**Hamilton-Wenham boys can't overcome second half deficit, bows out of tourney with loss to Pentucket
By Nick Giannino Staff Writer, Salem News
Mar 3, 2018**

The Hamilton-Wenham boys basketball team couldn't have gotten off to a better start in Saturday's Division 3 North semifinal.

Hosting gritty rival Pentucket, the Generals jumped out to an early 12-point lead while holding the sharpshooting Sachems to just five first quarter points.

But like they've proven capable of in so many games this season, the visitors got hot from deep to quickly cut into the deficit and eventually take a halftime lead. Behind the roar of their home crowd on a jam packed evening, the Generals fought right back, closing what was once a double-digit deficit down the stretch to just two with under a minute to play. Unfortunately, they ran out of steam from there, closing their season out with a 56-52 setback.

It was an emotional loss for head coach Mike DiMarino's 10 seniors, a group that dedicated themselves to the team their entire careers and certainly left it all out on the floor Saturday night.

"These seniors came in right after the (2015) state championship team and all they've done is win three league titles and go 17-5, 17-4 and 18-4 in the past three years," said DiMarino. "I love these guys. They gave it all they had and it's going to be hard saying goodbye.

"I would've loved a shot at Watertown (in the next round), but Pentucket played a great game. Can't take anything away from them."

James Lustig was terrific down low for the second straight game, dropping 13 points (6-of-10 shooting) and pulling down 5 rebounds in a strong all-around effort for Hamilton-Wenham. Cole Dwyer added 12 points and a team-high 16 rebounds and Jake Lanciani chipped in 10 points and five steals, while Alex Renaud and Cam Grinnell also played phenomenal in the loss.

Hamilton-Wenham waves goodbye to seniors Adrian Forzyk, Kevin Pham, Renaud, Max Vredenbergh, Cam Peach, Grinnell, Dwyer, Lanciani, Lustig and Yanni Moraitis. Versatile starting point guard Billy Whelan -- who scored eight points to go with nine assists, five steals and three rebounds Saturday night -- returns to lead an inexperienced Generals' group next winter.  **SISTER ACT: Irons siblings score both goals as Masconomet blanks Marblehead**[**By Matt Williams Staff writer**](https://www.salemnews.com/users/profile/Matt%20Williams)**, Salem News
Feb 27, 2018**HAVERHILL — Iron sharpens iron and the Masconomet girls hockey team was fortunate to have not just one but two Irons in the fire when they opened the Division 1 state tournament Tuesday afternoon.

Sisters Kate, a senior captain, and Erin Irons scored both goals to send the No. 9 seed Chieftains to a 2-0 win over league rival Marblehead at Valley Forum."It's a great moment, great for Georgetown. I think my sister is the only other Georgetown kid we've had on the team," said Kate Irons, who plays at Masco on the co-op program. "The two of us scoring in the same playoff game is something we'll always remember."

Unbeaten in their last eight games, the Chieftains (16-3-2) advance to face the winner of Wednesday's St. Mary's/Peabody contest in the D1 'Sweet Sixteen' (likely on Saturday). They were outshot by a hard-skating

Marblehead team that finished the season 10-7-1 by a fairly healthy 32-11 margin Tuesday, but got a flawless performance from sophomore Molly Elmore in net.

"Molly was unbelievable, as usual," said Masco coach Ryan Sugar. "Every team has first game playoff jitters and I think ours lasted a little longer than we wanted them to. Marblehead dominated that first period."

The Lady Headers had 15 of their 32 shots in that opening 15 minutes despite being shorthanded twice. Masco didn't even record a shot on goal at even strength in the first period, but Elmore was poised in smothering every chance that came her way to earn her first career playoff shutout (and fourth career playoff win).

"She does a great job controlling rebounds and they're really good about boxing out in front of her," Marblehead coach Chris Wells said of what makes Elmore so tough to crack. "We had open looks but she stuffed them. We couldn't get that one goal we needed to really put them on their heels."

The elder Irons put Masco on top just 45 seconds into the middle period, artfully tipping fellow captain Sami Kelleher's shot through the legs of Lady

Header goalie Grace Bertagna. Getting the lead after such a rough first frame put the juice back in Masco's legs.

"Kate's real smart in front of the net and now she's got 50 career points," said Sugar. "She's tough, she's physical, she can battle along the boards or in front. Wherever she needs to be on the ice, we know she's going to be there.

Midway through the period, Masco's breakout connected. After a D-to-D pass from Riane Vatcher and Anna Behringer sent Erin Irons streaking up the wing, she rifled a shot home for a 2-0 lead and all the scoring that the Chieftains needed to advance.

"We knew we had to pick things up," said Kate Irons. "That first step is always the toughest one to get going and get into those deeper rounds, so it feels pretty good to get that done."

Marblehead kept the pressure on with eight shots in the second period and nine more in the third. Grace Moroney, the team's only senior, created some good chances for Sydney Cresta, but too often the Masco defense closed down the shooting lanes shortly before the Lady Headers could pull the trigger.

"Sydney's someone you're nervous about every time she's on the ice," Sugar said. "When she's coming through the middle of the slot, you just want everybody to jump on her."

Young defenders Abby Kalinowski (freshman), Juliette Pierson (middle school) and Caroline Kinne (junior captain) had outstanding games for Marblehead as far as possessing the puck and making good decisions went. The loss stung for Marblehead, which hasn't won in the playoffs since 2009, but the experience gained by so many young players was a net positive.

"I told the girls to look around the room. We're losing one senior, maybe one or two to prep school, and then we have a pretty good team coming back. We could be poised to make some noise next year," Wells said. "The effort and progress the girls made, all the hockey knowledge they picked up, I'm really happy with."

**Generals strong season comes to a close at North Reading
By Jean DePlacido Correspondent, Salem News
Feb 28, 2018**

NORTH READING — The Lady Generals gave it their all, fighting for everything right to the end, but couldn’t pull off a big upset over a powerful North Reading team in the opening round of Division 2 North.

The Hornets were buzzing right from the start, scoring the first nine points before Madison Rivers made a layup to put H-W on the board.

North Reading, the No. 5 seed (16-5), played good defense, and kept 12th seed HW out of the paint in the early going. The home team also moved the ball around well to set up their shots, and enjoyed a 13-5 lead at the end of the first quarter.

Hamilton-Wenham heated up in the second quarter with a 7-2 run started by Jacqueline Fibbe’s trifecta. Cecily Szady (11 points) and Lauren Flynn hit back to back buckets to cut the deficit to six points, 18-12. Flynn’s basket came after Isabelle Dolan forced a turnover.

“When we cut it to six I thought momentum was changing,” said HW coach Jon Flanagan. But they came down the court with two big baskets to get the lead right back up. If we could have hit a couple of shots it might have made a difference.

“This was a tough match up for us, but we put together a game plan that would keep us in the game if we could execute. It was a matter of scoring some baskets, but we turned the ball over too many times. Part of that is a testament to their defense.”

The Hornets went on an 11-0 run led by Mia DeNofrio, who had a game-high 14 points, Casey McAuliffe and Victoria Grasso with seven points apiece. By halftime North Reading had a 31-16 lead. DeNorfrio opened the second half by canning a shot from downtown, and Julia Howse came off the bench to score seven points including a trey.

Heading into the fourth quarter the Lady Generals were down by 21 points, but they never stopped diving on the floor for loose balls or playing tough defense.

“Our defense played well the whole game,” said Flanagan. “North Reading hit shot big shots, especially the 3’s, while we missed some layups or shots rimmed out.”

H-W is a very young team with three senior leaders in Szady, Flynn, and Fibbe.

“I can’t say enough about those three,” said Flanagan. “For them to persevere over all the difficulties they faced says a lot about them. I’m proud of their efforts to get this far. Nobody expected us to do anything, but they played hard right to the end.”

**Generals pull away late, move on to quarter finals
By Austin Woolman  Staff Writer, Salem News
Feb 27, 2018**SOUTH HAMILTON — Tournament victories aren't guaranteed to any teams, regardless of their regular season success. A heavily favored squad could enter the postseason and easily have their season cut short by a scrappy underdog — anything goes in the postseason.

What matters in win-or-go-home contests is how you finish, and Hamilton-Wenham's boys basketball team clearly understands the importance of a strong finish.

The Generals defeated Wilmington 70-46 in their first round playoff match. In the final 13 minutes, Hamilton-Wenham doused their opponent with 24 points and a flurry of forced turnovers to close out the Wildcats' season.

"Playoff games never come easy," said Generals head coach Mike DiMarino. "It was a great atmosphere tonight. The whole community comes out for these games and we needed it tonight. We got contributions from a bunch of guys tonight ... it was a great tournament win."

While Hamilton-Wenham cruised to victory in the fourth quarter, the first three and a half quarters presented a sloppy battle in the paint. Heading into the half, the Generals only led the Wildcats by a score of 36-30. Wilmington gave the Generals an impressive fight in the first half, and DiMarnio acknowledged their effort.

"Wilmington plays hard," said DiMarnio. "They gave us trouble, made the game physical, tried to muck it up under the hoop ... and you know what? All the credit to them. They deserve it."

However, when games unfold in this sort of fashion, a hoop team needs its big men to battle through the trenches — and Hamilton-Wenham's James Lustig did just that.

The 6-foot-4 senior finished with 15 points and 10 rebounds and provided the Generals with the morale boost they needed in the matches first two frames. DiMarnio could barely contain his enthusiasm when talking about his three-year varsity player.

"I love this kid," said DiMarnio. "He's the best big guy I ever coached. He can score inside, can score outside and can grab a ton of boards. He looked like Bill Walton out there tonight!"

When asked about the importance of a big man presence in physical contests like this, and if he takes pride in that role, Lustig humbly deflected his stellar effort to his teammates.

"I don't really think about my role as being essential," said Lustig. "I just try and give the best effort I can and grab as many boards as I can, and all the guys gave a great playoff effort tonight. Giving that sort of effort is what's on my mind, and that's whats on all of their minds too."

After the Generals found some separation at the end of the third quarter, their offense finally found sustained rhythm in the final eight minutes. Hamilton-Wenham finished the game with four players in double figures, including a game-high 17 points from Billy Whelan. DiMarnio and Lustig discussed the importance of Whelan to their team.
"Billy's fantastic," said DiMarnio. "He's our floor general. As his offense goes, so does the whole teams. He's able to create offensive opportunities for us at any given time."

"I've been playing with him forever," said Lustig. "He's a great shooter, and has amazing instincts on the pick-and-roll. If he's open, he'll find you."

The Generals now await the winner of Wednesday night's playoff date between Pentucket and Amesbury. DiMarnio knows that both teams will provide challenges, but that his boys will be ready.

"They're both great teams," said DiMarnio. "They both can shoot, both well coached, like to make the game physical and shoot threes. It'll be tough, and we'll have to clean some things up, but the one advantage we have is that we'll be home. Whoever we play, it's going to be a great experience."

 **Girls hockey tournament: Preview
By Matt Williams Staff writer, Salem News
Feb 24, 2018**

For No. 9 seed **Masconomet**, it's a complete role reversal of last year. This time, it's No. 24 **Marblehead**that comes in with a long fruitless stretch against a league foe, looking to pull an upset in the third meeting of the season.

The Lady Headers haven't beaten the Chieftains since December 2011, an 0-11-2 skein, and haven't won a playoff game since 2009. They're led by the top line of junior captain Sydney Cresta (32 points) flanked by Bella Peters (25 points) and Grace Moroney (24). Marblehead won its last two games of the regular season but will have been off for 10 days when the puck drops Tuesday.

The Chieftains, Northeastern League champs with a program record 15 regular season wins, are aiming to match or exceed last year's trip to the state semis. Unbeaten in its last seven games, Masconomet has four career 50-point scorers in captains Sami Kelleher (18-8-26 this winter) and Kate Irons plus senior wing Lexi Rosenbaum and junior Abby Gendron (14-12-26 this winter).

Masco also has an experience edge in net. Sophomore Molly Elmore (.937 save percentage) will be making her fifth playoff start and was arguably the MVP of last year's tourney. Marblehead is backstopped by Grace Bertagna, who's had an outstanding season with a 2.00 goals against average and four shutouts.

In both meetings this season, Marblehead outshot the Chieftains despite losing by scores of 3-2 and 5-2.

The winners of the Peabody/St. Mary's and Masconomet/Marblehead tilts would then be on track to play each other in the Round of 16. A potential meeting with undefeated No. 1 Shrewsbury in the state quarterfinals then awaits.

**Boys hockey playoff pairings:** **Preview**
**by Phil Stacey Executive Sports Editor, Salem News**

**Feb 24, 2018**Back in the playoffs after an 11-year absence, **Hamilton-Wenham**(8-7-5) drew the No. 10 seed and will face seventh ranked Newton South (10-6-3) Wednesday in Woburn at 8 p.m.Balance has worked wonders for the Generals, who have four shutouts and a 2.35 GAA from sophomore Finn Brophy in goal; steady defense from the likes of senior captain Kim Shaw (4-10-14) and juniors Clint Gourdeau (3-8-11), Luke McClintock (3-6-9), Mark Roselli (0-6-6) and Tucker Apgar (0-3-3); and scoring provided across the board from the likes of captain Cam Vautour (11-12-23), junior Aidan Daly (17-8-25), senior Jack Greenwald (7-8-15), sophomore Matt Dearborn (6-8-14) and juniors Henry Jones (1-9-10) and Will Hogan (4-5-9). "I'm very proud of the boys," H-W coach Rob Ryan said. "All of their hard work has paid off. The boys need to stick to their game; it's one shift at a time. There are no passengers ... it will take a team effort, five guys playing each zone of the game."

# Hamilton-Wenham boys hockey team earn tourney bid

**By Dom Nicastro / Correspondent, HW Chronicle**

**Posted Feb 23, 2018 at 2:31 PM**What’s it like to go through a high school hockey season with zero wins?Very frustrating, it turns out.“I would get very frustrated last year,” said Aidan Daly, a Hamilton-Wenham Regional High School boys hockey player whose program suffered a winless season last winter in its return to varsity after several years off.How did he and teammates take out that frustration?They worked. And worked some more. They knew there would be no repeat of Year 1 for the coming season.“We had a lot of offseason work and knew coming into this year we had a chance to win games,” Daly said. “And we have been able to show it. We have good momentum, and we are able to fight back in games which shows heart.”

Call it heart. Call it perseverance. Call it, well, winning.

That’s what the Hamilton-Wenham team has done this season: win. The team won its eighth game of the season Monday, Feb. 19 – 6-4 over Pentucket – and that clinched a spot in Division 3 North boys hockey tourney.

“We really came together as a team towards the end and rallied around each other,” Cam Vautour said of his team’s Feb. 19 win. The team improved to 8-6-5 with a scheduled season finale coming against Lynn, a solid Division 3 team, in the championship of the Newburyport Bank Classic.

Hamilton-Wenham trailed 3-1 against Pentucket heading into the third but scored five goals in the final period.

Vautour himself had a hat trick in the third period alone, including an empty-netter, and Daly had the other two goals in the final 15 minutes. They each added an assist in the period as well, and Kit Shaw picked up his second helper of the night in the final period.

Griffin Penn added a goal and an assist in the game for the Generals.

“We went down early,” Vautour said, “and we knew our tourney berth was on the line so we fought back in the third and scored five goals.”

Daly called it a huge accomplishment as the team was down 3-1 after the second.

The win represented the fourth consecutive game in which Hamilton-Wenham registered a win or a tie. Heading into their season finale, the Generals had only one loss in seven games. In that span, they’ve scored 26 goals while allowing 16.

“It feel amazing to make the tournament,” said Hamilton-Wenham goalie Finn Brophy. “But we know we still got a lot of work to be done. But it feels awesome to accomplish this with this team because it’s been a goal of ours for a long time now.”

Brophy isn’t going to forget last year any time soon. The team has surely moved on from the winless season, but there were plenty of lessons to be learned. One of them was remembering how they felt during the down times.

“The losses from last year were tough,” Brophy said. “It was really frustrating letting in 10 goals in a game as a goalie, and as a team we were all frustrated. We put the hard work in and were motivated to win this year.”

# Boys basketball tournament: PreviewBy Nick Giannino Staff Writer, Salem NewsFeb 23, 2018DIVISION 3In their first year competing at the D3 level after moving up from D4, Hamilton-Wenham (17-3) claimed the No. 3 seed in this 15 team bracket.The deep and talented Generals are a favorite to advance to the sectional final, and will begin their quest at a title by hosting No. 14 Wilmington (5-15) on Tuesday at 7.Despite concluding the regular season with a tough setback to Winchester, H-W is playing some of their best basketball down the stretch. Should they move on, the Generals would face the winner of No. 6 Pentucket (14-6) and No. 11 Amesbury (7-13).

**Girls basketball tournament: Preview
By Austin Woolman Staff writer, Salem News
Feb 24, 2018**

Hamilton-Wenham Generals: North Division 2, 12th seed
2017-18 Record: 11-9
All-Time Tournament Record: 12-12
First Round Opponent: North Reading (15-5) at North Reading

After stumbling to a 4-6 start, the Generals won seven of their last ten games and earned a Cape Ann Baker League championship. Hamilton-Wenham, in spite of losing head coach Jon DeMarco just days before the regular season, were able to put the pieces together at just the right time to punch their tournament ticket.

The CAL Baker champions relied on the leadership of seniors Lauren Flynn, Jacq Fibbe, and Ceciily Szady during their 2017-18 campaign. They also had the benefit of acquiring veteran head coach Jon Flanagan after the departure of DeMarco.

# Last season, the Generals were only one game better than this year’s 11-9 finish. However, Hamilton-Wenham caught fire during the tournament and made an appearance in North Division 2 Finals. If they want to mirror that run they’ll have to first win against North Reading in the opening round — a team they lost to in the regular season

# Hamilton-Wenham girls basketball team clinch CAL Baker Division title

**By Dom Nicastro / Correspondent**

**Posted Feb 22, 2018 at 3:47 PM**

For a brief period of time this season, the Hamilton-Wenham girls basketball team did not know who would coach their team.

Just about three months later, they are Cape Ann League champions for the first time since 1994. The Generals won the CAL Baker Division with a 65-36 win over Georgetown on Friday, Feb. 16 at home, the same night they clinched a berth in the Division 2 state tourney.

Uncertain future around Thanksgiving time? You could say that when five-year coach Jon DeMarco stepped down on Day 1 of the season because of personal reasons.

But in swooped Jon Flanagan, a teacher at Swampscott High School who for over a decade or so led the Gloucester girls basketball team to two North championship appearances that included one title.

Flanagan was named coach of the Generals this season after the school went through the proper hiring procedures. Flanagan had been out of the coaching circles for a few years.

But neither he – nor the Generals – showed signs of growing pains this season. It may have been slow out of the gates when the team lost three out of four games in December and ended the first month 3-4.

But this is nowhere near a sub .500 team.

Here they are, on top of the CAL Baker and at 11-8 overall (on an 8-4 run since starting 3-4) heading into their last scheduled regular season game: Tuesday, Feb. 20 against Melrose in the championship game of the Patton tourney. The Generals beat Haverhill, 57-41, in the opening round.

“They have really come together,” Flanagan said. “They are more efficient offensively, play hard consistently and are cutting down on mistakes. They are starting to play pretty well. They are really a pleasure to coach.”

Improvement, yes. But the bigger story here is perseverance. For the Generals to overcome a stunning move for the program and pick up and just start playing competitive basketball was impressive, for sure.

“I am just so proud of our team for getting to where we are,” said senior captain Lauren Flynn, who had 12 points in the CAL Baker-clinching win over Georgetown. “I did not expect such a rewarding and fun season. We started the first day of the season feeling confused, upset, nervous, so many different feelings. We are so lucky to have coaches Flanagan, (Mark) Cole, Meghan (Cole) and Erica (Pasquarelli) who put everything aside to bring us together and have faith in us.”

Hamilton-Wenham opened this season with a huge victory: a 39-35 win over the defending Division 3 North champions, Amesbury. It proved to be a huge win because that victory, combined with a 38-27 win at Amesbury Jan. 19, completed the season sweep of the Indians. Amesbury finished in second place behind Hamilton-Wenham.

Despite the season-opening win, it wasn’t the easiest of beginnings. It took time to adjust to a new coaching style on the fly, said senior captain Cecily Szady.

“In the beginning of the season we were not comfortable with their coaching and playing style,” Szady said. “And being expected with only a week of preparation to go out and play at the beginning of the season was a definite challenge. The progress we have made is outstanding. The coaching staff can give a player a glance and that player will know exactly what to do or what they need to improve on. It’s crazy how a team can connect quickly with coaches, especially great coaches like the ones we have. We are super excited to have such positive and enthusiastic coaches this year.”

It helps to have good players, too. Szady had a monster game against Georgetown, with an 18-point, 12-rebound effort. Jacqueline Fibbe added seven.

In the Haverhill win on Monday, Feb. 19, Fibbe added 16 points, and Szady contributed another double-double with a 10-point, 12-rebound effort. Jemma Shea added nine, and Maddy Rivers eight. Olivia Currier contributed greatly off the glass.

Flynn credited the underclassmen for “filling big shoes” and stepping up their game this season.

“We’ve had a goal this season to play all 32 minutes of the game and not let down for any moment,” Flynn said. “Obviously this is a tough accomplishment but we have been getting really close. Having two goals to complete on Friday night -- the CAL Baker championship and clinching a spot in the tournament -- made us realize we had to dig in from the first moment and play our own game. We had to make the other team play to our tempo, and this is something we really did on Friday.”

# Marblehead co-op girls hockey team ready for state tourneyBy Scot Cooper / Correspondent, HW ChroniclePosted Feb 22, 2018 at 3:44 PM

After dropping two tough games to two very good opponents last weekend, the Marblehead High girls co-op hockey team finished the regular season with two impressive wins as they head into the 2018 playoffs.

Seeds will be announced this coming weekend, with the 10-6-1 Headers happy to be back in the big dance after missing out in 2017.

Head coach Chris Wells said Friday night’s comeback win over Peabody was probably the biggest win if the season, for his team.

“I think the team definitely started to click as our season progressed, and we are ready for the tournament,” said Grace Moroney. “Our coach has done a great job making sure to keep things uptempo and incorporating new plans as we go. I am looking forward to the tournament and proud of my teammates for working so hard to get where we are.”

Heading into the third period Friday night at the Connery Rink, Marblehead was looking at a 1-0 deficit against the Tanners and their All-Star goalie Abby Buckley. Buckley made 25 stops, but four shots in the third got by her, and Header goalie Grace Bertagna made 9 of her 14 saves down the stretch as Sydney Cresta scored twice and the winners got single goals from Chloe Trudel and Bella Peters to ice the game.

The win over Peabody was especially sweet for the whole team, extracting some revenge for a 3-2 loss against the Tanners to open up the season back on Dec. 13. Grace Moroney, Abby Kalinowski, Bella Peters, Mia Salah and Sydney Cresta had helpers for Marblehead.

On the Cape Saturday night to play Nauset Regional, the home team Warriors were walloped by the Headers 7-1, to put an exclamation point on the regular season, keeping Friday’s intensity up for three periods Saturday night.

Isabell Amigo lead the way with three goals for the guests, with Cate Delaney, Sydney Cresta, Bella Peters and Juliette Piersol all finding the back of the cage as well. Elle Seller, Piersol, Chloe Trudel (2), Delaney (3), Maddy Digiovanni, Grace Moroney (2), Sydney Cresta and Abby Kalinowski doing the setting up for the winners.

“I was very pleased with the effort Friday night,” Wells said. “And we came out and played a very strong game Saturday night as well. Peabody is a very good playoff-caliber team, the kind of team we’re going to see in the tournament, so to come out and play very well against them is very encouraging.”

The victory couldn’t come at a better time after enduring a pair of tough 3-2 losses to both Archbishop Williams and Winthrop, last weekend.

″(That) was very, very frustrating,” Wells said. “We gave up a late goal against Archbishop Williams, and we fell apart late in the Winthrop game. I was pretty upset after those two losses, but the girls came out and had, what I thought was a great week of practice, and everything sort of came together in the Peabody game, especially in the third period, which I liked.”

According to the coach, the Peabody game was their best effort to date

“We played what I think was our best game of the year,” he said. “And the effort in the third period carried over into our game on Saturday, and we picked up another win.”

The team also held their own physically, which should bode well for the future.

“We were very physical, everyone on the team played and contributed, and that’s how we have to play in the tournament to be successful,” Wells said. “We played a good game against a good team Friday, and then we came out Saturday and never let them (Nauset) into the game.”

# Winchester pulls away from H-W, takes Patton crownBy Nick Giannino Staff Writer

 **Feb 20, 2018**

SOUTH HAMILTON — Triples rained from the rafters at Hamilton-Wenham High on Tuesday night, as the host Generals took on Winchester in the fifth annual General Patton boys basketball tournament final.

Ironically, the team with one-less trey wound up coming out on top.

Led by a balanced display of shooting from distance and spurts of equally impressive play down low, the visiting Sachems earned a hard-fought 70-57 triumph to take home the title.

The two teams combined for 21 long balls on the evening which led to a one-point game (30-29) at the half. But Hamilton-Wenham went cold from deep after the break and failed to get the necessary stops on the other end, ultimately running out of steam in the final frame.

"I think we relied a lot on the three in the first half; we hit seven threes and then came out (in the second half) and stopped executing our offense," said Generals' head coach Mike DiMarino, his team now 17-3 on the season and awaiting their draw in Division 3 North competition.

"I think we started settling for threes in the second half and when those started falling a little short our execution got poor. Give Winchester credit; they're a good team and they were able to capitalize and extend the lead."

While Winchester had the last laugh, the first 16 minutes of play belonged to Generals' junior captain Billy Whelan.

The shifty point guard drilled five of his game-high seven 3-pointers in the first half alone, including a span of three straight, as Hamilton-Wenham quickly erased an 8-point deficit to climb back to even. The southpaw hardly hit rim on any of his makes, and while Winchester slowed him down in the second half, he still managed to drill another two triples to keep the Generals within striking distance.

"(Whelan) was on fire," said Winchester (14-6) head coach John Fleming. "We talked at half about trying to slow him down just a little bit and I thought we were able to do that. We'll definitely get something out of this win; Hamilton-Wenham could be a state champion (in Division 3), so it was an important game for us heading into the tournament."

The third quarter proved to be the decisive one, as Winchester built as big as a 14-point lead. The advantage stood at 11 (53-42) heading into the fourth, and the hosts were never able to get it closer than nine at any point down the stretch.

Sachems' star guard Liam Fitzpatrick was tremendous for the second consecutive game, following up a 30-point outburst with 19 more and eight rebounds on Tuesday, while backcourt mate Joe McCarron got hot from deep with four bombs of his own en route to 18 points, seven rebounds and five assists.

Whelan finished with a game-high 25 points to go with three rebounds, five assists and two steals, while recently dubbed Player of the Year in the CAL, Jake Lanciani, chipped in 12 points, three rebounds and a pair of assists.

With the loss, Hamilton-Wenham finds themselves in at least a tie with Lynnfield at the top of D3 North, and should St. Mary's win out they would join them too, meaning the top seed will quite literally be a toss up.

Regardless of where they end up, DiMarino feels the competition down the stretch will only help them come tourney time.

"We scheduled these games (i.e. St. John's Prep, Winchester, etc.) on purpose to make sure we were tested," said DiMarino. "We want to expose weaknesses that we can work on while we wait to see who we're playing, and also get used to a tournament atmosphere. It's good for the kids to get out of the Cape Ann League a little bit and see what's out there."

**SALEM NEWS: Monday's area roundup: H-W hockey back in playoffs for first time in 11 years
Feb 19, 2018**

**BOYS HOCKEY**

**Hamilton-Wenham 6, Pentucket 4**: Erasing a deficit by scoring five times in the third period, including the game’s final three snipes, the Generals (8-6-5) returned to the postseason for the first time in 11 seasons while prevailing in the opening round of the Newburyport Bank Classic’s Gulazian Division. Senior captain Cam Vautour nabbed three goals and an assist while Aidan Daly had two goals, giving him a team-leading 17, as well as one assist. Sophomore Griffin Penn contributed his first goal of the season and assisted on another; captain Kit Shaw had two assists; and single helpers went to Henry Jones, Luke McClintock, Callum Hunt, Jack Greenwald, Matt Dearborn and Clint Gourdeau. Finn Brophy earned the ‘W’ in goal with 20 saves as his teammates rallied from a 3-0 deficit late in the second period.

**GIRLS BASKETBALL**

**Hamilton-Wenham 57, Haverhill 41**: The Generals (11-8) advanced to the finals of the Patton Tournament behind Jacq Fibbe’s 16 points. Others with big games included Cecily Szady (10 points, 12 rebonds), Lauren Flynn (10 points, 10 rebounds), Maddy Rivers (9 points) and Gemma Shea (8 points). Hamilton-Wenham will face Melrose Tuesday (6:30 p.m.) in the tournament final.

# Hamilton-Wenham track stars keep up the pace

**By Dom Nicastro / Correspondent, HW Chronicle**

**Posted Feb 15, 2018**

They’re going the distance

Becca Erhard and Jake Sturim like to ice skate together and catch the occasional horror flick.

And, when they have a free morning, the young couple can be seen grabbing some breakfast at the Depot Diner on Enon Street in Beverly: Becca with her plate of waffles; Jake working some French toast.

Oh, and in their spare time? They are excellent high school track and field runners – each in the 2-mile.

And they have some recent accolades to prove it.

Erhard, a senior on the Hamilton-Wenham Regional High School girls track team, finished second in the 2-mile race at the Cape Ann League championships Tuesday, Feb. 6 at the Reggie Lewis Center in Boston.

Sturim, a junior on Hamilton-Wenham’s boys track team, placed fourth in the CALs. Each earned points for their respective teams and represented the best individual performance for the Generals.

Erhard earned a medal because she finished top three, and Sturim just missed out with his fourth but did score points for his team. Each team finished at the bottom for the team event, but Erhard and Sturim made their mark.

Erhard finished with a time of 11:50.57, shy of the Hamilton-Wenham indoor school record (11:23.55) and less than five seconds behind winner Michaela Halloran of Amesbury (11:45.94). Sturim registered at 10:20.69, 16 seconds off the winner -- Newburyport’s Sam Acquaviva, who finished in 10:04.89 and is one of the state’s best distance runners.

“I would easily say she is the better runner,” Sturim said in a super wise choice of words. “She keeps reminding me. She’s been trying to break the school record while I have been just trying to keep up in most races.”

For Erhard, this is another tremendous feat in a senior year that started with a bang in the fall. She finished eighth in the Eastern Mass. Division 5 race to help the Generals to another team title.

The school record in the 2-mile was in her sights last week in Boston because she thought she’d have some competitive runners with whom to keep pace.

However, once the race at CALs began, she was in the lead “without much competition as I had anticipated. At this point my main goal was to medal and maybe compete for the win, and that’s exactly what happened.”

The tracksters are back at it at the Division 5 Eastern Mass. meet Thursday, Feb. 15.

Erhard said there is a lot of competition in that meet. She feels it’s the most “competitive division for the 2-mile. Besides improving my time, my goal is to stay with those top runners and secure a good position in the race.”

Sturim, meanwhile, said he was “a little shaken” heading into CALs because he had run a “poor 2-mile” in the prior race. He was unsure how he would fare.

Sturim decided to stick with a Triton runner (Liam Gay-Killeen) who had been posting times similar to his goal time: 10:15. It worked. Sturim finished only a couple of seconds behind the third-place Triton runner.

“I ran comfortably,” Sturim said. “I tried to pass him twice but he made it ahead of me shortly after both times, which I am alright with. He continued to push me to a 10:20 2-mile. It’s a little slower than what I was going for but still a personal best time, so I am very pleased with my performance.”

Sturim also has another runner pushing him to be better from time to time: the one who sits across from him eating waffles at the Depot Diner.

“We are super supportive of each other and cheer each other on in every race good or bad,” Erhard said. “I will say that we can get pretty competitive at practice at times.”

Also for Hamilton-Wenham, sophomore Gwyneth Fitzpatrick scored points for the Generals as she finished fourth in the 55-meter hurdles with a 9.10. The 4x200 meter relay consisting of Fitzpatrick, freshman Gaylan Ryus, and juniors Elizabeth Gasiorowski and Izzy Schwartz placed sixth in 1:53.92, which qualifies for the state meet on Thursday.

Hamilton-Wenham’s Anthony Pallazola (11th, long jump, 17-4) and Charles Butler (11th, 1,000, 2:55.13) had the best finishes outside of Sturim.

**Prep hangs on for win over Hamilton-Wenham
By Nick Giannino Staff Writer**

**Feb 14, 2018**

SOUTH HAMILTON — They had their moments, but the Hamilton-Wenham boys basketball team could never quite get over the hump against visiting St. John’s Prep on Wednesday night.

For the second time in as many years, the Generals played their Division 1 counterpart with determination and grit. But a sluggish start, a slew of missed layups and some lapses on defense ultimately led to a 55-44 defeat.

Head coach Mike DiMarino’s group remained within striking distance for the entire 32 minutes, and with just under two ticks to go it was a six-point contest. However, a turnover, common foul and subsequent technical allowed the Eagles to seal the deal at the free throw line.

“Give all the credit in the world to (St. John’s). John (Dullea) does a great job and they play great defense. There’s a reason they’re a top 10 team in the state.” said DiMarino, his team still in great shape heading into the tournament with a 15-3 record.

“That being said, we missed a lot of shots tonight, had 13 turnovers, missed seven free throws and had a couple stupid technicals late. When you’re playing a team of that caliber you don’t have to play perfect but you have to pretty much play mistake free basketball, and we didn’t.”

Every time it appeared the Eagles were well on their way to separating themselves and running away with things, H-W fought back. SJP led by 13 (29-16) at halftime, and pushed the advantage past 10 consistently in the third.

But a flurry of buckets to close out the third by Generals’ standout point guard Billy Whelan made it a seven point game heading into the final frame and gave the hosts some much needed momentum. Whelan scored eight of his team-high 14 points in the stanza, including a buzzer-beating, contested triple from the right wing.

“Billy just takes over when he has to,” said DiMarino. “He had a quadruple double, a triple double, and he was close again tonight. He can really dominate when he wants to and I’m excited we got him for another year. He’s a really special player.”

Unfortunately, Whelan’s third quarter heroics were for naught, as the Prep reserves opened the fourth with a 6-0 run of their own to pull away for good. Dullea went with freshmen Will Batchelder and Aidan Callahan in the backcourt, alongside sophomore Liam Dunfee, and seniors Christian Lamers and Patrick Sweetnam. The group delivered, something Dullea wasn’t surprised by.

“We needed a little bit of a change with our lineup there, and those guys are rotation guys anyways,” said Dullea. “They were able to go on a little bit of a run so it was nice to see that.”

Tommy O’Neil (17 points, 5 rebounds) led the Eagles in scoring once again, canning a trio of smooth jumpers while using his frame to drive the lane against smaller defenders, while Jarnel Snow-Guzman (11 points, 3 assists) hit a couple of big 3’s and played some stout D in the win. Still, Dullea would like to see his team pick up the offense down the stretch here as they enter the most important time of the season.

“That’s a good team,” said Dullea. “We knew it was going to be a battle, but we’re struggling to score to score right now. We’re playing better defense but our offense is not where it needs to be right now.”

Hamilton-Wenham was led by Whelan, who added four rebounds and four steals, as well as Jake Lanciani, who managed 10 points and five boards. But a 25 percent (14-55) clip from the field won’t win you many games and that was the case on Wednesday.