

Hartford High Captures State Title

Griffin Leads Owls To 67-64 Triumph Over Bulkeley High



PYRAMIDING TO VICTORY: A jam-up of Hartford Public High School and Bulkeley High basketball players around the HPHS basket during the first half of the CIAC Class A Basketball Championship final at the University of Connecticut gym Saturday night didn't stop Owl star Bruce Maddox (arrow) from pyramiding through the pile-up of arms, legs, and bodies to

score another two points. The Owls clinched the state title downing the Bulkeley Maroons in a thrilling finish, 67 to 64. Other identifiable players are HPHS star Eddie Griffin (21) and Bulkeley stars Joe Hourihan (50) and Gene Reilly (24) (Courant Photo by Arman G. Hattian).

By PAT BOLDUC
 Courant Sports Writer

STORRS—Clutch foul shooting by spindly John Joiner and tall Billy Jones in the final 46 seconds proved the margin of victory Saturday night as Hartford High edged city rival Bulkeley, 67-64, to capture the school's first Class A basketball championship.

An excited crowd of 4250 jammed the University of Connecticut Field House for the first all Hartford final in the Connecticut Interscholastic Conference's 40 year history.

Joiner converted both attempts of a one and one bonus foul award to give the 11th rated Owls a shaky 65-62 edge with only 46 seconds showing on the electric scoreboard clock.

But Bulkeley workhorse Gene Reilly, who only seconds before had reduced Hartford's lead to 63-62 with two free throws, cleverly drove up the middle for a lay up which sliced the Owl's margin to a single point again, 65-64, with 38 seconds to go.

Twenty eight seconds later Jones was fouled as the Maroon battled to gain possession and despite the almost deafening roar of the crowd calmly converted both tries and Bulkeley's bid for its first State title ended.

Threaten Runaway

Up to the climactic ending Hartford had threatened a runaway by beating the Maroon at its own game—accurate shooting throughout the third period and a good part of the final quarter. With Ed Griffin and Bruce Maddox hitting consistently from every part of the court, the Owls fashioned an 11 point advantage late in the third period and were ahead by nine points late in the hectic fourth quarter.

Hartford went into the final period nursing a 49-40 margin. Playing only for the good shot and taking advantage of Bulkeley's inability to score, the Owls with Griffin and Kostek as triggermen, erected their biggest lead of the night 56-44. During this streak Bulkeley's stock dipped when Carry Murphy fouled out with only 55 seconds gone in the quarter.

Bulkeley, looking to atone for two previous two point defeats during the regular season, battled back with six straight points and trailed 56-50 as Hartford promptly requested a time out with 5:07 remaining.

Belfiore, Bulkeley's second leading scorer, was closely guarded by Griffin and wound up with just 11 points, six coming in the final period. Steady Joe Hourihan also scored 11 points, one more than McGrath.

Both rivals scored 26 baskets, Hartford in 58 shots and Bulkeley in 61. The Owls were successful on 15 of 25 charity tosses while the Maroon missed only two of 14 chances.

Bulkeley took a 1-0 lead at the game's outset on a foul shot by Belfiore. But the Owls quickly took control of the defensive board and ran up leads of 4-1 and 8-3 before five straight points by Reilly and a jump shot by Murphy made it 10-8 in favor of the Maroon with 3:05 left in the quarter. Bill Thornton's jump shot at the buzzer left the Owls trailing by two, 16-14.

Tied at Halftime

McGrath, who replaced Murphy when the latter picked up his third personal with only four seconds gone in the second period, threw in a jumper and Belfiore followed with his only hoop of the first half to give Bulkeley a 20-15 edge. With Kwash, Belfiore and Reilly taking the play away from the Owls under the boards, the Maroon, with Reilly and Hourihan supplying the key points, threatened to open some daylight.

Griffin fired two jump shots, then sank a free throw and led Maddox for a 63-54 bulge before the Maroon rallied on consecutive baskets by Kwash, Jim Belfiore and little Leg McGrath to trail 63-60 with 1:30 to go. Then came the pressure packet finish.

Griffin Most Valuable

Griffin, who received the Thomas M. Monahan trophy as the tourney's most valuable player, hit on 11 of 22 field shots to wind up with 26 points. Griffin, who has enjoyed fabulous success in three games against the Maroon, wound up with 86 points in four tourney starts.

Maddox, who joined Griffin as Hartford's representative on the

all tournament team elected by the sports writers, added 20 points and was the Owls top rebounder with 11, two more than Griffin. For the first time this winter Bulkeley won the battle of the boards 40-38.

Reilly, who also made the all tournament team along with Joe Tonelli of Notre Dame of West Haven and Mike Branch of Hillhouse, was outstanding in defeat. The cat-like Bulkeley senior hit on 9 of 19 field goal attempts and 8 of 8 free throws for a total of 26 points. Reilly extended his foul shooting streak to 30 in a row.

Behind 27-23 late in the second quarter, Hartford came back to knot the count a 27 all as Griffin led Joiner for an easy two-pointer with 46 seconds remaining. Reilly connected on a jump shot, but Jones converted twice from the foul line to leave the clubs tied, 29-29 at halftime.

Belfiore scored Bulkeley's first second half basket with 3:27 gone in the third period.

The Maroon also lost Kwash, who was rested after being tagged with his fourth personal with 2:39 played.

During this stretch the Owls swept both boards clean and racked up seven straight points five by Maddox, to author a 36-29 advantage.

Then with Griffing and Maddox finding the range with unerring accuracy Hartford fashioned leads of 46-35 and 49-38 before a jump shot by Reilly made it 49-40 at the buzzer.

The triumph was the 16th in 22 starts and sixth in succession for the Owls. The loss leaves the Maroon with a glittering 18-3 mark and snapped a seven game winning streak.

Both Hartford and Bulkeley will now represent Connecticut in the final New England tournament which gets underway Friday at the Boston Garden.

HARTFORD			BULKELEY				
	B	F	B	F	PI		
Griffin	11	4	26	Reilly	9	2	25
Maddox	9	2	20	Belfiore	5	1	11
Jones	0	4	4	Kwash	2	0	4
Kostek	4	0	8	Murphy	1	0	2
Thornton	1	0	2	Hourihan	4	3	11
Joiner	1	3	5	McGrath	5	0	10
				Hickey	0	0	0
Totals	26	15	67	Totals	26	12	64
Score at half time	29-29						