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Sports**'Kits end Wolves' season for second straight year****ETHS prevails 70-67 in West sectional**A.J. Bayatpour
Sports Editor

The Wolves' boys' basketball team finished its season in disappointing fashion Tuesday night, losing a 70-67 heartbreaker at the hands of the Evanston Wildkits.

In a game sure to go down as one of the best ever played in the Contest Gym, the Wolves' playoff run ended at the hands of the Wildkits for the second straight season.

It didn't take very long for the drama to kick in as the gym rocked in anticipation of the opening tip. Senior guard Erik Granlund was quick to avenge the infamous biting incident at Evanston February 25, scoring six of his team's first eight points, giving the Wolves an early 8-4 lead, and whipping the crowd into a frenzy. The Wolves maintained a four-point advantage at the end of the first quarter, leading 15-11.

Junior John Laughlin quickly put the "Kits within a point, drilling a three-pointer at the onset of the second period. Evanston gained the lead when the infamous Gordon Watt, who is no fan favorite among West supporters after his assault on Granlund, powered to the basket to score his fifth straight point, and "E-Town" led 19-17.

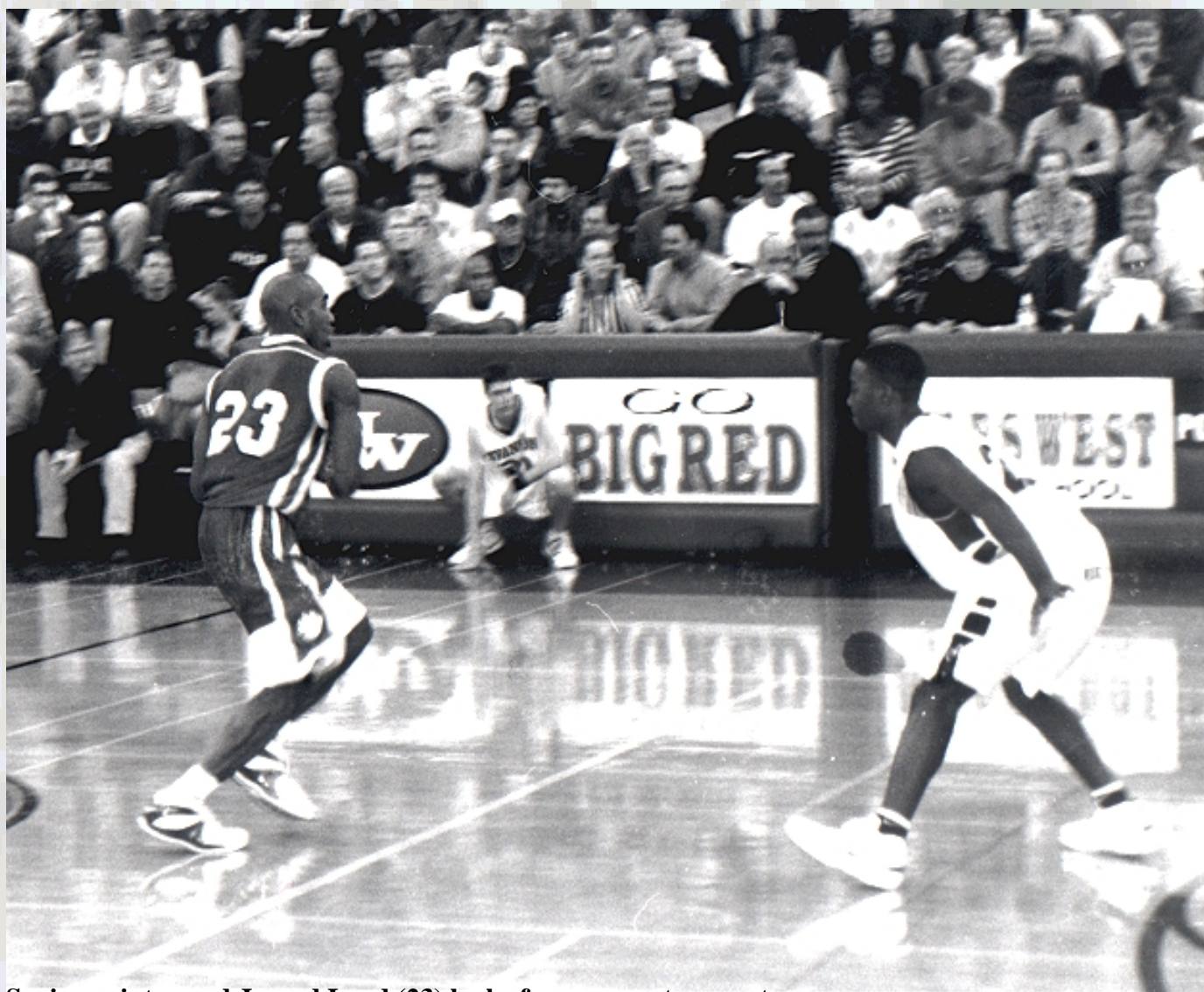
After junior Sead Odzic tied the game with free throws, junior guard Aaron Hamilton gave the 'Kits a three-point lead when he hit from long range, giving Evanston a 22-19 lead. Sophomore forward Victor Colon, who missed the teams' last meeting, responded quickly, tying the game with a three of his own. The shot gave the Wolves the momentum to regain the lead at halftime, ahead by two at 26-24.

With West ahead 30-29, Watt made his bid for play-of-the-game, picking off an Odzic pass and finishing with a powerful two-handed slam at the other end, bringing Evanston fans to their feet and sparking a 14-

2 Wildkit run that saw Evanston ahead by a seemingly insurmountable 44-32 lead heading into the final quarter.

Watt scored his team's first six fourth quarter points, putting him at 22 points for the night, and the lead was 50-38 when Odzic came to life. The Wolves' scoring leader

hand, and Odzic hit yet again from three-point range, narrowing the gap to two. After junior Rudolph Neo hit two free throws to put the 'Kits up by four at 68-64, Odzic came down the court and drained his fifth three-pointer of the quarter with 5.9 seconds remaining to put the score at 68-67 in favor of Evanston.



Senior point guard Jarryd Loyd (23) looks for an open teammate.
Photo by Jordan Simon

drilled a three to put the Wolves with in nine, and after the Kits scored, Odzic was good again from long distance, and West was down by eight.

The Wolves were down by six with under two minutes to play in the fourth when Granlund went on a break for the lay-up that would have cut the lead to only four; however, Granlund missed the chippy, and Evanston went down to score and regain an eight point lead. Undaunted, Odzic continued to play the role of hero for West, hitting another three to cut the lead to 63-58 with 80 seconds left to play.

After a defensive stop, the Wolves were quick to get the ball to the man with the hot

The Wolves fouled Neo immediately, putting him at the line for the two biggest free throws of his life. Neo couldn't have been more clutch, knocking both shots in to give his team a three-point lead. Senior point guard Jarryd Loyd (15 points) wasted no time getting Odzic the ball for a rushed three-point shot to tie the game. The place was ready to explode when the arching shot clanked off the side of the rim and gave Evanston its second playoff win over the Wolves in as many years and its fourth straight win in the rivalry.

As for the Wolves' state championship hopes, Odzic, Colon and company must utter the time-honored Chicago battle cry, "Wait 'til next year"