

2009 STOP-DWI Holiday Classic  
Day 3 – December 30<sup>th</sup>, 2009  
*By Ryan Connolly*

Game 14

**National Division**

Landstown High School (*Virginia Beach, VA*).....69  
Binghamton High School (*Binghamton, NY*).....39

Day 3 of the 2009 STOP-DWI Holiday Classic got under way Wednesday with a pair of teams trying to salvage a tournament with a 7<sup>th</sup> Place finish. Host Binghamton High dropped their first two games in rather convincing fashion, losing by an average of 24 points, including a 35 point romping at the hands of King’s Fork. Kyle Lovett-Pitts was solid in the Pats’ second loss with 18 points. A pair of last second free-throws sunk Landstown on Day one, and the Eagles couldn’t generate enough offense early in their second contest to hang with Our Lady of Good Counsel, eventually losing by 10.

An 11-2 run to start the game for the Eagles put Binghamton in a hole that only got deeper as the game progressed, with Landstown eventually taking the win, 69-39. The Pats were simply overmatched for the third day in a row, lacking the offense to keep up while failing to slow Reggie Williams and crew at the defensive end of the floor. Williams, coming off a 23 point effort in the Eagles’ second round loss, had 17 points in only 19 minutes of work. For Binghamton, they gave it away 19 times while shooting only 33% from the field. Eric Edwards came off the bench and had a team high seven points and six rebounds for the Patriots. For the fourth time as tournament host and second time in as many years, Binghamton failed to win a game and took home a last place finish.

## Game 15

### **National Division**

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Our Lady of Good Counsel ( <i>Olney, MD</i> ).....    | 66 |
| Villa Angela St. Joseph ( <i>Cleveland, OH</i> )..... | 50 |

Fifth place in the National Division was up for grabs on Day 3 for the Falcons of Good Counsel and the Vikings from Villa Angela St. Joseph. After dropping their opening games, each team rebounded with convincing wins and looked to continue their winning ways. Good Counsel's Ben Hazel and Jemel Sessoms lead the offense, scoring in double figures in each of the Falcons' contests, and Villa Angela's Devin Carter was good for 16 and 15 in the Vikes' first two games.

A highly competitive first half played out to a 25-all tie. Good Counsel, led by Rodney Glasgow and his half high 14 points, looked to get to the rim, attacking the lane and getting to the foul line where they made good on seven of 11. At the other end, Villa Angela relied heavily on the long ball, as 15 of their 25 first half points came via the three-pointer. Carter was tops for the Vikings in the first half with eight points and three helpers.

Sloppy play plagued the Vikings in the second half, committing 11 turnovers – 19 total in the game. Good Counsel knocked down three's on three straight possessions to start the half sparking an 18-4 run. Villa Angela would never recover, falling in this one, 66-50. Glasgow had a game high 24 points on 10-13 shooting from the field including 3-3 from downtown. Hazel tacked on a quiet 21, collecting seven in the form of free-throws. Carter finished with 16 points to lead all Viking scorers, but turned the ball over a costly eight times in the game.

## Game 16

### **National Division**

|   |    |
|---|----|
| South Laurel High School ( <i>London, KY</i> )..... | 46 |
| King's Fork High School ( <i>Suffolk, VA</i> )..... | 65 |

The battle for 3<sup>rd</sup> Place in the National Division between the Cardinal of South Laurel and the King's Fork Bulldogs capped the National Division play of the morning session on Day 3. South Laurel, a team built around fundamentals and defense, was pummeled in their semi-final game by an athletically superior Boys and Girls team, 69-40. King's Fork dropped a tough one to Christ the King, a game in which both teams were plagued with severe foul trouble and unable to get into any rhythm on offense. South Laurel looked for a repeat effort from Matt St. John whose double-double (17pts and 14rbs) was overshadowed in the loss. 6'8" seniors Davante Gardner and Jay Copeland lead King's Fork at both ends of the floor.

Neither team made a move to pull away in the first quarter, trading buckets to a 17-13 King's Fork advantage at quarter's end. In the second stanza, however, Gardner took over scoring eight points during a 12-3 Bulldog run to start the quarter. Copeland got to the rim twice on consecutive trips up the floor to end the half, pushing the King's Fork lead to 13, 37-24, heading into the locker room. Gardner finished with 17 points in the half on 8-11 shooting while collecting seven rebounds as well. St. John had 11 to lead the Cardinal offense.

During the break, South Laurel found no answer for Gardner as he continued to dominate inside getting easy buckets and a slew of rebounds. South Laurel cleaned it up on the offensive end in the second half after committing nine turnovers in the first 16 minutes of play, but it wasn't enough, as King's Fork kept their distance and took home 3<sup>rd</sup> Place in their inaugural appearance in the Holiday Classic, 65-46. Gardner led all scorers with 25 points and 12 rebounds. Copeland tallied a double-double of his own with 14 and ten.

## Game 17

### **Regional Division II**

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Susquehanna Valley High School ( <i>Conklin, NY</i> ).....      | 32 |
| Chenango Valley High School ( <i>Chenango Valley, NY</i> )..... | 65 |

The second consolation game in Regional Division action saw local division rivals Susquehanna Valley facing off against Chenango Valley High. In their opening round game, the Sabers from Susquehanna Valley came up short on a second half comeback, falling to Chenango Forks, 53-47. Twenty-four Warrior turnovers in their first round game with Maine-Endwell were too much to overcome, and they fell to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Place game despite three players scoring in double figures.

Chenango Valley senior guard Andy Fox, who was limited by foul trouble in the first round loss, was the spark for the Warrior offense, creating numerous opportunities in the first half. The Warriors took full advantage making good on 13 field goals in the half. Susquehanna Valley on the other hand, shot an unbelievable 8.7% from the field in the half and turned the ball over 11 times. Matt Cronwell collected all ten Saber points in the half, and going to the locker room Chenango Valley held a commanding lead, 29-10. Fox had a half high 14 points.

There was much of the same in the second half, as Susquehanna Valley connected to only three points in the third quarter. They made good for 19 in the final frame, but it was too little too late and Chenango Valley rolled down the stretch to a 65-32 victory. Fox led all scorers in the game with 18 points, and Mitchell Hillegas and Tom Hull added 12 a piece as well for the Warriors.

## Game 18

### **Regional Division II**

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Chenango Forks High School ( <i>Chenango Forks, NY</i> )..... | 34 |
| Maine-Endwell High School ( <i>Endwell, NY</i> ).....         | 55 |

The first final of the tournament took place in Regional Division II between the Blue Devils of Chenango Forks and the Spartans from Maine-Endwell High. Forks finds themselves in the championship after staving off a late comeback effort in their first round matchup with Susquehanna Valley. Maine-Endwell cruised into the finals, beating Chenango Valley 62-54, behind a 16 point six rebound effort from junior guard Nate Burgo.

In the first half, neither team took an initiative to push the tempo and energy you would expect in a championship game. Forks shot a measly 18% from the field, netting only 17 points; no Blue Devil made good on multiple buckets. For the Spartans, it wasn't much better, as they failed to capitalize on the poor Blue Devil shooting, allowing them to stay in the game heading into halftime, Maine-Endwell up 24-17. Willis Stocks led all first half scorers with nine points and five rebounds. Forks made no improvements in the second half, and with a big 21-point fourth quarter effort from the Spartans, Maine-Endwell took home the Regional Division II title in convincing fashion, 55-34.

Stocks, who was named Regional Division II Most Valuable Player of the tournament, finished with a game high 15 points and 15 rebounds. Burgo picked up 14 points as well, and Patrick Creagh was best for Forks with ten points in the losing effort. Stocks, Burgo and John Connolly were named to the Regional Division II All-Star team from Maine-Endwell, and Creagh represented Chenango Forks on that list as well.

## Game 19

### **Regional Division I**

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Johnson City High School ( <i>Johnson City, NY</i> )..... | 55 |
| Norwich High School ( <i>Norwich, NY</i> ).....           | 50 |

In the prelude to the tournament finale, the Purple Tornado of Norwich High battled the Johnson City Wildcats for the Regional Division II title. Norwich rode the coattails of senior Josh Borfitz's 23 point first round effort into the championship game. The guard was nearly perfect against Seton Catholic, making good on five of six three-point attempts. For Johnson City, it was a collective effort to get to the finals, as eight Wildcats contributed points in their first round win over Vestal, fronted by Troy Robinson's 19.

Norwich and Johnson City traded quarters in the first half, with the Purple Tornado holding a slim lead, 30-26, heading into halftime. Richie Bonnie, who doubled as a tenor singing the national anthem, had a solid half with 11 points and five rebounds. After Johnson City went on a short run to start the second quarter, bringing the score to within one, 22-21, Bonnie scored five in response, the last three coming off a strong and-1 drive along the baseline. Gil Choi came off the bench late in the half for the Wildcats and knocked down two jumpers to get the Wildcats back in striking distance, setting up for a thrilling second half. Bonnie's 11 led all scorers in the half.

Johnson City came out of the blocks in the second half firing on all cylinders, closing the gap thanks to production of Rashawn Powell and Troy Robinson. Norwich responded with a Borfitz three-pointer as the shot clock expired, putting the Purple Tornado back up five. With 1:28 left in the third quarter and the Wildcats trailing by only three, Jake Spalik drove the baseline and converted a tough lay-in while drawing the foul. He converted at the line, and knotted the score at 37. About a minute later, Robinson picked up his dribble at the top of the key and cashed in a three sending the Wildcats out in front for the first time since the opening minute of the game. Norwich wouldn't see the lead again, and with 8.7 seconds left in the game Robinson sunk two free-throws clinching the five-point, 55-50, victory and the Regional Division I title. The win gives Coach Mark Voitach his 300<sup>th</sup> career win. Powell was a force in this one, connecting for 18 points and 18 rebounds, both game highs, earning him Regional Division I Most Valuable Player. Bonnie was impressive in the loss with 19 points and 13 rebounds.

## Game 20

### **National Division**

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Boys and Girls High School ( <i>Brooklyn, NY</i> ).....        | 49 |
| Christ the King High School ( <i>Middle Village, NY</i> )..... | 52 |

The atmosphere was electric as a near capacity crowd filled the Broome County Arena for the National Division title game. A pair of New York City giants tipped off vying for the right to claim 2009 STOP-DWI Holiday Classic Champion. The Boys and Girls Kangaroos enter the finals coming off a dominating performance in the semi-finals beating South Laurel High 69-40. Four different starters finished the game in double figures for Boys in Girls, led by Antoine Slaughter with 17. Christ the King outlasted King's Fork High in a foul-laden semi-final, 56-40. Omar Calhoun was best for the Royals in the semis with 17 points.

The crowd on hand for the evening session got their money's worth in the first half, for there hadn't been a better collection of athletes on the floor for 16 minutes of play all tournament. To mention the scoring ability of each team would be simply restating the obvious, when what might have been most impressive in the half was the relentless defense from both teams and the way they exploded off the floor for rebounds. Offensively, the 'Roos and Royals traded buckets for most of the first quarter, but a late surge by Boys and Girls sparked by a Michael Taylor three with a minute to play in the frame gave them the lead 12-11. At the 4:30 mark of the second quarter, five consecutive points from Christ the King's Corey Edwards pushed the Royals back out in front 17-16. The two teams traded the lead four more times until an Edwards three sent the Royals on a 10-2 run to end the half. At the break, it was Christ the King leading 29-22. Edwards hit three times from beyond the arc in the half and led all scorers with 12 points. Leroy Isler was tops for the 'Roos with eight points and five boards.

The second half came with all the excitement expected of a tournament championship game. The two teams traded blows throughout the third quarter, each going on mini runs of six points. At quarters end, Christ the King held an eight point lead, 39-31. As he did in the 'Roos first game, Taylor looked to take the team on his shoulders and was determined to get to the rim and the offensive glass. He hit on nine points through the fourth quarter, but left a devastating eight points at the free-throw line, all of which would prove costly in the end. At the 3:30 mark of the fourth, Boys and Girls completed the second half comeback when Slaughter rattled home a three from the corner, tying the game at 40-all. It did not last long, as Edwards went on an MVP run, scoring 12 of the Royals' 13 fourth quarter points, none bigger than a three with 45 seconds left that put Christ the King out in front for good. Boys and Girls never got a clean look at the basket in the end, and Christ the King took home the title, 52-49. It was their third in team history and the first since Omar Cook and the Royals took it home in 2009. Edwards was high scorer in the game with 25 points including 5-8 from three-point range. Taylor had 16 in the loss, but will be kept awake thinking about his 1-9 effort from the charity stripe. Isler also had 16 points in the game to go with 11 rebounds.

## 2009 STOP-DWI Holiday Classic All-Star Teams

### National Division

Reggie Williams – Landstown  
Kevin Carter – Villa Angela St. Joseph  
Rodney Glasgow – Our Lady of Good Counsel  
Matt St. John – South Laurel  
Davante Gardner – King’s Fork  
Michael Taylor – Boys and Girls  
Leroy Isler – Boys and Girls  
Maurice Barrow – Christ the King  
Dominykas Milka – Christ the King  
**Most Valuable Player** – Corey Edwards – Christ the King

### Regional Division I

Josh Bailey – Vestal  
Richie Bonnie – Norwich  
Josh Borfitz – Norwich  
Troy Robinson – Johnson City  
Ronald Teekasingh – Johnson City  
**Most Valuable Player** – Rashawn Powell – Johnson City

### Regional Division II

Tom Hull – Chenango Valley  
Andy Fox – Chenango Valley  
John Connolly – Maine-Endwell  
Nate Burgo – Maine-Endwell  
Patrick Creagh – Chenango Forks  
**Most Valuable Player** – Willis Stocks – Maine-Endwell

### Thomas Schwan Award

Nate Burgo – Maine-Endwell