

Eagle finale upsets 7th-ranked Cheyney St.

By **BARNEY KOSAR**
Sports Editor

Although Coach Jerry Walke's basketball team did not enter a post-season tournament, the Ashland club displayed its best roundball of the season with a thrilling 108-107 overtime victory over the nation's seventh-ranked College-Division team, Cheyney State (Pa.) Saturday evening on the AC court.

The largest crowd of the year watched the Eagles finish their toughest schedule in AC history with a 19-7 mark. The 22-4 Cheyney team was selected for the Mid-East Regional Tournament last week.

The Cheyney Wolves ran up 6-2 and 16-8 leads with tremendous outside shooting before the Eagles, led by Earl Hill and Bill Higgins, came storming back for a 38-33 lead late in the first half. Cheyney's shooting star Antoine Harrison put the Wolves right back in the game as the half ended in a 50-50 deadlock.

Hill and Spivery left the game early in the second half with their fourth fouls but Ashland maintained as much as a five point advantage for 13 minutes of the second stanza. Ashland tied the game again at 92-92 with 2:30 remaining.

Cheyney State gained a 96-94 lead on an AC turnover, but "Rookie" Minter connected on a 15-foot jumper to tie the score. The Wolves took a shot with five seconds left but Higgins grabbed the rebound and the contest went into a five-minute overtime.

The Eagles quickly piled up a 108-101 advantage with 1:03 left as Thallman, Spivery, Higgins, Minter and Jones all contributed points. Cheyney exploded for a 108-107 game with :13 left but the Eagles controlled the ball and ran out the clock for the upset victory.

Freshman guard Bill Higgins led the Eagles with 29 points, only four short of a new Ashland single game scoring record. "The Thrill" finished his first collegiate season with 501 points while AC recordholder Larry Aulger scored 505 during the 1959-60 campaign.

Co-captain Rob Spivery ended his collegiate career with one of his best performances of the

man combined for 17 points and ten rebounds at the post position against Cheyney's 6'-10"

Their entire set-up is built on true class," concluded Walke.

The "press n' sprint" has

taken over the cagers as head coach and he was teaching a complete reversal . . . a running and speeded up version of the game.

It was slow to catch on. Sure, the Eagles opened the season with a 99-78 win over Walsh College, but the real test came in the next game. Akron University, now in the NCAA Mid-east Regional Tournament, offered a veteran club and showed it in an 84-64 win.

The Eagles patched up their pride and went out to win the next five games, averaging over 101 points in those games. Back to back losses to tournament-bound Eastern Michigan and Earlham set the season record at 6-3.

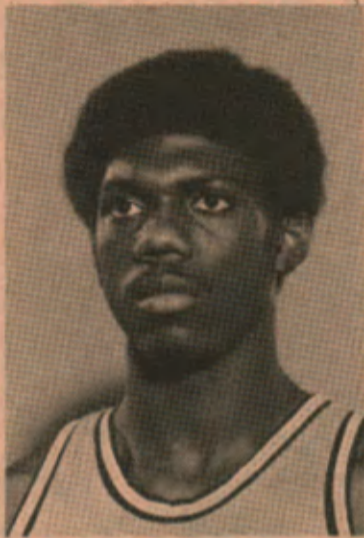
Then, all of a sudden, the learning process took hold. "The guys just seemed to start playing the way we had been coaching them; we started to run well, press well and cut down on our errors," pointed out Walke.

The result was a giant streak which saw Ashland winning 12 of its next 13 games and upping the season slate to 18-4. The lone loss during that time was to host Fredonia State University, 41-39, in a slow-moving contest.

Ashland put on one of its powerful showings in the 103-65 win over Shaw College.

The biggest move of the season came in the 98-83 win over St. Vincent when Walke inserted Kirk Minter into the starting lineup with Billy Higgins, beginning the combination which Walke called "the best pair of freshman guards in the state, and maybe the nation." Higgins scored 32 points in that game, aided by Minter's 12 assists, and they combined for 10 steals.

(Continued on page 11)



Co-captain David Jones



Co-captain Rob Spivery



Earl Hill



Dan Joyner



Todd McConnell



Earl Diddle

season. "The Hawk" scored 19 points and grabbed seven rebounds.

All-American Co-captain David Jones connected on only six of 29 attempts from the field but led the Eagles with 12 rebounds and finished with 14 points. Earl Hill scored 13 points and hauled down eight rebounds but was in foul trouble most of the game.

Dan Joyner and Dan Thall-

and 250-pound Bill Allen.

"We beat a great team," exclaimed the Eagle mentor, Jerry Walke. "Cheyney has one of the finest offenses around; they just keep firing right at you. But, under the circumstances, we played pretty good defense. They are just unstoppable.

"Cheyney has the classiest team and coaching staff that I have ever coached with or against.

taken hold at Ashland College, to the tune of a sweet 19.7 record as the Eagles wrapped up another powerful year on the hardwoods.

Things didn't exactly look promising with three early-season losses. Jerry Walke had just

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