

2008 STOP-DWI HOLIDAY CLASSIC

Day 1 – December 28th, 2008

By: Ryan Connolly and Chris Williams

Game 1

Regional Division I

Seton Catholic Central (<i>Binghamton, NY</i>).....	62
Union-Endicott High School (<i>Endicott, NY</i>).....	40

The 2008 STOP-DWI Holiday Classic, tipped off early Sunday morning with a Regional Division match-up of local STAC foes, Union-Endicott High and Seton Catholic Central. The two teams are 1-1 in head-to-head play at the STOP-DWI Holiday Classic. Seton knocked off Union-Endicott in 2005, just a year after taking home their first Regional Title in 2004. Last year, the two teams met in the first round, with the Tigers from U-E bettering the Saints, 64-43, on their way to the Championship game where they fell to Chenango Valley High. Union-Endicott features a trio of returning starters: seniors Brett Hall, Matt Stanley, and Casey Jordan. Seton is led by All-Conference forward Chris Furner, who averaged 14 points and 10 rebounds a season ago.

Union-Endicott got the scoring underway with a Carnell Chandler bucket inside; however, the Tigers would follow that up with turnovers on their next four possessions, allowing Seton to climb out front for a majority of the first quarter. Eighth grade standout, Kijana Rose connected from beyond the arc late in the quarter, putting Union-Endicott back out front by one, 13-12, at quarter's end. In the second frame, Seton used an 11-0 run to put some distance between themselves and the Tigers, taking a 29-25 lead into the locker room. Seton's Matt Meier led all scorers with eight points, hitting twice from three-point-land.

The Tigers looked to protect the ball better in the second half, after committing 11 turnovers in the first half. Not much would change through the third quarter, as the total ran to 15 by quarter's end, and Seton carried a six point advantage into the fourth. Union-Endicott failed to produce any threat of a comeback over the final eight minutes, and Seton cruised down the stretch to a 62-40 victory. Meier finished with a game high 17 points, and Furner turned in a solid game one performance with 15 points and 15 rebounds. Chandler led the dismal offensive effort for the Tigers with 10 points and seven rebounds.

Seton moves into the Regional Division I final on Tuesday at 7:30pm, and will play the winner of the Norwich/Vestal game. Union-Endicott falls to the 3rd Place game, and will face the loser of the Norwich/Vestal game on Monday at 9:30am.

Game 2

National Division

Simon-Gratz High School (*Philadelphia, PA*).....55
Bishop Ford High School (*Brooklyn, NY*).....62

National Division action got under way with a pair of past STOP-DWI Holiday Classic champions, the Falcons of Bishop Ford High and the Bulldogs of Simon-Gratz High. Bishop Ford took home the title in 1992, and Simon-Gratz bested the field in their only appearance in 2003. The Falcons feature a senior laded line-up that returns from last year’s Class A Catholic High School State Championship team, led by Hofstra bound guard Chaz Williams (20 ppg). Simon-Gratz features 6’5” junior Tyree Smith, and 6’8” senior Joe Reid.

The first half featured a steady dose of offense from the two featured players. Smith was a force for the Bulldogs through much of the first quarter, and he finished with a half-high 15 points, including 3-3 from beyond the arc. Williams showed he was worthy of his top 10 NYHOOPS ranking, using his quickness to the get to the rim, as well as showing a sound stroke from the floor, connecting for 12 points. He received no help from his teammates, as the Falcon’s went to the locker room sitting on a collective 28% shooting from the field, down six, 30-24.

The intensity picked up in the second half, with Bishop Ford coming out of the break with five quick points to draw the score to within one. For a majority of the half, the Falcons searched for that elusive bucket to put them out in front, but failed to find it, coming within one on multiple occasions. Justyn McMichael helped Williams carry the load in the second half, getting red hot from three-point land. He was a perfect 4-4 from beyond the arc, with 12 second half points. The Simon-Gratz offense sputtered in the fourth quarter, with Smith failing to connect after the break, largely in part to an aggressive press from Bishop Ford. With 3:12 left in the game, a pair of Williams free-throws sent the Falcons on an 11-0 run, and with 1:45 showing on the clock, Lorenzo Brown finished a tough play inside sending Bishop Ford into the lead for the first time since the very start of the game. Simon-Gratz had no response, and the Falcons held on to a 62-55 victory. Williams led all scorers with 27 points and McMichael finished with 19 of his own. Smith’s 15 first half points held up for a team high, and Andrew Moyer added 12 points in the loss.

With the win, Bishop Ford moves to the semi-finals and will face the winner of the Franklin County/Jamesville-Dewitt game on Monday at 7:30pm. Simon-Gratz falls to the consolation bracket and will see the loser of the Franklin County/Jamesville-Dewitt game on Monday at 1:00pm.

Game 3

National Division

Taft High School (*Cincinnati, OH*).....54
Wings Academy (*Bronx, NY*).....53

Game three of the 2008 STOP-DWI Holiday Classic featured a past champion and a newcomer to the annual tournament. The Senators from Taft High School, the 2005 title winner, tipped off against Wings Academy. Taft is led by 6'4" senior Richard Harris who averaged a double-double (20 ppg, 14 rpg) last year for the Senators, and senior Ronald Baker fronts the Wings Academy attack, averaging 15 points per game just a season ago.

The first half featured a close battle, with neither team jumping out to a significant advantage, trading baskets to the tune of a 30-27 Taft half-time lead. Harris was best for the Senators with eight points and eight rebounds. Taft managed to get out in front and stay there while only making it to the line twice. Deshaun Wiggans led Wings' first half scoring with 15 points, shooting 50% from the field.

The stalemate continued through much of the second half, as Taft gripped to a one possession lead halfway through the fourth quarter. Wiggans broke through with less than three minutes to play, first connecting on a pair of free throws, and then putting Wings out in front 53-52 with a jumper from the corner with 2:23 to play. It looked as though Wings would hold on for the victory, but with 26 seconds left, junior Kevin Mitchell hit a runner in the lane to give Taft the lead once and for all, 54-53. Wiggans led all scorers with 26 points and Baker tacked on 13 of his own in the losing effort. Harris was tops for the Senators with 12 points and 12 rebounds.

With the win, Taft moves to the semi-finals and will face the winner of the Cypress Bay/Binghamton game Monday at 9:15pm. Wings Academy falls to the consolation bracket and will play Monday at 2:45pm against the loser of the Cypress Bay/Binghamton game.

Game 4

Regional Division I

Norwich High School (*Norwich, NY*).....53
Vestal High School (*Vestal, NY*).....52

Regional Division I action continued on day one of the 2008 STOP-DWI Holiday Classic with a match-up of two of the top teams in the Southern Tier Athletic Conference for the 2008-2009 season, the Vestal Golden Bears and the Norwich Purple Tornadoes. Vestal played without their All-League forward Jeremy Baltz, and instead looked to 6’4” senior Mike Patterson to head the charge. Norwich is led by a trio of returning senior starters.

Vestal dominated the first quarter, using a 9-2 run to quickly distance themselves from the Tornadoes, 16-10, by first quarter’s end. In the second frame, however, the offense sputtered, making good on only four field goals, allowing Norwich to shorten the gap, 25-22 at halftime. Norwich kept themselves in the game by getting to the line, making good on eight of 11 attempts, while shooting only 25% from the floor and getting out-rebounded 23-11 in the half. Norwich’s Josh Borfitz led all first half scorers with 10 points.

Norwich found their stroke coming out of the locker room for the second half, pulling right back into the game with an 18 point outburst in the third quarter. The Purple Tornadoes used a 16-3 run spanning the end of the third quarter and into the fourth, during which they took the lead on a Borfitz three from deep in the corner. Vestal made a threat at the end, but a crucial turnover from Patterson sealed the deal for Norwich, and they move into the Regional Division I Championship game with the win, 53-52. Borfitz’s 19 points were best for the game, and Patterson led Vestal with 13 in the losing effort. Vestal’s Cameron Boyden collected 13 rebounds as well.

Vestal will move to the Third Place game against Union-Endicott on Monday at 9:30am. Norwich will see Seton Catholic in the Championship on Tuesday at 7:30pm.

Game 5

National Division

Franklin County High School (*Frankfurt, KY*).....79
Jamesville-Dewitt High School (*Dewitt, NY*).....85

One of the marquee games on the bill for the 2008 STOP-DWI Holiday Classic was this first round battle between the Flyers of Franklin County and the Red Rams of Jamesville-Dewitt. Franklin County returns for the second time to the Holiday Classic, bringing their lethal long range shooting to the forefront, and the Red Rams feature one of the top players in New York State in guard Brandon Triche (22 ppg, 6rpg, 6apg), who has made a commitment to play for Syracuse University. Jamesville-Dewitt is coming off of a 26-2 season in which they captured both the State and Federation Championships.

It was no contest in the first half, as Jamesville-Dewitt exploded out of the blocks to a 19-9 first quarter lead. They tacked on another 26 in the second quarter to take a commanding lead into the locker room at the break, 45-28. The Red Rams shot an impressive 62.5% from the field, led by Alshwan Hymes' 16 points and Triche's 11. The Flyers struggled to get their shooters in sync in the first half, hitting on only 28% of their three point attempts and only 39% total from the field.

Jamesville-Dewitt came out of the locker room sitting on their 17 point lead, expecting to cruise through the second half to the victory. Franklin County had other plans, as their three point game came alive in the second half, hitting on five of 11. The Flyers put up an impressive 36 point comeback statement in the fourth quarter, but it was too little too late, and Jamesville-Dewitt held on down the stretch for the 85-79 win. Hymes finished with a game high 29 points on eight of nine shooting, and Triche turned in a quiet 23 point performance – 10 of those second half points coming from the charity stripe. Vance Hall was tops for the Flyers with 21 points, and teammate Barrett Meyer added 16 of his own.

Jamesville-Dewitt advances to the semi-finals and will play Bishop Ford, Monday at 7:30pm. Franklin County falls to the consolation bracket and will face Simon-Gratz High on Monday at 1:00pm.

Game 6

National Division

Cypress Bay High School (*Weston, FL*).....52
Binghamton High School (*Binghamton, NY*).....47

The final game of day one at the 2008 STOP-DWI Holiday Classic pitted the host Patriots of Binghamton High versus the Lightning from Cypress Bay High. Binghamton will rely on the sharp shooting senior Jimmy Gray and the big body of 6'5" senior Nate Papso. Cypress Bay features more of an explosive game, highlighted by 2008 STOP-DWI Holiday Classic Dunk Contest Winner, James Jackson, who averages 20 points and 11 rebounds per game.

Cypress Bay seemed to be too much for the Patriots for most of the first half, as they jumped out to a 12 point lead midway through the second quarter, out-rebounding Binghamton 17-9. Jackson and Eric Katz provided the offense, each accounting for a half-high nine points. Binghamton hit a short 6-0 run at the end of the half to bring the deficit back to single figures at nine, heading the break down 28-19.

In the second half, Gray came alive from beyond the arc, accounting for 14 of Binghamton's 16 points in the third quarter pulling the Pat's all the way to within one of the lead heading into the final frame. Binghamton wouldn't waste any time taking their first lead of the game, 37-36, on a Papso offensive rebound and lay-in. Shortly after Binghamton took their lead, Gray picked up his fourth foul and went to the bench with still over five minutes left to play. At the 4:30 mark of the fourth quarter, Jackson knocked down a huge three, surging Cypress Bay back out front, this time for good, and the Lightning held on down the stretch taking the win 52-47. Gray was high scorer in the game with 24 points, including a solid 6-12 from downtown. Jackson was best for the Lightning with 17 and Blake Foeman pitched in 13 points as well.

Binghamton will move to the consolation bracket and face Wings Academy Monday at 2:45pm, and Cypress Bay will play in the second semi-final game at 9:30pm against Taft High.

2008 STOP-DWI HOLIDAY CLASSIC

Day 2 – December 29th, 2008

By: Ryan Connolly and Chris Williams

Game 7

Regional Division I

Union-Endicott High School (<i>Endicott, NY</i>).....	32
Vestal High School (<i>Vestal, NY</i>).....	58

Day Two of the 2008 STOP-DWI Holiday Classic got under way Monday with a third place match-up in Regional Division I between the Tigers of Union-Endicott and the Vestal Golden Bears. Union-Endicott comes off a loss to Seton Catholic Central in which they committed 22 turnovers resulting in only 40 points of offense – only five in the fourth quarter. Vestal fell on Day One to Norwich High in a close game, 53-52. The Golden Bears were better than Norwich in almost every statistical category, except in their effort at the free-throw line. They looked to be more aggressive to the rim, and get to the line on a regular basis against Union-Endicott in hopes of salvaging a Third Place finish at this year’s Holiday Classic.

For the Tigers, it was the turnover story for the second consecutive day, committing 23 in the contest. No Union-Endicott player finished with double-figure points, as the Tigers managed only five and six points in the second and fourth quarters respectively. Vestal took care of business on the glass picking up 35 rebounds, however, as a team, shot a mediocre 40% from the field. Junior guard Adam Smith came off the bench for the Golden Bears, contributing significant minutes and was high-scorer in the game with 13 points. A 23 point fourth quarter sealed the deal for Vestal, and they cruised to the win, 58-32, and a Third Place finish. For Union-Endicott, they return home with Fourth Place honors – a disappointing encore to a championship run in 2007.

Game 8

Regional Division II

Maine-Endwell High School (*Endwell, NY*).....81
Candor High School (*Candor, NY*).....49

Day Two saw Regional Division II action get under way, as the Spartans from Maine-Endwell High tipped off against the Indians of Candor High. Maine-Endwell enters this year’s tournament returning six players from a 2007-2008 team that took home Third Place in last year’s Holiday Classic. The Spartans are led by 5’8” senior All-Conference guard Joe Powell who averaged 19 points per game during the 2007-2008 campaign. Candor returns to the Holiday Classic for the first time since taking home the Regional Division II title in 2006. The Indians are led by 6’6” senior Will Gates and 6’3” junior Jake Tubbs who average 26 and 15 points per game respectively.

Maine-Endwell came out of the gate running, using stiff defense and fundamental passing to get open looks and easy buckets, to the tune of a 14-2 run to start the game. Candor got themselves back within striking distance, 18-14, nearing the end of the first quarter with a trio of three pointers. The Spartans responded early and often in the second frame, hitting on four threes of their own. Nine Maine-Endwell players got into the scoring action in the first half, and the Spartans carried a commanding 14 point lead heading into the break, 46-32. Maine-Endwell’s Cory Adrian was leading scoring in the half with 13. Gates was best in the half for the Indians with 12.

There was no slowing down the Spartan offense in the second half, and Candor ran out of gas to start the fourth quarter, failing to connect until the 3:30 mark of the final frame. Maine-Endwell distanced put the game well out of reach with a 16-0 run, and rolled to an impressive 81-49 victory and a spot in the Regional Division II Championship game. In the end, 11 Spartans contributed points, and Pat Barrett dominated the glass with 13 rebounds. Powell was best for Maine-Endwell with 17 points, and Gates finished with a game-high 20 points in the losing effort.

Maine-Endwell will play in the Regional Division II final on Tuesday at 5:45pm against the winner of the Windsor/Unatego game. Candor falls to the Third Place game, and will face the loser of the Windsor/Unatego game at 2:45pm.

Game 9

National Division

Simon-Gratz High School (*Philadelphia, PA*).....47
Franklin County High School (*Frankfurt, KY*).....65

The first game in National Division Consolation bracket play had the Bulldogs from Simon-Gratz High battling the Flyers of Franklin County. Simon-Gratz fell to Bishop Ford in the first round after leading for a majority of the game. They were outscored in the fourth quarter 21-10, largely in part due to sloppy play amassing 27 turnovers in the game. Andrew Moyer carries the hot hand into the game for the Bulldogs after accounting for 10 of Simon-Gratz's last 16 points. Franklin County fell just short of an incredible comeback in their first game with Jamesville-Dewitt. The Flyer shooters finally found their stroke in the second half scoring 51 points – 36 coming in the fourth quarter alone. They looked to transfer that momentum into the start of their second game, improving on the dismal nine point first quarter output they produced in the 85-79 loss to Jamesville-Dewitt.

The sharp-shooting Franklin County continued their success from beyond the arc early in the game connecting twice within the first two and a half minutes thanks to Vance Hall and Barrett Meyer. Those threes spearheaded an 11-0 run pushing the Flyers out front in the early-going. They would turn the ball over on their next three possessions, allowing Simon-Gratz to use a mini-run of their own, crawling back to within five at the end of the first quarter. Both teams would trade scores through the second quarter, and it was Franklin County hanging on to a four point advantage, 27-23, heading into the locker room at half. Moyer was top first-half scorer with nine points and five rebounds, and Hall finished with eight on two of three shooting from three-point range for the Flyers.

Simon-Gratz sputtered offensively in the second half, struggling to get anything to fall. At the opposite end of the court, Franklin County didn't experience similar woes, hitting five threes in the third quarter, three off the hand of Meyer, and two from Brandon Jennels. The Bulldogs never recovered, failing to hit their first field goal in the fourth quarter until 3:40 remained. Steady play from Franklin County proved enough as they handedly advanced through the consolation bracket with the 65-47 victory. Barrett led all scorers with 15 points, and Hall chipped in 14 as well.

Simon-Gratz moves to the Seventh Place game on Tuesday at 9:30am and will face the loser of the Binghamton/Wings Academy game. Franklin County will battle the winner of that game for Fifth Place on Tuesday at 11:15am.

Game 10

National Division

Wings Academy (*Bronx, NY*).....87
Binghamton High School (*Binghamton, NY*).....34

The second game in the National consolation bracket took place between host Binghamton Patriots and newcomer Wings Academy. Binghamton found itself in the consolation bracket after suffering a heartbreaking 52-47 loss to the Cypress Bay Lightning. The Patriots are led by sharp-shooting Jimmy Gray who shot 6-12 from beyond the arc in the Patriots’ opening game. Wings Academy took a one point loss to the past Holiday Classic champ, Taft High of Ohio. Deshaun Wiggins put together a 26 point 7 rebound performance in the loss to Taft.

The dominance from Deshaun Wiggins continued with a stellar 22 point 9 rebound performance leading Wings to an astounding 53 point victory, 87-34 – one of the largest in tournament history. The 53 point loss is second only to a Binghamton squad who, in 2003 was humiliated by Rice 95-41. The Pats’ problems started right off the bat shooting a mere 13.3% from the field in the first quarter, in which they recorded a single field goal. The scoring woes didn’t go away, only scoring four points in the quarter to follow. Wings on the other hand were near automatic from any area of the court, shooting 53.8%. Leading the Patriots 47-8 going into the half, Wings didn’t look back. That 39 point half-time margin would be the closest the Patriots would get. Wiggins and teammate Jabriel Blue led all scorers with 22 points each. Gray failed to get in rhythm for Binghamton, but still finished with a team-high 11 points in the loss.

Wings moves to the Fifth Place game and will face Franklin County on Tuesday at 11:15am, and Binghamton falls to the Seventh Place game and will face Simon-Gratz High at 9:30am.

Game 11

Regional Division II

Windsor High School (*Windsor, NY*).....87
Unatego High School (*Unatego, NY*).....50

The second semi-final in Regional Division II play pitted the Black Knights of Windsor and the Spartans from Unatego. Windsor returns eight players from a team that took home the hardware in Regional Division II action in last years Holiday Classic. Notable returning starters include All-Division guard Tim Costello (8ppg), and Brenton Jones. Unatego is led by Second Team All-MAC performer from a year ago, Kyle Ray.

From the opening tip, Windsor dominated the tempo, jumping out to a 24-14 lead by the end of the first quarter, and stretching it even farther by half, 50-26. The difference in this one was Matt Murray. Murray scored the game's first 11 points, nine of them coming from beyond the arc. He tacked on another eight points in the second frame, finishing with a half-high 21 points. The half-time break didn't cool his hot hand, as he proceeded to score 19 of Windsor's 21 third quarter points, before being lifted in the early minutes of the fourth quarter.

In addition to Murray's offensive outburst, the Black Knights took care of both ends of the court in textbook fashion, picking up 14 steals, seven from Tim Costello, and 32 rebounds. Unatego couldn't muster any consistency on the offensive end, looking very unorganized for most of the contest, and fell 87-50. In the end, Murray tallied a new STOP-DWI Holiday Classic record for points in a single game with 46. Yuri Demetris of Shaler Area owned the previous record of 43, set back in 1999. No other Black Knight finished with double-figure points, Costello being second best to Murray with nine. Kyle Ray was tops for Unatego with 22 points and seven rebounds.

Windsor moves to the Regional Division II Championship game and will face Maine-Endwell Tuesday at 5:45pm. Unatego falls to the Third Place game and will face Candor at 2:45pm.

Game 12

National Division

Jamesville-Dewitt High School (*Dewitt, NY*).....73
Bishop Ford High School (*Brooklyn, NY*).....56

Semi-final action in the National Division got underway Monday night with a match-up of arguably the two most well-rounded teams in this year’s Holiday Classic. Star point-guard Brandon Triche and Alshwan Hymes lead the Jamesville-Dewitt Red Rams into the semis after a dominating first round defeat of Franklin County in which the Red Rams shot over 60% from the floor tallying what seemed to be an effortless 85 points. Bishop Ford had a tougher route to the second round needing a resilient comeback victory over Simon-Gratz. A 21-point fourth quarter surge propelled the Falcons to a 62-55 victory, setting up their date with Jamesville-Dewitt. Speedy guard Chaz Williams looked to continue his stellar play after netting a game-high 27 points against Simon-Gratz.

After a quiet 23 point performance the night before, Triche seemed to take more of an initiative to get to the basket and score. He opened the scoring with a strong drive to the lane and followed that up with a pair of free-throws coming off a drive to the hoop. Justyn McMichael kept the Falcons close, connecting from the field on back-to-back possessions at the end of the quarter; the second a big three from the wing. In the second frame, Triche took the Red Rams on a 12-0 run, again with three drives to the basket, the third converting a three-point-play opportunity at the line. However, as he did in the first quarter, McMichael triggered a short eight point comeback run, bringing the score to 32-27 in favor of Jamesville-Dewitt as the teams headed to the locker room. Triche led all scorers in the half with 16, and Williams tallied 11 of his own for the Falcons.

In the second half, Triche continued to carry the Red Rams on his back, all the way to the rim pushing the lead to 16 by the end of the third quarter. This time there was no response from Bishop Ford, and Triche & Co. cruised to a win and a birth in the National Division final, 73-56. Triche seemed set out to prove his ability to dominate the floor, and his 35 points in just over three quarters of play were a game-high. Steve Thomson and Dejaun Coleman took care of the glass for Jamesville-Dewitt, collecting 10 and 11 boards respectively. Williams was best for the Bishop Ford with 22 points in the loss.

Jamesville-Dewitt will meet the winner of the Taft/Cypress Bay semi-final in the National Division Championship game on Tuesday at 9:30pm. Bishop Ford will move to the Third Place game and will face the loser of the second semi-final at 1:00pm.

Game 13

National Division

Cypress Bay High School (*Weston, FL*).....56
Taft High School (*Cincinnati, OH*).....50

The second semi-final game in National Division play tipped off in the night-cap of Day Two with the Lightning of Cypress Bay and the Taft High Senators. Cypress Bay enters the second round after a win over host Binghamton High School, 52-47. The Lightning, however, will be without top-scorer James Jackson who was benched for disciplinary reasons. Taft barely snuck into the semi-finals after outlasting Wings Academy, 54-53. Richard Harris' 12 points were best for the Senators in their opening game, and Taft hoped to ride his big presence inside over Cypress Bay and into the finals.

Cypress Bay forward Venton Wilder showed his senior leadership taking it upon himself to replace the point production of Jackson, hitting on five of seven shooting in the first half for 11 points. He got the Lightning out in front early with a three from the corner, and finished the half with two easy buckets giving Cypress Bay a six point cushion heading into the break, 25-19. Taft dominated on the defensive glass out-rebounding Cypress Bay 8-1, but struggled to convert at the other end of the court, turning the ball over eight times. Wilder's 11 were best in the half.

Both coaches turned up the defense in the second half, as the two teams combined for a mere 14 points in the third quarter. Taft finally got the ball to bounce their way at the end of the third, inching back into the game, and with 1:54 left in the quarter, Harris connected for his first three, breaking a 29-all tie. Wilder disappeared to start the second half and he took the Lightning offense with him for the third quarter and much of the fourth after relinquished the lead. However, midway through the fourth, Wilder came alive and sparked an 11-2 run bringing the Lightning back within a possession of the lead. With time winding down, Eric Turjillo found a wide-open Eric Katz in the corner, and as the buzzer sounded, Katz drilled his second three of the game, tying up the score and sending the game into overtime.

In overtime, it was all Wilder, taking advantage of four fast-break points, and using a tough three-point play inside to put the Lightning out in front by six. Taft provided no threat, and Cypress Bay held on for the 56-50 win and a birth in the National Division Championship game. Wilder finished with 23 points to lead all scorers, and Katz pitched in 10 of his own – none bigger than the three as time expired in regulation. Turnovers finally caught up with the Taft, who coughed it up 19 times in the game, eight coming from junior guard Kevin Mitchell. Anthony Benton led the Senators with 16 points and 10 rebounds in the loss.

Cypress Bay advances to the National Division Championship game against Jamesville-Dewitt, tip-off coming at 9:30pm Tuesday. Taft moves to the consolation bracket and will play Bishop Ford for Third Place on Tuesday at 1:00pm.

2008 STOP-DWI HOLIDAY CLASSIC

Day 3 – December 30th, 2008

By: Ryan Connolly and Chris Williams

Game 14

National Division

Binghamton High School (<i>Binghamton, NY</i>).....	51
Simon-Gratz High School (<i>Philadelphia, PA</i>).....	63

Day three of the 2008 STOP-DWI Holiday Classic began with the Seventh Place game in the National Division. Host Binghamton finds themselves in the last place game following an 87-34 beating at the hands of Wings Academy that ranks as the second worst loss in Holiday Classic history. Past Champion Simon-Gratz looked to salvage a weekend with a win after dropping two close games with Bishop Ford and Franklin County.

For much of the first quarter it looked as though Binghamton was primed for another miserable offensive day failing to hit its first field goal until the 2:30 mark on a Jimmy Gray three. However, Gray wasn't finished, picking up two more quick buckets, and at quarter's end, Binghamton was very much in the game, down 13-10. The two teams played even through the second frame, and heading into the break it was Simon-Gratz up three, 30-27. The Bulldogs' Antoine Bland was best in the half with 11 points and four rebounds, and Gray picked up nine points to lead the Pats.

Gray kept firing from beyond the arc in the second half, tying the game up on Binghamton's first possession. A short 6-0 run from the Pats following the three put them out front for the first time since the beginning of the second quarter. Simon-Gratz didn't let Binghamton pull away, and with 1:07 left in the quarter, Bruce Hanner drilled a three, breaking a 39-all tie, giving Simon-Gratz a lead they wouldn't relinquish. Gray knocked down a pair of threes midway through the fourth, pulling the score to within one, but they would be last field goals Binghamton would score and for the third time in their tournament history, took home last place, falling in this one, 61-53. Andrew Moye, Tyree Smith and Bland all scored in double figures for the Bulldogs, and Gray's 22 points were a game high.

Game 15

National Division

Franklin County High School (*Frankfurt, KY*).....55
Wings Academy (*Bronx, NY*).....56

The battle for Fifth place in the National Division saw two teams with very different styles of play. The Flyers from Franklin County lived by their namesake, letting it fly from all over the offensive end of the court, connecting for a combined 18 threes in their first two games. Wings Academy rather looked to drive to the rim, led by the quick and explosive Ronald Baker and Deshaun Wiggans. Baker was good for 20 points in their second round win, and Wiggans added a game-high 22 as well.

In the first half, Franklin County was cold from long range shooting 0-7 from three-point range. However, Wings turned the ball over 11 times and failed to pick up an offensive rebound, and Franklin County carried a four point lead into the locker room, 30-26. Franklin County's Oakley Watkins led all scorers in the half with 11 points, and Baker was best for Wings with seven.

Not much changed for the Flyers in the second half, as they continued their cold streak from three-point range. Wings took advantage of the Franklin County shooting woes, and with 44 seconds left in the third, took their first lead since the start of the game. They hung on through much of the fourth but with 7.3 seconds remaining, Wings up three, Franklin County's Deron Hicks found himself open in the corner. While going up for the tying bucket he was fouled by Drimir Ferguson, sending him to the line for three. Hicks made good on the first two, but the third rimmed out preserving Wings' one point lead and the eventual victory, 56-55. For the Fifth Place Wings, Wiggans was high-scorer with 18 points, and Baker chipped in 13 as well to go along with three steals. Ryan Conner was tops for the Flyers with 13 points and seven rebounds.

Game 16

National Division

Taft High School (*Cincinnati, OH*).....57
Bishop Ford High School (*Brooklyn, NY*).....63

National Division play concluded in the morning session of Day Three at the 2008 STOP-DWI Holiday Classic with a match-up of past champions battling for a handle on Third Place. The Senators of Taft High enter this game after a bad loss to title hopeful Cypress Bay. Taft gave up a double-figure second half lead, including a buzzer beating three that sent the game into overtime, where they failed to convert a field goal and lost 56-50. Bishop Ford fell in their semi-final game to title hopeful Jamesville-Dewitt thanks to a 35 point outburst by Syracuse University-bound Brandon Triche. The Falcons looked to continue to ride the small shoulders of Chaz Williams who has averaged 24.5 points per game through the first two days of the tournament.

After playing to an even first quarter, Taft became lazy with their passes and turned the ball over 10 times in the second quarter alone. The turnovers, in combination with only 34.8% shooting from the field, plagued the Senators as they found themselves down five heading into the locker room at half, 26-21. Williams netted 10 points in the half, and Cory Hunter and Darryl Owens each picked up six points apiece for the Senators.

Taft's struggles continued in the third quarter managing only eight points, and falling further behind heading into the final frame. Despite the rough start to the half, the Senators managed a 20 point surge in the fourth quarter, much thanks to reserve Richard Harris. Down six, with just under two minutes to play, Cameron Mitchell hit two threes on back-to-back possessions to tie the game up at 47. Harris knocked down a pair of free-throws with 22 seconds showing on the clock to push the Senators out front. However, on the ensuing defensive possession, they failed to box-out on a Williams miss, and Lorenzo Brown was there for the put-back, tying the score and sending the game into overtime. In OT, Williams netted six of his game-high 27 points, and with Taft struggling at the free-throw line, Bishop Ford ran away with the victory, 63-57. Harris picked up 13 points off the bench for Taft, and Mitchell sunk a team-best 17 points in the loss.

Game 17

Regional Division II

Unatego High School (*Unatego, NY*).....56
Candor High School (*Candor, NY*).....63

The final game of consolation bracket play in Regional Division took place between the Spartans of Unatego and the Candor Indians. Both teams enter the game suffering huge losses the night before, each falling by more than 30 points. Kyle Ray picked up 22 points for the Spartans; however, as a team they turned the ball over 22 times. Candor's Will Gates had 20 points and eight rebounds in the Indians first round loss.

Both teams got out to slow starts, failing to get into any rhythm offensively and accounting for a combined 15 points in the first quarter. Candor picked up the pace in the second and third quarters, outscoring Unatego 44-30 over that span. Unatego couldn't find enough fire power to complete the comeback in the fourth and fell 63-56. Gates led all scorers with 29 points, shooting a solid 90% from the free-throw line. The Candor defense proved to be a difference maker as well, forcing 26 turnovers in the game, and holding Ray to only six points, on 2-9 shooting from the field.

Game 18

Regional Division I

Maine-Endwell High School (*Endwell, NY*).....55
Windsor High School (*Windsor, NY*).....43

The first championship game of the 2008 STOP-DWI Holiday Classic featured Regional Division II action between the Spartans of Maine-Endwell and the Black Knights of Windsor. Maine-Endwell cruised in their semi-final win, taking down Candor by 32 points. Joe Powell led the way for the Spartans into the finals with 17 points and five assists. Windsor made history in their semi-final win as senior guard Matt Murray set a STOP-DWI Holiday Classic record for points in a single game with 46. The Black Knights hoped his hot hand wouldn't cool off over night, and looked to ride his wave to their second consecutive Regional Division II title.

Powell got going right away in the first quarter making good on two of his five threes in the game, as well as cashing in on an acrobatic lay-in and drawing the foul earning the three-point play. At quarter's end, he had the Spartans out in front 16-6. Maine-Endwell cooled off in the second quarter, but Windsor failed to take the advantage, and was down six, 23-17, going into the break. Powell led all scorers in the half with 14 including 3-6 from beyond the arc. Murray had apparently wasted all of his bullets in game one, accounting for only 5 points, five of them coming from the foul-line late in the half.

Windsor made no adjustments at the half failing to capitalize on any offense opportunity and shooting an abysmal 25% from the floor in the second half. Steve Federowicz got into the mix for the Spartans in the second half going 4-4 from the field, and despite an astounding 23 turnovers, Maine-Endwell rolled down the stretch to the easy victory and their third ever Regional Division Championship, 55-43. Powell finished with 24 points to lead all scorers, and captured Regional Division II Most Valuable Player honors. Tim Costello's 18 points were best for Windsor in the loss, and Murray finished with eight.

Game 19

Regional Division I

Norwich High School (*Norwich, NY*).....57
Seton Catholic Central (*Binghamton, NY*).....64

The second Regional Division final of the night featured the Saints of Seton Catholic and the Purple Tornadoes from Norwich. Seton rolled to the championship game taking down Union-Endicott 62-40. Norwich had a much tougher road to the finals, barely hanging on late to fend off a charging Vestal team, 53-52. The senior duo of Matt Meier and Chris Furner head the charge for the Saints after each picked up double-figure points in game one. Josh Borfritz shot six of 13 in the semi-finals for a game-high 19 points.

Norwich got themselves out front early in the game taking an 11-7 lead in the first quarter as Seton struggled to get their offensive sets in sync. However, with a big three from Tom Torto at the start of the second, Seton found its stroke and went on a 14-0 run en route to a 23 point quarter and a 30-19 halftime lead. Torto was a perfect 4-4 from the field including 3-3 from beyond the arc for a half-high 11 points.

In the second half, Norwich made an effort to get to the rim on a more frequent basis and it resulted in 19 third quarter points. However, Seton's sophomore big-man was up to the task, picking up four blocks, and cleaning up the glass for a game-high 18 points. Any time Norwich looked to make a run at the lead, Seton was able to respond, and hold on down the stretch for the 64-57 victory. With the win, the Saints pick up their third STOP-DWI Holiday Classic Championship, first since 2004. Meier picked up 15 points on 6-14 shooting for the Saints, and Corey Dietrich had 12 to lead the Purple Tornado in the loss.

Game 20

National Division

Cypress Bay High School (*Weston, FL*).....55
Jamesville-Dewitt High School (*Dewitt, NY*).....78

The third and final day of the 2008 STOP-DWI Holiday Classic concluded with a battle for the right to claim Champion in the National Division. Brandon Triche and the Red Rams of Jamesville-Dewitt looked to finish the weekend strong after dominating in their first two games. Triche looked to improve on his 35 points from a night before, and Alshwan Hymes hoped to regain his form after netting only nine in the semi-finals for the Red Rams. Cypress Bay needed some late game heroics from junior Eric Katz, whose buzzer beating three sent their semi-final into overtime where they earned their birth in tonight's championship game. Cypress Bay returns their star player James Jackson for the finals, who served a one game suspension for violating team rules.

Cypress Bay came out with a determination to eliminate the driving opportunities and force Triche and company to shoot the outside shot. Through the first quarter Jamesville-Dewitt struggled to knock down the first look, but managed to out-rebound the Lightning on the offensive boards 11-5, and picked up the necessary second-chance points to stay close. Cypress Bay took advantage of the open outside shot and was a solid 46.2% from beyond the arc in the first half, with six of their 10 field goals coming in the form of a three. In the second quarter, Triche showed his ability to take over a game, and Cypress Bay couldn't squeeze the lane tight enough, and he made his way to the rim at will. He finished the half with 14 points and eight boards, both half-highs. Hymes struggled to get hot from beyond the arc missing his first three-point attempts of the game. He finished the half with only seven points. Going into the locker room at half, it was Jamesville-Dewitt 34, Cypress Bay 26.

In the second half, Hymes found his stroke and made five of his next seven attempts from three-point land including one from nearly 26 feet. Cypress had no answer for Triche at either end of the court as he picked up another 16 points and seven rebounds in the second half. Jamesville-Dewitt pulled away in the fourth quarter, outscoring Cypress Bay 24-12, and took home the National Championship in their inaugural year at the Holiday Classic, 78-55. Triche's 30 points and 15 rebounds were both game-highs and Hymes was superb with 29 points on 11-19 shooting from the field and 50% from long-range. The Red Rams out-rebounded Cypress Bay 40-17 in the contest – another sign of their dominance over the field during the three day tournament.

2008 STOP-DWI Holiday Classic All-Star Teams

National Division

Brandon Triche – Jamesville-Dewitt – MVP
Jimmy Gray – Binghamton
Vance Hall – Franklin County
Chaz Williams – Bishop Ford
Richard Harris – Taft
Venton Wilder – Cypress Bay
Alshwan Hymes – Jamesville-Dewitt
Eric Turjillo – Cypress Bay
Dajuan Coleman – Jamesville-Dewitt

Regional Division I

Matt Meier – Seton Catholic – MVP
Chris Furner – Seton Catholic
Greg Johnson – Seton Catholic
Bob Garbade – Seton Catholic
Timmy Clark – Norwich
Josh Borfitz – Norwich

Regional Division II

Joe Powell – Maine-Endwell – MVP
Tim Costello – Windsor
Steve Federowicz – Maine-Endwell
Matt Murray – Windsor
Willis Stocks – Maine-Endwell
Will Gates – Candor

Slam Dunk Contest Winner – James Jackson – Cypress Bay

Three Point Shooting Contest Winner

Jamesville-Dewitt High School
Alshwan Hymes and Zach Firestone