Gussert ‘D’ Player of Year

Gussert, Waara voted to all-U.P. ‘dream team’

ESCANABA—Local girls basketball fans got to see two of the U.P.’s best players this year, and that was confirmed by the U.P. Sportswriters and Sportscasters Association at its annual basketball selection meeting, held here March 27.

West Iron County senior Jaclyn Waara and Forest Park sophomore Lexi Gussert were both voted to the five-member all-class “dream team” during the meeting.

Waara earlier was voted player of the year in the West Pac Conference for the second time. She averaged 20.5 points this season, shooting 39% from the floor and 79% at the free throw line. She also averaged 4.5 steals and four assists. Waara finished her high school career with a West Iron school record of 1,588 points.

Gussert was the only Class D player chosen to the dream team and was also voted Class D player of the year. She averaged 22.4 points and 9.3 rebounds this year, and she scored her 1,000th career point late in the regional semifinal game against Superior Central—and scored 81 in Forest Park’s three games after that. Next winter, she will be a junior.

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She is already being highly recruited by Division 1 programs. She has been voted all-state honors as both a freshman and sophomore, and she was the only Class D and only U.P. player voted to this year’s all-tournament team at the state finals.

In total, three West Iron and three Forest Park girls were named to the all-U.P. team.

For the Wykons, Shannon Koski and Kylee Erickson were both voted to the Class ABC second team, and the Lady Trojans’ Tanner Bartczak and Audrey Sholander were both picked for the Class D second team.

Erickson is a junior, Koski, Bartczak and Sholander are all seniors.

In addition, Forest Park, which won district and regional titles and advanced to the state semifinal game at East Lansing, was voted Class D team of the year.

Lady Trojans Coach Jeff Syrjanen finished second in voting as Class D coach of the year. Superior Central’s Greg Trowbridge received the honor—his Cougars compiled a 21-3 record before falling to Forest Park in the regional semifinals.

In the boys all-U.P. meeting, West Iron County’s Caleb Pellizzer missed being voted to the Class ABC first team by a single vote and finished on the second team instead.

Forest Park’s Jake Divine received honorable mention.

Girls

All-class team: Jammie Botruff, Gladstone; Taylor Dillinger, Houghton; Olivia Nash, Escanaba; Jaclyn Waara, West Iron County; Lexi Gussert (soph.), Forest Park.

Class ABC

First team: Rikki Gingras, Iron Mountain; Lauren Goldthorpe, St. Ignace; Megan Kangas, Norway; Megan Manninen, Westwood; Courtney Waara, Negaunee.

Second team: Carlee Benzie (jr.), Kingsford; Gary Cappaert, Stephenson; Joey Carroll, Houghton; Kylee Erickson (jr.), West Iron County; Shannon Koski, West Iron County; Allyssa Lindberg, Marquette; Madi Swanson (soph.), L’Anse; Mellie Tuma, Marquette; Whitney Wells,

Gladstone; Kelley Wright (soph.), St. Ignace.

Class D

First team: Whitney Frazier, Brimley; Vanessa Freberg (soph.), Superior Central; Jaime Madalinski, Bark River-Harris; Sarah Madalinski (jr.), Bark River-Harris; Gertie McGeshick, Watersmeet.

Second team: Tanner Bartczak, Forest Park; Kelly Bintner, Rapid River; Nicole Bouwma (soph.), DeTour; Emily DesJardins (jr.), Munising; Taylor Granquist, North Central; Morgan MacArthur, Engadine; Krista Melcalf, Engadine; Heather Sanderson, Rapid River; Audrey Sholander, Forest Park; Olivia Soumis, Ontonagon.

Players of the year: ABC, Jammie Botruff, Gladstone, and Olivia Nash, Escanaba; D, Lexi Gussert, Forest Park.

Coaches of the year: ABC, Karl Dollhopf, Gladstone; D, Greg Trowbridge, Superior Central.

Teams of the year: AB, Gladstone; C, St. Ignace; D, Forest Park.

Boys

All-class team: Steve Angeli, Sault Ste. Marie; Jeff Gregory, Kingsford; Brett Branstrom (jr.), Mid Peninsula; Jordan LaPlant, Ewen-Trout Creek; Kenya Oas, Munising.

Class ABC

First team: Josh Beauchamp, Iron Mountain; Zach French, Westwood; Tyler Jandron (soph.), Negaunee; Adam Mackey (soph.), Ironwood; Tyler Wilson, Rudyard.

Second team: Alex Almquist (soph.), Hancock; Riley Angeli, Sault Ste. Marie; Alex Briones (soph.), Ishpeming; Mark Pap (jr.), Marquette; Caleb Pellizzer, West Iron County; Andy Steber, Calumet; Ty Thomann, Iron Mountain; Kyle Tiglas, Manistique; Jimmy Veker (soph.), L'Anse; Aidan Wienke (jr.), Kingsford.

Class D

First team: Dillon Gordon (jr.), Ewen-Trout Creek; Josh Hester (jr.), Cedarville; Jacob Kleiman, Bark River-Harris; Lucas Moreau, Carney-Nadeau; Wade Schetter (jr.), Carney-Nadeau.

Second team: Bryce Bilski, North Central; Bryon Harper, North Dickinson; Cory Johnson, North Dickinson; Troy Kinnunen (jr.), Jeffers; Michael Kuenzer, Brimley; Jacob Ludtke, Bessemer; Trevor Maki (jr.), Superior Central; Matt Verbrigghe (jr.), Superior Central; Garrett Warren, Chassell; Jake Yaklyvich, Ontonagon.

Players of the year: ABC, Steve Angeli, Sault Ste. Marie; D, Kenya Oas, Munising.

Coaches of the year: ABC, Dan Olkkonen, Kingsford; D, Dan Waterman, Munising.

Teams of the year: AB, Sault Ste. Marie; C, Negaunee; D, Carney-Nadeau.--