS BASKETBALL</b>							
		8AA semis Moorehead 4:45					8AA finals TBD
<b>BUFFALO BISON SOFTBALL</b>							
				Opening Day Practice			Next: April 2 Monticello 4:30
<b>BUFFALO BISON TRACK AND FIELD</b>							
				Opening Day Practice			Next: March 22 UM Indoor Invites/4:00

Bold games are at home. All times listed as afternoon/evening games, unless noted. Keep up to date with Buffalo High School cancellations and postponements with the Bison inclement weather hotline at 763-682-8180. Schedules are also posted on-line at [www.mississippi8.org](http://www.mississippi8.org).

## Swim/Dive

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Buffalo's Will Bofenkamp swims the first leg of Buffalo's 200-freestyle relay team that placed 17th at state in 1:30.09. Also swimming were Sam Backes, Troy Giddings, and Max Menzemer (Photo by Rob LaPlante)

our heart has to beat as one, which was kind of cool. I'm very glad she coached me her last year."

#### Area success

Besides the two medalists in Class AA diving, Monticello's Jack Whinnery reached the podium twice for seventh-place finishes in both the 50 free (22.04) and 100 fly (52.55). Watertown-Mayer/Delano's John Kenison, Bryce Borland, Nick Black, and Colby Kern placed eighth in the 400 free relay (3:17.52).

#### Class AA State Tournament

(Thurs-Sat, Feb. 28, March 1-2 at MPLS)  
Team scores (Top-10/Area): 1. Edina 268, 2. Chaska-Chanhassen 205, 3. Wayzata 176, 4. Eden Prairie 175, 5. Minnetonka 153, 6. Stillwater 131, 7. Rochester Century 100, 17. Lakeville North 100, 9. Eagan 98.5, 10. Rochester Mayo 98, T21. St. Michael-Albertville 26, 31. Buffalo-Maple Lake 11.

Individual results (Top-8 medalists, Champ/Bison/Area):  
200 Medley Relay: 1. Wayzata (Sam Kennedy, Nick Kale, Casey Stowe, Beau Brinkman) 1:30.03; 19. STMA (Ezra Dickerson, Colten Gustafson, Elijah Christenson, Blake Stuart) 1:40.42.  
200 Freestyle: 1. Andrew Gray (Edina) 1:37.68; 19. Max Menzemer (Buffalo) 1:47.44; 22. Nate Meyer (STMA) 1:48.93.  
200 Individual Medley: 1. Hayden Zheng (St. Louis Park) 1:48.25; 19. Ezra Dickerson (STMA) 1:59.04.  
50 Freestyle: 1. Peter Larson (Edina) 20.06.  
1-Meter Diving: 1. Josiah Flick (Stillwater) 389.35; 3. Tyler Barrett (STMA) 366.40; 8. Quincy Kabe (Buffalo) 331.30.  
100 Butterfly: 1. Andrew Trepanier (Lakeville North) 48.49.  
100 Freestyle: 1. Peter Larson (Edina) 43.77.  
500 Freestyle: 1. Sean Dwyer (Prior Lake) 4:32.00.  
200 Freestyle Relay: 1. Edina (Peter Larson, Charlie Webb, Max Dow, Andrew Gray) 1:23.67; 17. Buffalo (Will Bofenkamp, Sam Backes, Tory Giddings, Max Menzemer) 1:30.09.  
100 Backstroke: 1. Casey Stowe (Wayzata) 48.45; 15. Ezra Dickerson

(STMA) 53.78.

100 Breaststroke: 1. Hayden Zheng (St. Louis Park) 53.86.

400 Freestyle Relay: 1. Edina (Andrew Gray, Gabe Baker, Keegan Duffy, Peter Larson) 3:01.76; 13. STMA (Elijah Christenson, Nate Meyer, Jaden Herman, Ezra Dickerson) 3:14.82.

#### Class A State Tournament

(Thurs-Sat, Feb. 28, March 1-2 at MPLS)  
Team scores (Top-10/Area): 1. Breck-Blake 423, 2. Northfield 188, 3. Winona 177, 4. St. Thomas Academy 162, 5. Alexandria 149, 6. Austin 128, 7. Sauk Rapids-Rice 125, 8. Sartell-St. Stephen 118, 9. Fridley 88, 10. Simley 118, 13. Watertown-Mayer/Delano 65, 21. Monticello 31.

Individual results (Top-8 medalists, Champ/Area):  
200 Medley Relay: 1. Breck-Blake (Anderson Breazeale, James Pan, Spencer Pruet, Dylan Brown) 1:31.26; 13. Watertown-Mayer/Delano (Nick Black, Gentry Nuytten, Joe Coyle, Bryce Borland) 1:44.14; 16. Monticello (Isaac VanHoorik, Carter Olson, Tanner Branson, Sawyer McCalla) 1:48.05.  
200 Freestyle: 1. Spencer Pruet (Breck-Blake) 1:42.40; 9. Colby Kern (W-M-Delano) 1:47.95.  
200 Individual Medley: 1. Andrew Karpenko (Minnehaha Academy) 1:48.05; 11. John Kenison (W-M/Delano) 2:00.96.  
50 Freestyle: 1. Jack Herczeg (Winona) 21.02; 7. Jack Whinnery (Monticello) 22.04.  
1-Meter Dive: 1. Spencer Fritze (Park Rapids) 395.10; 12. Dakotah Parker (Monticello) 307.55.  
100 Butterfly: 1. Grant Wolner (Winona) 50.44; 7. Jack Whinnery (Monticello) 52.55; 13. Colby Kern (W-M/Delano) 54.92.  
100 Freestyle: 1. Jack Herczeg (Winona) 45.38.  
500 Freestyle: 1. Niels Wu (Breck-Blake) 4:43.31; 15. John Kenison (W-M/Delano) 5:01.45; 25. Jacob Biard (Monticello) 5:13.09.  
200 Freestyle Relay: 1. Breck-Blake (James Pan, Charlie Crosby, Thayer Breazeale, Luke Hamlin) 1:25.93; 11. Watertown-Mayer/Delano (Colby Kern, Bryce Borland, Per Anderson, John Kenison) 1:31.12.  
100 Backstroke: 1. Anderson Breazeale (Breck-Blake) 49.05; 15. Nick Black (W-M/Delano) 56.07.  
100 Breaststroke: 1. Andrew Karpenko (Minnehaha Academy) 54.41.  
400 Freestyle Relay: 1. Breck-Blake (Dylan Brown, Anderson Breazeale, Thayer Breazeale, Spencer Pruet) 3:06.46; 8. Watertown-Mayer/Delano (John Kenison, Bryce Borland, Nick Black, Colby Kern) 3:17.52; 18. Monticello (Jack Whinnery, Isaac VanHoorik, Sawyer McCalla, Tanner Branson) 3:25.43.

## BRIEFS

### Register for Buffalo Traveling Girls Fastpitch, 6U/8U Softball

There is a mandatory parent meeting on Tuesday, March 12 at 6:30 p.m. in Choir Room D110 at Buffalo High School for any girls interested this spring playing in the 2019 Buffalo Girls Traveling Fastpitch and 6U/8U Softball.

Traveling age groups include: 10U, 12U, 14U, 16U, 18U (based on age as of Jan. 1, 2019). New this year is the 6U and 8U age groups (as of Jan. 1, 2019). Girls in 6U and 8U will be provided t-shirts as part of their registration. All other players can be fitted for uniforms and helmets at player evaluations on Sunday, March 17.

Registration fees for ages 10U, 14U, 16U, 18U Travel is \$250. The fee for 6U and 8U is \$50. Please register online at [www.bisonfp.com](http://www.bisonfp.com). Contact any board member with questions. All emails and phone numbers are listed on website.

### Delano hockey returns to state

The Delano Tigers qualified for the Class A boys' state hockey tournament for the second time in three years with a 2-0 shutout over top-seeded Orono in last Thursday's Section 2A championship game at the St. Louis Park Rec Center.

Hogan Williams' power-play goal at 10:41 of period one proved to be the eventual game winner. Adam Brown's unassisted goal with 20 seconds remaining into an empty net sealed the win. The Tigers (17-9-2 overall) received the No. 5 seed in this week's state tourney. Delano's quarterfinal game comes against No. 4 seed Greenway (15-13) on Wednesday, March 6 at 8 p.m. at Xcel Energy Center in St. Paul (see results in next week's paper).

Aidan Bouman scores over Elk River defender Brock Burdine during the second half of Buffalo's 85-66 home win Tuesday night. Bouman led the Bison with 29 points and 17 rebounds. (Photo by Rob LaPlante)