

# 'Guarantee' Comes True For Bees

Bloomfield Beats Omaha Nation For First State Berth Since 2006

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NORFOLK, Neb. — A pre-season guarantee, though it may have been in a somewhat joking manner, came true for the Bloomfield Bees. Before the season, the boys' basketball players told head coach Gary Eisenhauer that they were going to state this season.

His response? "He said, 'Let's do it,'" said senior Conner Wilson, who scored 17 points in Bloomfield's 60-40 win Tuesday night over Omaha Nation in the District D1-3 final in Norfolk.

And so, for the first since 2006, Bloomfield qualifies for the Nebraska State Tournament, to be held March 12-14 in Lincoln.

"It's perfect," Wilson said. "We've been talking about this forever."

Bloomfield (17-8) needed a late surge down the stretch this season to reach this point. The Bees, once 3-7, have won 14 of their last 15 games and upset defending state champion Randolph in sub-districts.

"It's huge. It's been a long time for us," said senior Cody Beckmann, who scored 15 points.

"This class has dreamed of this since fourth grade."

That dream was never really in jeopardy on Tuesday against Omaha Nation, a small, fast-paced team.

Bloomfield rolled to a 30-16 halftime lead and never let that cushion get to within single digits.

Quinn O'Brien, one of eight seniors on the roster, added 10 points for the Bees, who were 11-of-18 at the free throw line.

Amidst the post-game celebration, Eisenhauer — in his second year back with Bloomfield — couldn't put into words what it means for his program to reach the state tournament.

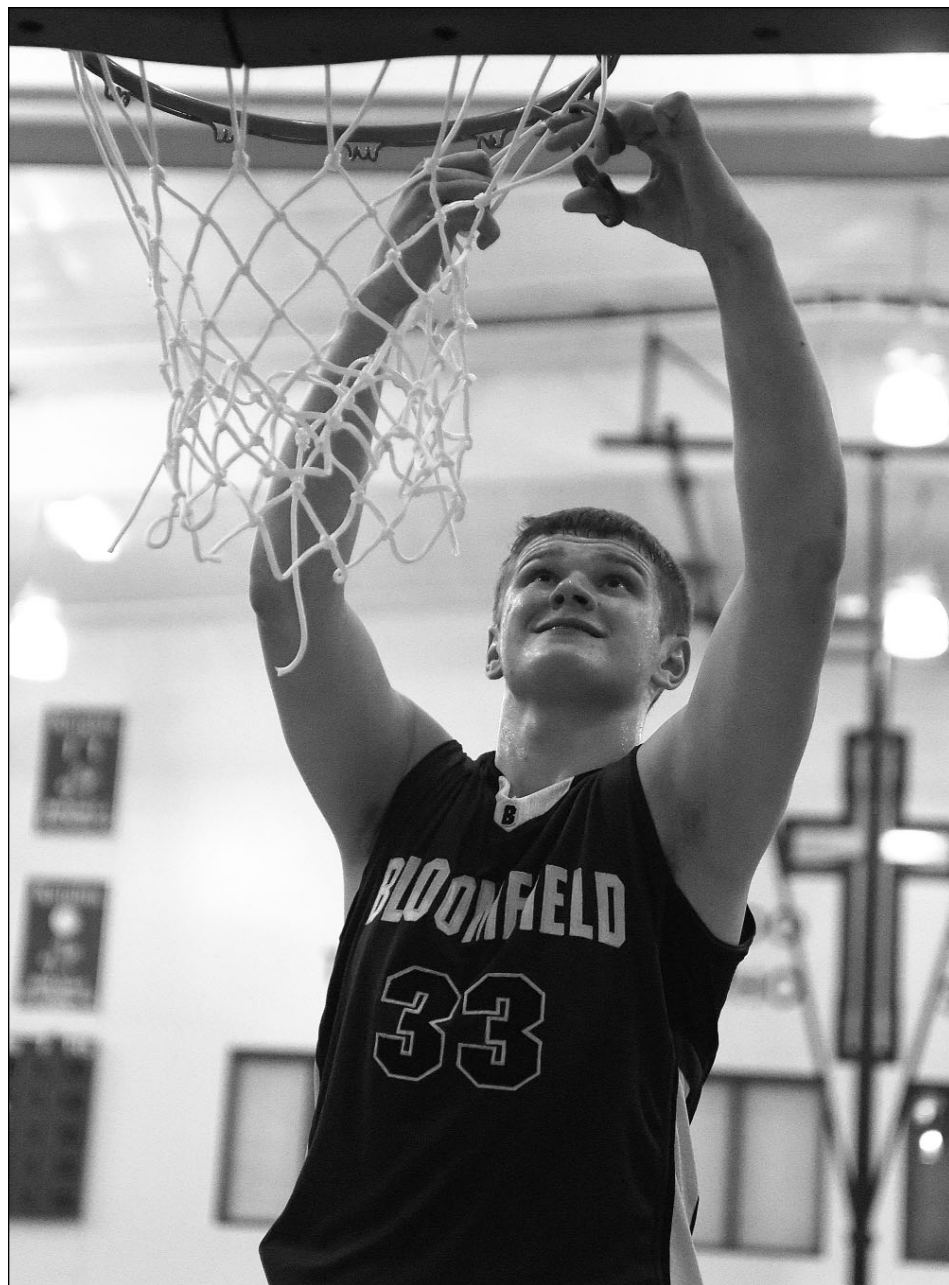
"We don't know yet," he said, with a smile.

"That's been our goal all year," he added. "We knew we had a chance."

Perhaps the catalyst for that goal appearing realistic was a game against Winnebago on Feb. 5 in the Lewis & Clark Conference Tournament, according to Beckmann.

"We started off a little rough, but we rattled off a few in a row," he said. "When we played Winnebago and didn't lose by that much, we

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## Bees Soar Past Omaha Nation

**Bloomfield beat Omaha Nation 60-40 in the District D1-3 boys' basketball championship on Tuesday in Norfolk, Nebraska. The victory sends the Bees to state, March 12-14 in Lincoln, for the first time since the 2005-06 season.**

**ABOVE: Bloomfield senior Anthony Arroyos, front, hugs his teammates after coming out of the game late in the fourth quarter of Tuesday night's District D1-3 final against Omaha Nation in Norfolk, Nebraska.**

**LEFT: Bloomfield senior Devin Gieselman cuts out a piece of the net after the Bees beat Omaha Nation 60-40 in the District D1-3 final on Tuesday night in Norfolk, Nebraska.**

JEREMY HOECK/P&D

## Tornadoes, Eagles Earn District 10B Title Berths

CENTERVILLE — In the second round of the District 10B tournament, Centerville downed Alcester-Hudson 55-44 Tuesday night in Centerville.

Christian Gruschin netted 20 points and grabbed 13 rebounds for Centerville. Rory O'Malley and Tyrell Martz each added 11 points to the win.

For Alcester-Hudson, Gavin Doering totaled 12 points, and Christopher Klemme and Sam Jensen each tallied eight points.

Centerville plays Irene-Wakonda in the finals in Tea on Friday, and Alcester-Hudson ends its season with 9-13 record.

ALCESTER-HUDSON (9-13).....7 21 34 55  
CENTERVILLE (15-6).....14 23 36 55

## Irene-Wakonda 64, Viborg Hurley 60

CENTERVILLE — In the District 10B semifinals, Irene-Wakonda edged out Viborg-Hurley 64-60 Tuesday night in Centerville.

Tate Gale cashed 10-10 free throw to total 18 points for Irene-Wakonda. Trey King tallied 17 points, and Gabe King added 15 points and nine rebounds to the win.

For Viborg-Hurley, Rusten Anderson netted 17 points and had eight rebounds, and Austin Wurtz put up 13 points.

Irene-Wakonda will play in the championships in Tea against Centerville on Friday, and Viborg-Hurley ends its season with a 12-9 record.

VIBORG-HURLEY (12-9).....17 28 38 60  
IRENE-WAKONDA (15-5).....19 28 46 64

## Region 5A

### Tri-Valley 62, Wagner 56

COLTON — In the Region 5A opener, Tri-Valley downed Wagner 62-56 in Colton on Tuesday night.

Conner Teel and Will Steineke each totaled 12 points for Tri-Valley. Jayden Sonnenberg tallied 11 points and seven, and Noah Jewit added 10 points to the win.

For Wagner, Derek Soukop cashed 30 points and grabbed 11 rebounds. Lukas Young added 15 points and seven rebounds.

Tri-Valley advances to the semifinals against McCook Central-Montrose on Thursday in Salem, and Wagner ends its season with a 8-13 record.

WAGNER (8-13).....10 22 37 56  
TRI-VALLEY (13-8).....22 38 50 62

### West Central 59, Parkston 53

SALEM — In the first round of the Region 5A tournament, West Central trounced Parkston 59-53 Tuesday night in Salem.

Noah Vetrus cashed 25 points for West Central, and Jacoby Odegaard added 13 points to the win.

For Parkston, Wes Genant netted 21 points. Dillan Thuringer tallied 10 points,

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# Carter Leads Omaha Men Past North Dakota 80-78

GRAND FORKS, N.D. (AP) — CJ Carter scored 11 points and the game-winning free throw on Tuesday and Omaha rallied to beat North Dakota 80-78 in its final game of the season.

Devin Patterson and Tre-Shawn Thurman scored 14 points apiece, Mike Rostampour had 12, and Kyler Erickson and

Jake White 10 apiece for the Mavericks (12-17, 5-11 Summit), who have won three straight.

Omaha finished eighth in the Summit League standings, but is still ineligible for the NCAA postseason after beginning its transition to the Division I level prior to the 2011-12 season. The team will be eligi-

ble beginning next season.

Trailing 43-41 at halftime, Omaha rallied to a 69-66 second-half lead on a 3-pointer by Carter, but North Dakota retook the lead 78-77 on a 3 by Terrel de Rouen with 1:25 to go. Cater put Omaha up 79-78 with free throws with 1:10 left, then Thurman iced it with one

of two free throws.

Quinton Hooker scored 23 and Lenny Antwi 12 for North Dakota (8-21, 4-13 Big Sky Conference), which has lost eight straight.

**IOWA 77, INDIANA 63:** BLOOMINGTON, Ind. (AP) — Aaron White had 21 points and five rebounds to lead the Iowa Hawkeyes to a 77-63 victory over the Indiana Hoosiers on Tuesday night. Jarrod Uthoff had 14 points and six rebounds, and Gabriel Olansen added 13 points for the

Hawkeyes (20-10, 11-6 Big Ten), who have won five straight.

Nick Zeisloft scored 15 points, all from 3-point range, and James Blackmon, Jr. finished with 14 points and five rebounds for the Hoosiers (19-11, 9-8), who have lost two in a row.

Olansen's go ahead basket with 5:40 left in the first half to make it 25-24 gave Iowa the lead for good.

Peter Jok, who finished with eight points, made two 3-pointers and Uthoff scored to put the Hawkeyes ahead 61-48. They led by as much as 16 when Anthony Clemmons scored a free throw with 1:10 left to play.

# Huskies Edge Dakota Valley For Return Trip To State 'A'

BY KEITH A. BROCKBERG  
P&D Correspondent

VERMILLION — On Feb. 6, the Dakota Valley Panthers edged the Elk Point-Jefferson Huskies 75-73 in triple-overtime.

Tuesday night's 4A Region Championship rematch with a bid to next week's State A Tournament in Watertown was decided in regulation but was no less wild as the Huskies avenged the loss to the Panthers with the 50-49 win at the Vermillion High School gym.

"It's exactly how championship games should go," Dakota Valley head coach Tammy Lilly said.

The Huskies' Payton Donnelly swished a pair of free throws with 10.3 seconds left to give EP-J the win and a return ticket to the State A's.

The Panthers bid to win the game on a last-second lay-up, but the shot by Emma Tuttle rolled off the rim.

"It was right there," Lilly said of Tuttle's shot. "It's exactly the opportunity you want right there."

"I went up there thinking it was just like every other day because we are always shooting free throws; I was just trying to block out the crowd noise," Donnelly said of her Region-winning moment. "I have the coaches to thank for always making us shoot free throws."

The Huskies were 14-16 for the game from the free throw line while the Panthers visited the charity stripe just five times.

"We knew the free throws would be important," EP-J head coach Gary Nebelsick said. "We knew it would slow them down and keep us going if we could get to the line."

McKenzie Mennenga was 8-8 from the free-throw line and led all scorers with 24 points as she helped the Huskies recover from a 10-point 2nd-half deficit.

The Panthers led 31-21 after Abby Faldmo drained a 3-pointer with 6:10 remaining in the third quarter.

Mennenga began the 3rd-quarter charge with a pull-up jumper and later kicked out to Donnelly for an open trey. Donnelly dropped in a 3-pointer with 1:09 left in the frame to give the Huskies a 36-34 lead.

The Panthers battled back to tie the game at 45-all after Anne McCabe backed in for a bucket.

Dakota Valley took a lead at 49-47 as Claire Johnson drove the Huskies' defense for a lay-up.

Donnelly was 3-4 from the line in the final 44.5 to account for the game's deciding points. The junior guard finished with 17 points.

The Huskies opened with the hot

hand and a 7-2 lead as Mennenga scored on a drive and later swished a 3-pointer.

Mennenga's jumper late in the first quarter gave EP-J a 13-6 lead, but Dakota Valley's Haley Hoffman sliced the Huskie defense for a foul-drawing hoop and a free-throw make, trimming EP-J's lead to 13-11.

The Huskies ended the first frame with a 15-13 lead as Faldmo pulled for a 15-foot jumper.

The Panthers took their first lead of the night at 18-17 midway through the second quarter when Johnson tickled the net with a 3-pointer. Dakota Valley's lead grew to 22-17 as McCabe scored on a runner.

The Huskies' offense made just two field goals in the second quarter and Dakota Valley held a 24-19 halftime lead as McCabe scored from the lane as time was about to expire.

Proving the doubters wrong became the rallying cry for the Huskies as they put together a 19-win season.

"It's amazing," Donnelly said of returning to the state tournament. "I think some people thought we couldn't do it because we lost a lot of amazing players, but we never doubted ourselves and we have so much heart."

"I don't think a lot of people gave us



Elk Point-Jefferson's McKenzie Mennenga splits the Dakota Valley defense for a layup during the Region 4A girls' basketball championship on Tuesday in Vermillion.

JAMES D. CIMBUREK/P&D

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