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Lowell soldier remembered as a hero, a man who loved his life and his family

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by Emma Palova
Army Sgt. Lucas Beachnaw, 23, will be remembered as a hero by his family and friends.

Beachnaw, a 2004 Lowell High School graduate, was killed Wednesday by small arms fire in Afghanistan just a few months before he was scheduled to return home in August.

His mother, Jeanne Beachnaw, said he entered the army because it was the right thing to do for his country and the money would help with his future.

"He wanted to go to school," she said. "He went on to the army to serve his country."

Lucas Beachnaw first worked in the cleanup after hurricane Katrina and then he went into service in March of

2006. He was stationed on a base in Vicenza, Italy.

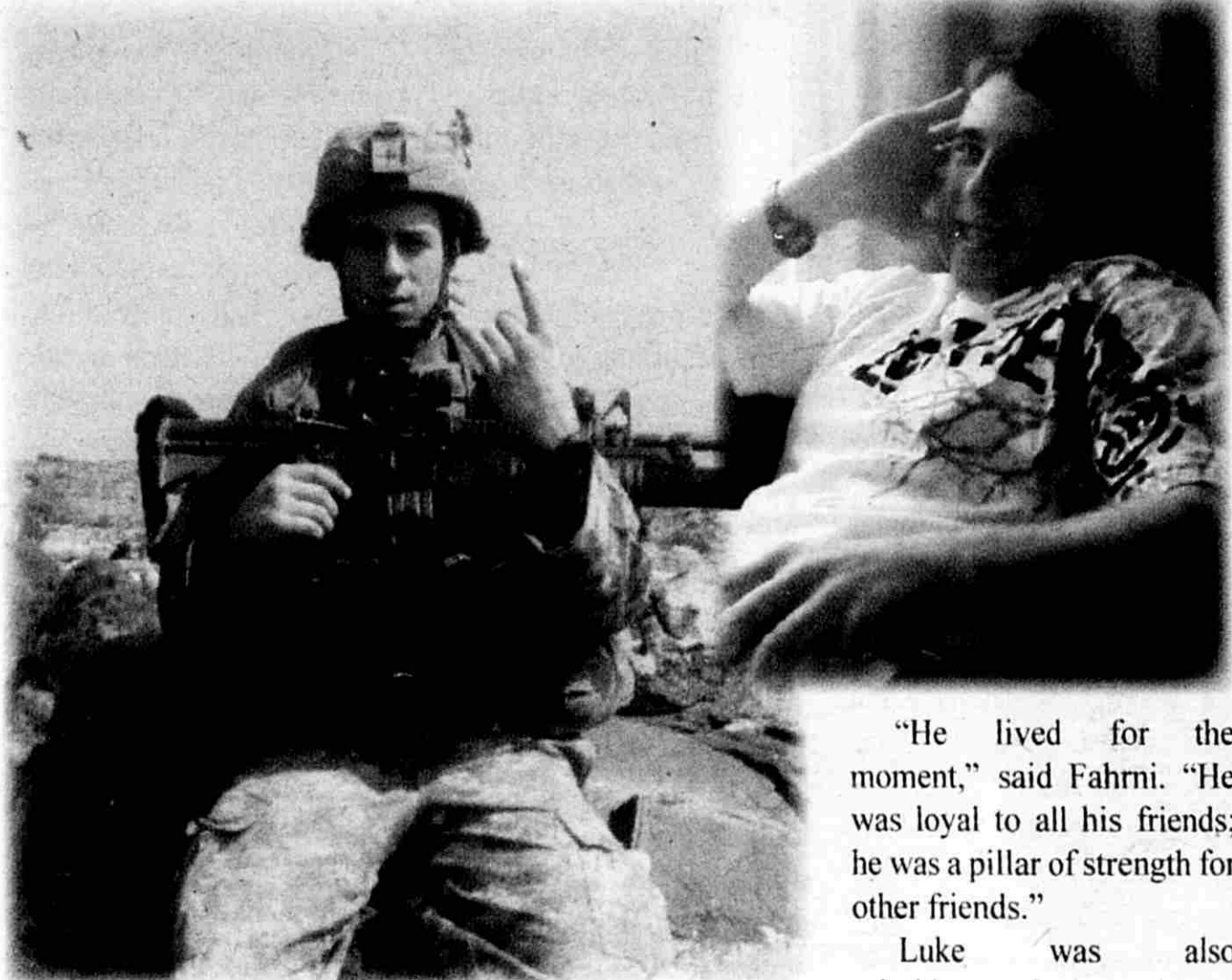
But, most of all he will be remembered for his great sense of humor.

"He was being a happy kid, loving every moment of life," said Jeanne Beachnaw.

She found out about her son's death Wednesday at 11 p.m. when the army knocked on her door. Lucas was the baby in the family and he was loved by his two older sisters, Jamie Beachnaw, 25 and Terra DeLong, 27.

"He liked being active and having fun," said DeLong. "He loved us, he loved to snowboard, fishing and hunting and motorcycles."

Sister Jamie Beachnaw agreed that Lucas definitely knew how to have a good time.



"He lived for the moment," said Fahrni. "He was loyal to all his friends; he was a pillar of strength for other friends."

Luke was also mischievous in a good way, according to Fahrni. "He was never malicious," she said. "I am a better person today for getting to know him."

The family is working on plans for a service for Beachnaw later this week.

"I will miss everything about him," said his mother Jeanne Beachnaw.

In lieu of flowers, the family has set up The Lucas Beachnaw Memorial Fund at Huntington Bank to offset the expenses of soldiers coming to Lowell for the services.

"He made everybody laugh," she said.

Lucas liked to play with Jamie's daughter, three-year-old Emma, according to his good friend of three years from the base, Melissa Horner. He also liked sushi and Mojitos.

"There's no way a force like Luke can be gone," said Horner. "I was devastated. It wasn't real. He always talked about his niece Emma."

While in Italy, Luke went snowboarding in the Alps. He called himself green, according to Horner.

"He was one of the funniest people I've ever met," she said. "He loved being a sniper."

You could always tell him in the crowd by a chip in the tooth in the front and by that famous big crooked smile on one side.

"He had a great smile," said his science teacher Amanita Fahrni. "You always laughed when you were around him."

Luke had posted on his Facebook "Live some day today."



Jamie and Jeanne Beachnaw and Terra DeLong.

Lowell man seeks help for Haiti earthquake victims

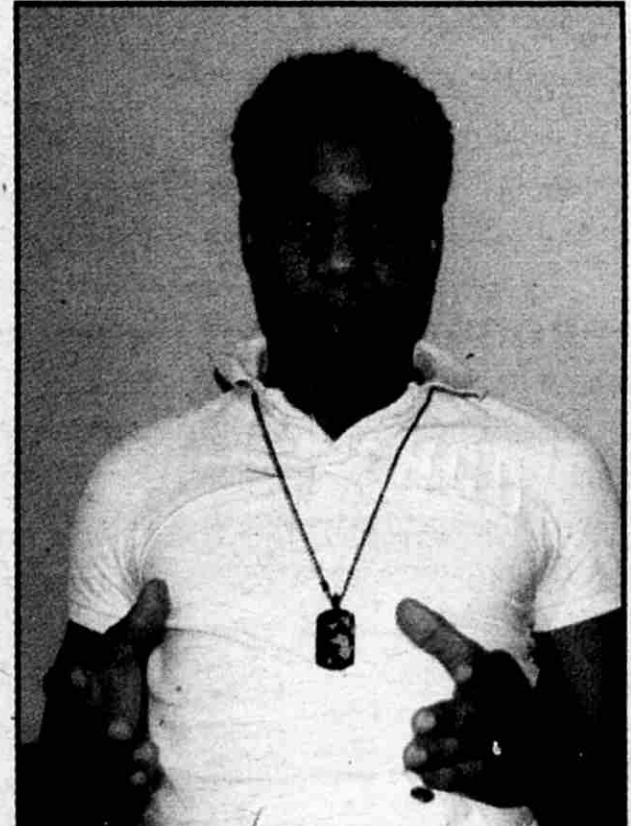
by Emma Palova
Nehemie Destine, a local refugee from Haiti, is seeking help for earthquake victims in his native country.

His father, Marcel Destine, is a missionary in Saint Marc, Haiti, located approximately 60 miles north of the Port-au-Prince, struck by the earthquake last week.

Marcel Destine oversees orphanages at seven different churches in Haiti and he

will be helping the victims. He visited the capital to check on the family.

"Everybody is okay,



Nehemie Destine urges people to help Haiti.

but there are dead people everywhere," said Destine. "It's chaotic right now. They need help."

And Destine is organizing that help locally through Ray of Hope for Haiti. The agency is collecting donations, the much needed water, food, clothing, medicine, toiletries and money.

Donations can be dropped off at the Lowell Area Chamber of Commerce. Anything that will not get shipped will get donated locally. Destine is also working with local churches to arrange for donations and with Youth With a Mission (YWAM) in Saint Marc.

Apart from the immediate need, in the long run the country will need big items to rebuild, such as building

materials, mainly cement mixtures, generators and power tools.

Destine is very concerned about his country and he stressed the need to finally break the vicious cycle of isolation. He likened the beautiful country, the pearl of Antilles, to a back alley.

"It's important to keep talking about this," he said. "The country has been isolated because it was the first black country to get independence."

Haiti gained independence from France in 1804. But it has suffered from corruption, kidnapping and violence.

"This will be a turning point in our history only if we keep shining a light on this back alley," he said. "It

needs to come out right now."

And Destine fears with the earthquake, the already poverty stricken country will suffer even more from looting. Even though UN peacekeeping troops are present in Haiti, Destine said that is not enough.

"There needs to be a strong foreign military presence to enforce humane ways of living," he said. "People are poor, angry, hungry and they need to survive."

Destine views the recent disaster as an opportunity for change.

"We have to keep helping and not let the story die," he said.

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Red Arrow SPORTS

Lowell lanced in finals of Rivers tourney

by Thad Kraus
It marked the first time in four years that a Lowell wrestling team did not come away with the goods at the Gary Rivers Memorial tournament.

The Red Arrows, the number two team in Division I, had their string of tourney wins snapped Saturday by the Lancers of Lakeshore-Stevensville, the number two team in Division 2, 33-30.

As is the case, more often than not when two super wrestling powers collide, the outcome comes down to bonus points.

"When wrestling big time matches against great teams, usually both teams win seven matches or one wins eight and the other six and

it comes down to managing bonus points," said Lowell wrestling coach Dave Dean.

The Lancers and Red Arrows divided the 14 matches with each club winning seven, however, Lakeshore tallied 12 bonus points to Lowell's nine.

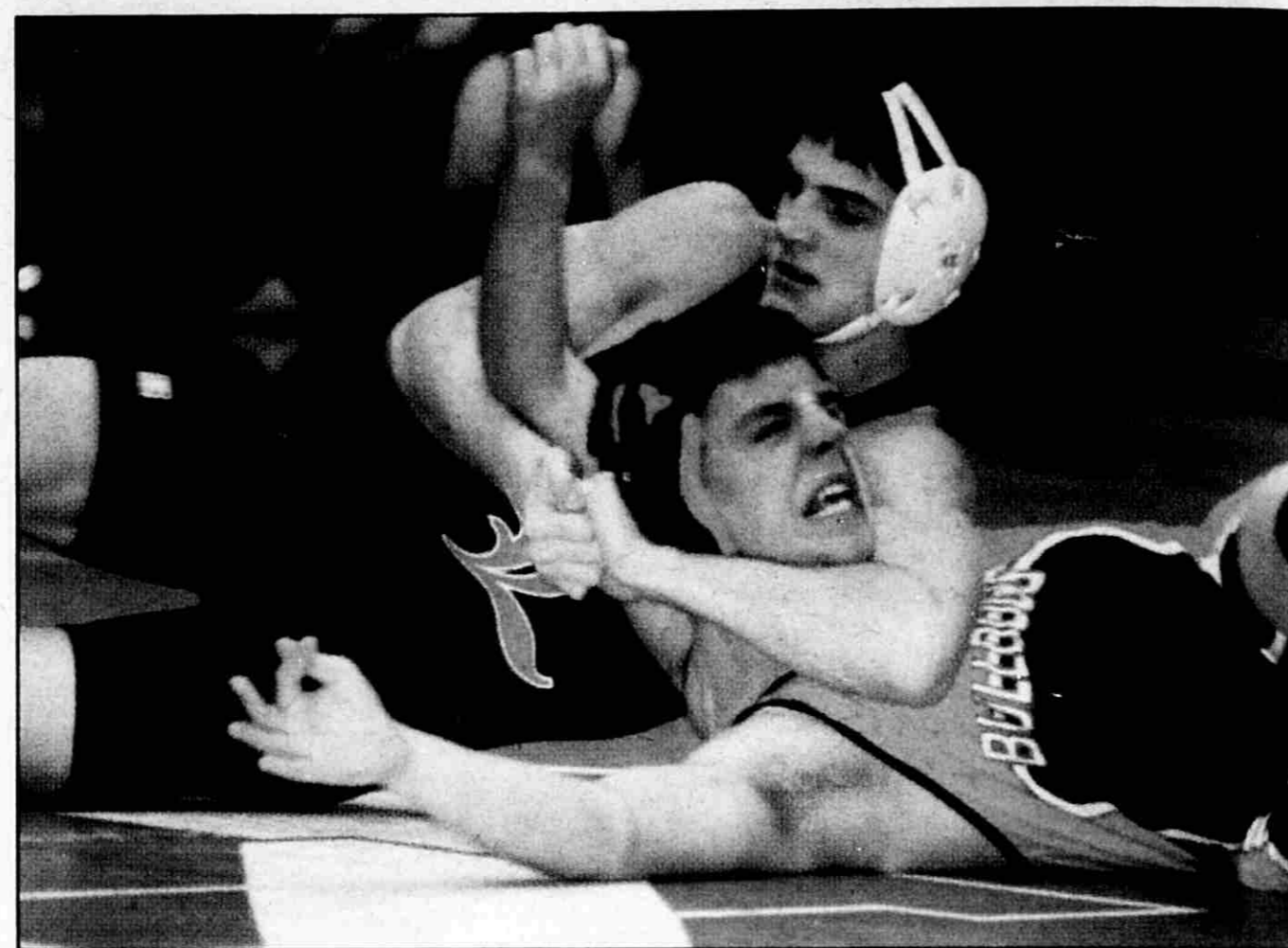
Lakeshore won the toss, preventing Lowell from matching up Jackson Morse against Nick Humes. That may have been worth an additional bonus point or two.

"It comes down to attention to detail in practice, staying in good position when battling under pressure and when the heat is on you not having breakdowns late in the match," Dean explained.

It was the first time since 2003 Lakeshore has left Lowell with the hardware. Something not lost on venerable coach, Bruce Bettendbender.

"We've been in the finals every year it seems and we just can't seem to get that edge," he explained. "It's a big win for us to come here and beat Lowell. They are a great team and well coached. They will be happy in Lancer land as soon as the word starts spreading down," Bettendbender said.

Lowell led 13-7 on the strength of wins by Gabe Dean (189), Ryan Olep (215) and Connor Kruse (HWT). Dean won a 4-2 decision. Olep earned a 15-5 major



Andrew Morse controlled his match throughout for a 12-4 major decision.

disqualification for stalling.

Lakeshore's strength in the lower weights then flexed its muscle.

Kyle Frese (103) recorded a pin in 39 seconds of the first period.

Tyler Daniels (112) posted a pin at 3:39 of the second period while Tyler Frese (119) won a 10-2 major decision propelling the Lancers to a 23-13 advantage.

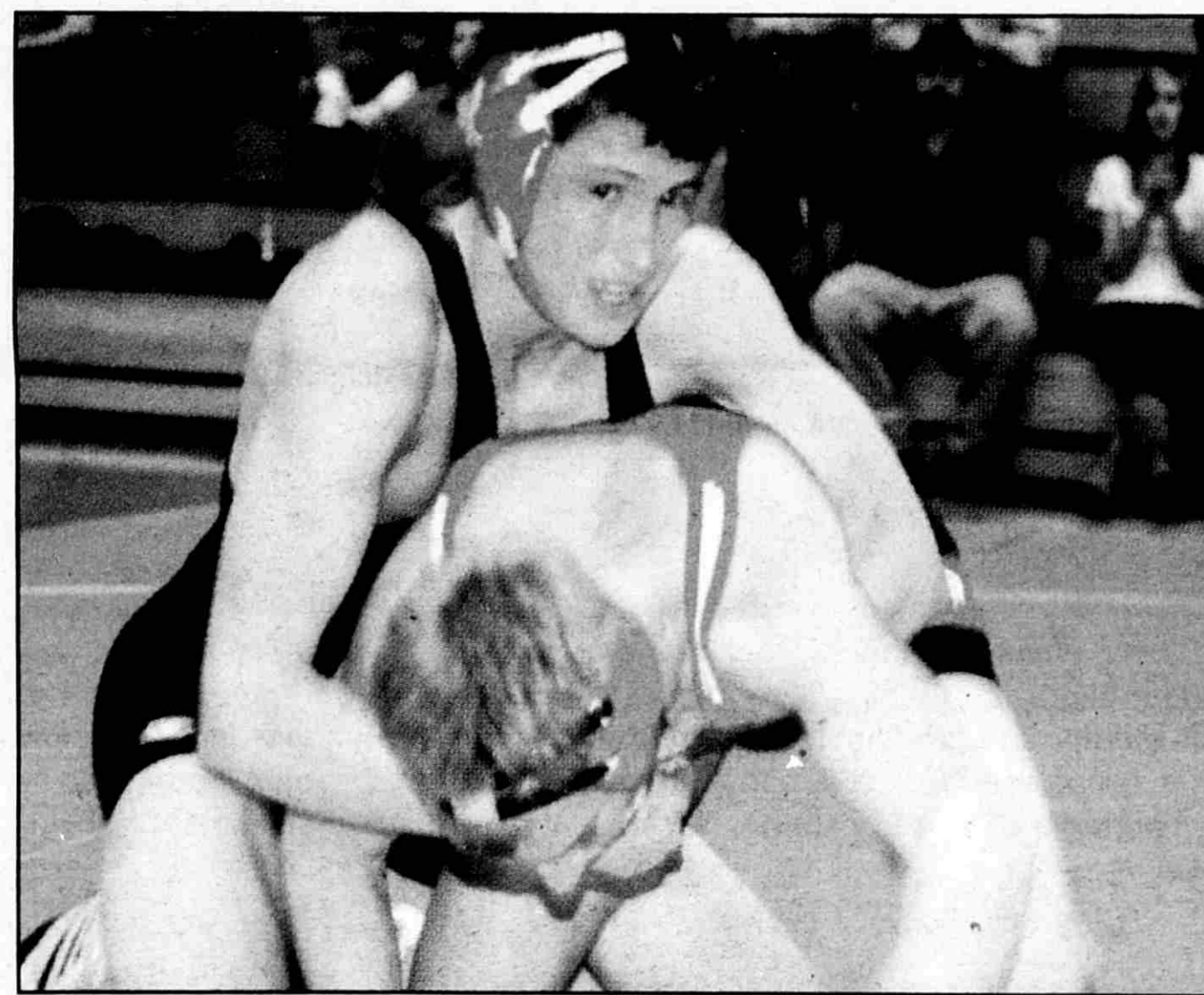
The two clubs split the next four matches. Lowell's Matt Griffioen won 8-7 at 125 pounds and Gabe Morse was a 12-4 winner at 135 pounds.

Those wins were offset by Lakeshore's Travis Dragoner's pin over Jake Fillingham at 130 pounds and Payne Hayden's 10-1 major decision against Jake Gould. His win gave Lakeshore a 33-20 lead, clinching the

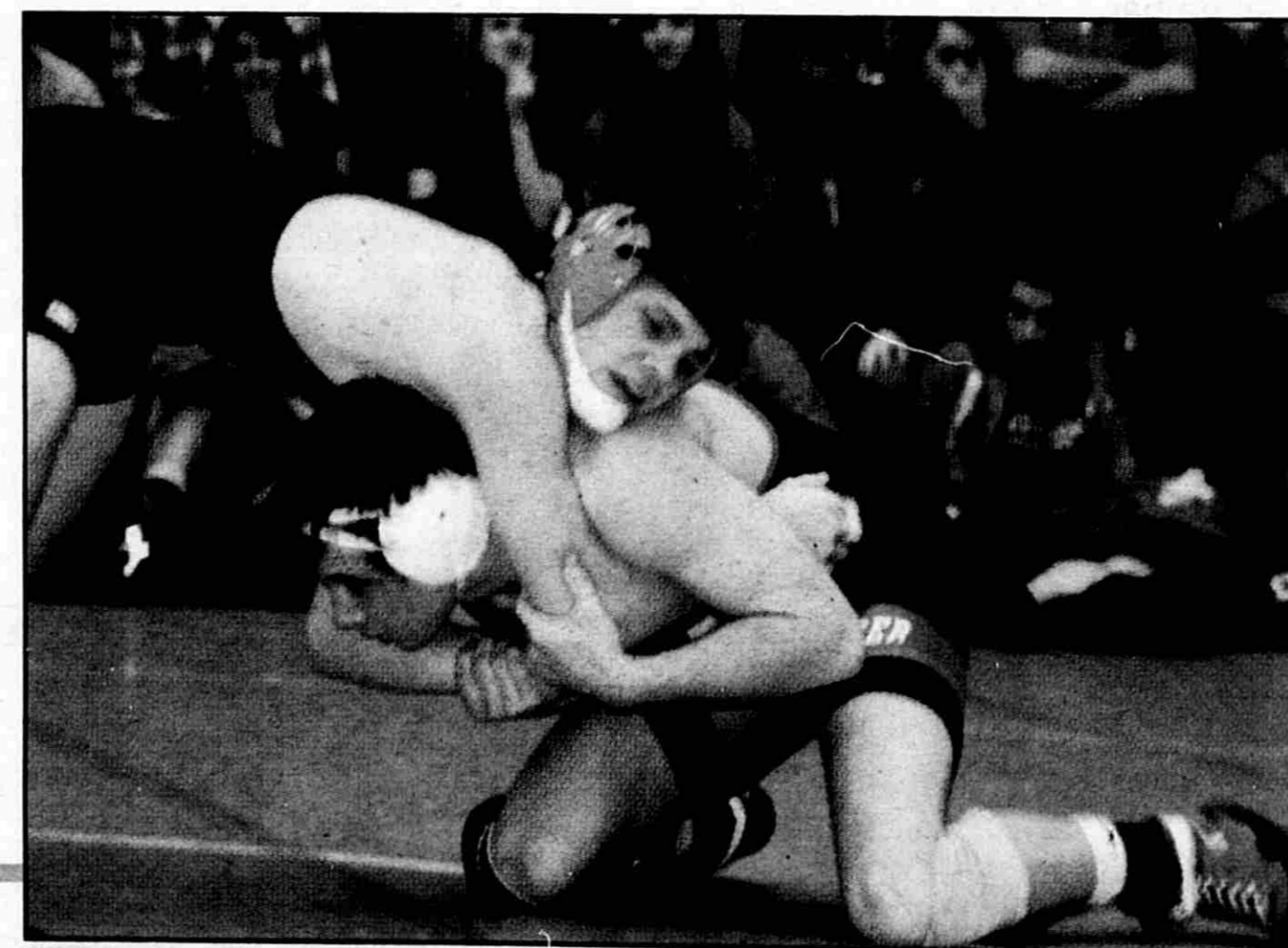
tournament championship.

The Red Arrows' last two wins of the day came at 145 when Andrew Morse defeated Caleb Nitz 12-4 and Jackson Morse pinned Connor Brand at 1:04 of the first period.

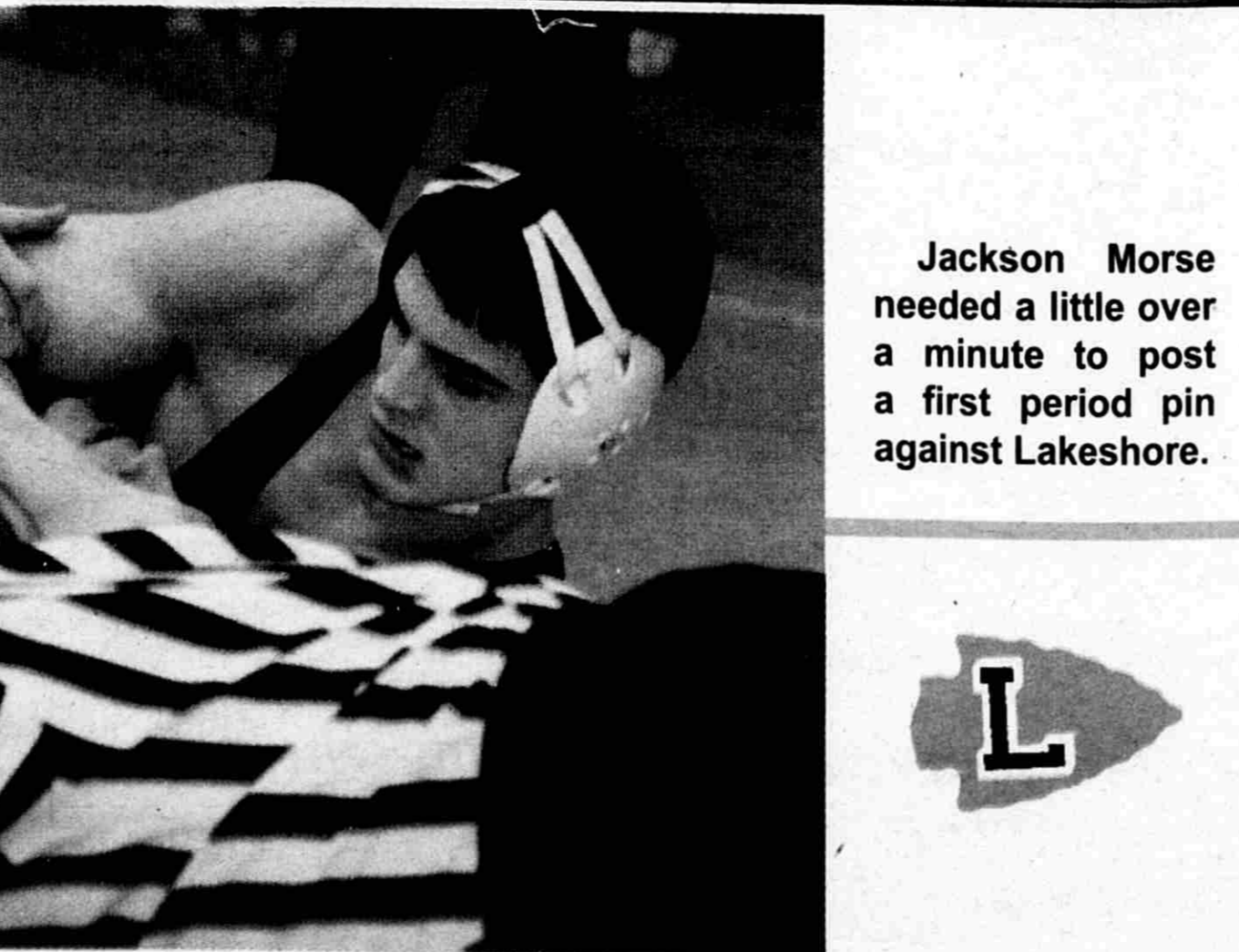
Leading up to the finals, Lowell defeated Coldwater 61-12; Fruitport 60-12; Hudsonville 54-14 and Allendale 39-29.



Jake Fillingham helped Lowell finish 4-1 at the Gary Rivers Memorial tournament over the weekend.



Lowell's Dan Fleet enjoys control early in his match against Lakeshore's Nick Humes.



Jackson Morse needed a little over a minute to post a first period pin against Lakeshore.

Individual Results:

- 103
Kyle Frese def. Scott Vanoosten (L) pin :39.
- 112
Tyler Daniels def. Zack Jeffries (L) pin 3:39.
- 119
Tyler Frese def. Calvin Meyer (L) maj. dec. 10-2.
- 125
Matt Griffioen (L) def. Brett Glaske dec. 8-7.
- 130
Travis Dragoner def. Jake Fillingham (L) pin 3:47.
- 135
Gabe Morse (L) def. Jordan Florian maj. dec. 12-4.
- 140
Payne Hayden def. Jake Gould (L) maj. dec. 10-1.
- 145
Andrew Morse (L) def. Caleb Nitz maj. dec. 12-4.
- 152
Jackson Morse (L) def. Connor Brand pin 1:04.
- 160
Nick Humes def. Dan Fleet (L) dec. 5-2.
- 171
Tyler Humes def. Jake Stehley (L) maj. dec. 15-5.
- 189
Gabe Dean (L) def. Zach Weer dec. 4-2.
- 215
Ryan Olep (L) def. Ryan Brandt maj. Dec. 15-5.
- HWT
Connor Kruse (L) def. Kyle Seear DQ (stalling).

Red Arrow SPORTS

Red Arrow gymnasts elevate skill and confidence

by Thad Kraus

As Lowell gymnasts learn new skills they are taking them to the meet.

Sometimes it lands a Red Arrow on her seat, but the learning and progression sits still for nobody.

For example, take Lauren Trasky, she is one of four

Red Arrows learning the fly away dismount on the uneven bars this year. While the result is not what she wanted, Lowell coach Michele DeHaan is pleased with the determination and persistence she sees in Trasky, Abby Rogalke, Vonda Kyes and Cassie Miles.

"It's great the girls are excited to learn and try new skills. The fly away dismount adds difficulty to their routines," DeHaan said.

At the same time, the coach stresses that it is not always what you're doing but how you're doing it. Doing the simple things well is also important.

On the vault, Lowell's Kelsey Teft has been practicing the tsukahara (a 1/2 twist going on with a one-and-a-half twist coming off the bar). She is on schedule to attempt it in a meet against Forest Hills Central this week.

RedArrow Morgan McVey earned "Beam Queen" honors this week for completing her routine without a fall. The routine scored a 7.95 against Kenowa Hills.

"Our team score against Kenowa was our highest this year. The nerves of our young gymnasts are going away," DeHaan explained.



Kelsey Teft works the high bar during her uneven bar routine.



Abby Rogalke works on the balance beam in Lowell's meet against Kenowa Hills.

Portage 129.125	Jorie Bennett 7.0	Bars
Lowell 121.675	Abby Rogalke 6.6	Kelsey Teft 7.675
Vault		Sarah Piell 6.85
Kelsey Teft 8.6	Floor	Abby Rogalke 6.65
Abby Rogalke 7.95	Kelsey Teft 9.225	Lauren Trasky 6.05
Morgan McVey 7.95	Morgan McVey 7.625	Beam
Sarah Piell 7.9	Abby Rogalke 7.55	Cassie Miles 8.15
Bars	Becky Chamberlain 7.35	Morgan McVey 7.95
Kelsey Teft 7.8		Kelsey Teft 7.9
Abby Rogalke 6.8	Lowell 123.975	Abby Rogalke 7.4
Sarah Piell 6.8	Kenowa Hills 133.65	Floor
Lauren Trasky 6.25		Kelsey Teft 9.175
Beam	Vault	Morgan McVey 8.025
Kelsey Teft 8.6	Kelsey Teft 8.85	Abby Rogalke 8.75
Cassie Miles 7.2	Morgan McVey 8.05	Sarah Piell 7.575
	Abby Rogalke 8.0	
	Sarah Piell 7.8	

Lowell loses games and two starters

by Thad Kraus

Lowell was outscored 12-1 in the second quarter and with it saw its chances of an upset over Grand Rapids Christian die.

The Red Arrow girls' basketball team built a 10-7 lead over the opening eight minutes before the wheels came off in losing their fourth game of the year, 47-28.

"After that first quarter we committed a lot of mental errors and had some turnovers," said Lowell basketball coach Danielle Gallert.

Lowell (5-4, 2-1) was outscored 24-7 over the middle two periods and trailed 31-17 going into the final quarter.

"Christian has a great basketball program and their kids work hard," Gallert said.

Her respect for the Eagles was returned by Christian coach Charlotte Muller.

"Any time you play against a Gallert-coached team they are going to play good, tough defense and be

scrappy," Muller explained.

Lowell played the top team in the O-K White

minus two of its starters, Taylor Flanagan and Kallie Holzhueter.



Lowell's Katie Tompkins finds room along the baseline in her drive to the bucket against the Eagles.

Flanagan was injured in a six-point loss to Union on Tuesday night while Holzhueter is out for the year with a knee injury.

Flanagan is also expected to miss the remainder of the season.

Brooke Curtis led all Red Arrow scorers with nine points while Katie Tompkins and Bryleigh Loughlin each contributed with six points apiece.

The Eagles, with the victory, are now 3-0 in the league and 9-0 overall.

In its 52-46 loss to Union the Red Arrows jumped out to an 8-2 lead before its starting point guard (Flanagan) was injured.

"I think the girls panicked a little after that," Gallert said. "They played well in spurts but never were able to get over the hump."

Tompkins led Lowell in scoring against the Red Hawks with 17 points. Curtis and Loughlin both netted 10 points each.



Bryleigh Loughlin scraps for an offensive rebound against Grand Rapids Christian.

Red Arrow SPORTS

Late three drains Lowell of victory against Union

by Thad Kraus
Grand Rapids Christian boys' basketball coach Mike Spicer feared two things heading into Friday's game at Lowell, a slow start by his Eagles and a fast start by the Red Arrows.
He got neither and he liked it!
"Our concern coming

in was to make sure we were ready to go from the beginning," Spicer explained. "The worst thing that could have happened is we get off to a slow start and Lowell starts quickly and then we've got a dog fight on our hands for 32 minutes."
Instead, the Eagles (7-1, 3-0) started fast and

controlled things throughout in a 49-28 O-K White win over Lowell.

Christian led 16-5 after one quarter; 28-10 at half and 41-19 after three quarters.

"Christian has size, speed and it can shoot," said Lowell basketball coach Jeff McDonald. "That's a dagger."

Lowell seemed a little short on all three against the Eagles, mainly shooting.

"We must be able to score the basketball. Defensively, I can live with what we did tonight," McDonald said. "We want games in the 40's, but tonight we didn't get there."

Isaac Tawney was the only Lowell player to score in double figures. The senior finished with 12.

In Lowell's 60-54 loss to Union on Tuesday, the Red Arrows found themselves down just two with a little under two minutes to play.

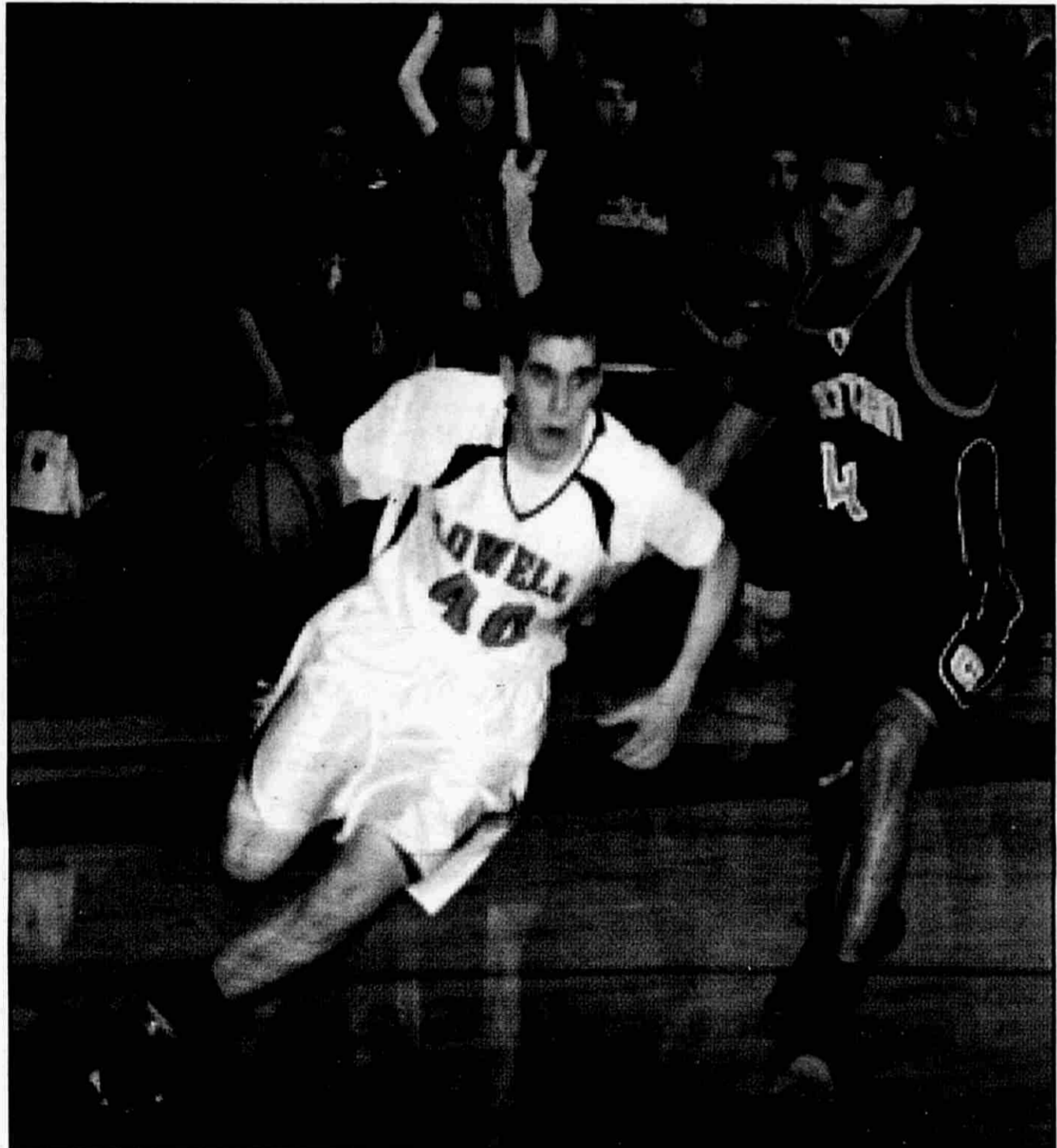
The Red Hawks, however, netted a one-pass triple to extend their lead to five. A lead Lowell was not able to overcome.

Tawney led all Lowell scorers with 20 points. Derek Cornish netted 13 and Jon Hanson tallied eight.

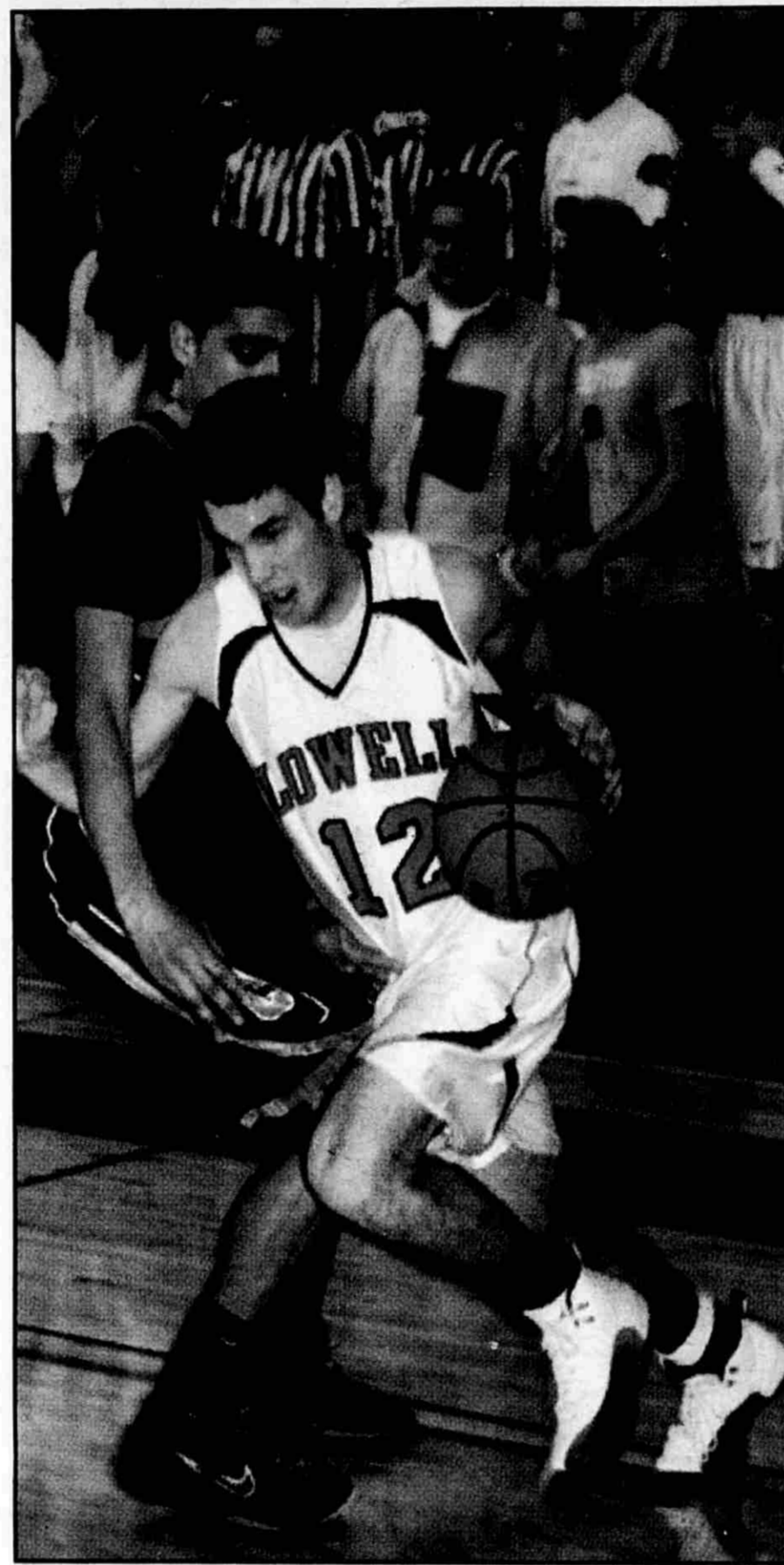
Laden Carnegie led Union in scoring with a game-high 22 points.

The Red Arrows trailed 13-4 early before rallying to take a 20-18 lead. Lowell trailed 26-20 at the half.

Things don't get any easier for Lowell as it has a nonconference game with Forest Hills Central and then a league game with East Grand Rapids on Friday.



Lowell's Elliott Drain turns the corner on his defender in Friday play against Grand Rapids Christian.



Derek Cornish dribbles out of a corner trap in first half action against the Eagles.

Someone had to say it!



Thad Kraus

When it was learned last summer that Lowell's wrestling program would be bumped up to Division I, many Red Arrow fans gasped.

Now nearly five weeks into the season that gasp has changed to a sigh of relief.

Yes, you heard (read) me correctly, a sigh of relief.

Division I, while it still has Rockford, Detroit Catholic Central, Hartland and now Lowell, doesn't appear to be as strong at the top as Division II.

There, you will find Allegan, Lakeshore-Stevensville, Greenville and St. Johns.

What makes it difficult to judge is the fact that a wrestling match can turn on a decision, a pin, or the flip of a coin.

Sticking it to the Cowboys!

Leading 27-3 with less than two minutes to play in Sunday's game, Minnesota and Brett Favre chose to throw for a touchdown instead of running the football.

How about them Vikings?

I could not have been happier. I wish there would have been time for a sixth Viking touchdown.

No good deed...

A few weeks back the Indianapolis Colts laid down and allowed the Jets to win a game which propelled New York into the playoffs.

Three weeks later, after two wins against Cincinnati, and Sunday's win over San Diego, the Jets will play the Colts in the AFC championship game.

What a twist it would be if the Jets, a team the Colts are responsible for getting into the playoffs, would rise up and prevent Peyton and his boys from reaching the Super Bowl!

Lowell lost this year, will the Red Arrows see the Lancers on Saturday?

HOOKING YOU UP WITH THE LATEST SPORTS NEWS

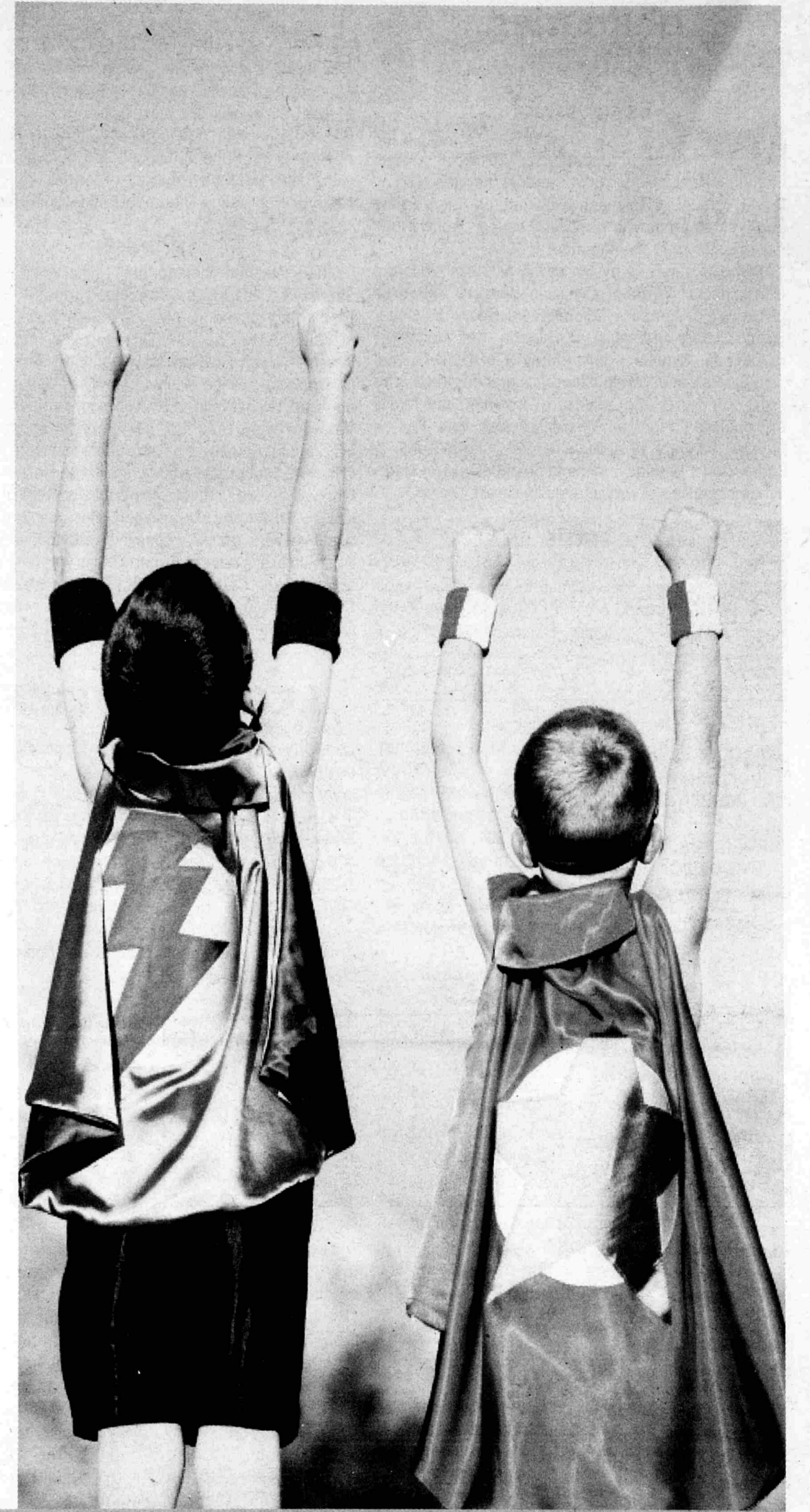


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Helping Haiti, continued

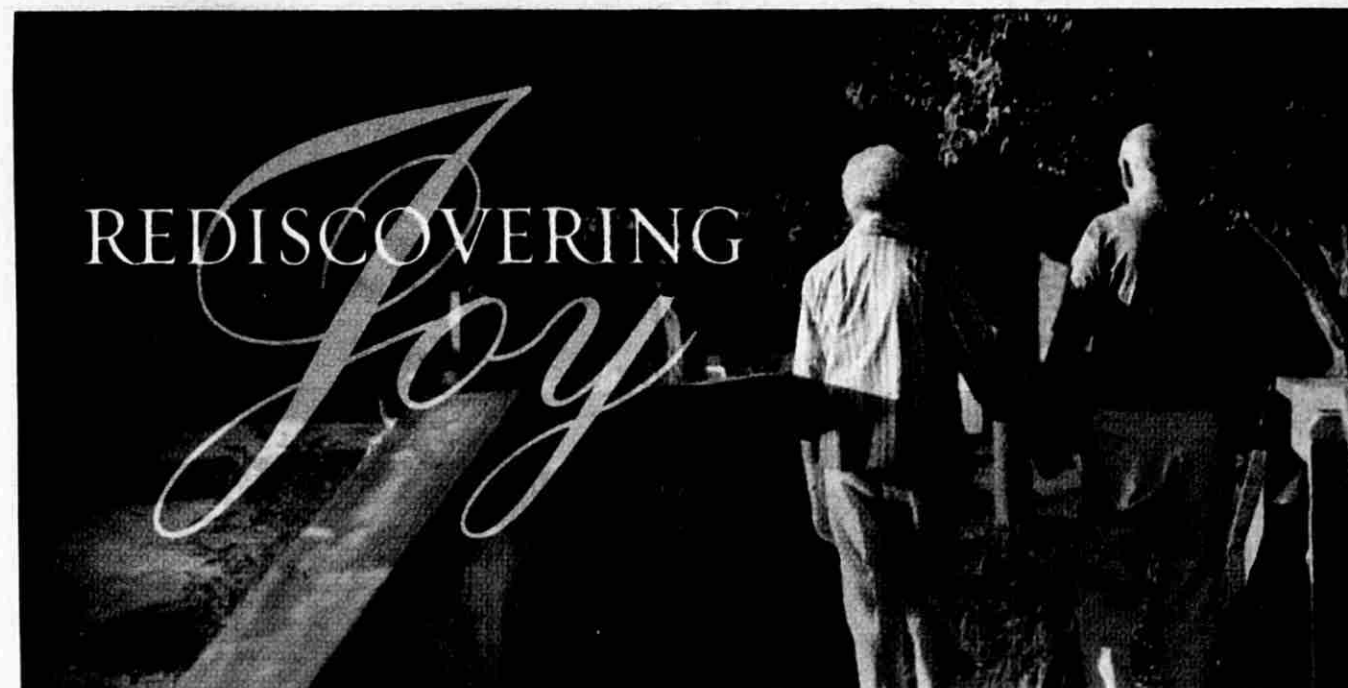
Destine, along with his brothers, sisters and mother, have been granted asylum to stay in the USA. They will soon receive green cards for permanent residency.

Destine works as a sales representative for Tamarack ATV Accessories in Lowell and he is starting his own business, A+ Solutions, that

will be employing mainly youth. The business will offer house and business valet services.



These pictures were taken by Marcel Destine and emailed to his son Nehemie. More pictures will be posted on the Ledger website later this week at www.thelowellledger.com



REDISCOVERING Joy

Practical Strategies for Handling Dementia and Depression

Thursday, January 21, 6:00pm

Dementia and Depression are physical, chemical ailments that cause emotional distress — for both the sufferer and family members. Cindy Pio, RN from Care One Home Health Services, will share strategies to help us understand these conditions and minimize their emotional strain.

Snacks and coffee will be provided. Seating is limited, so please RSVP to guarantee your spot.

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- THE BOOK OF ELI (R) 4:55, 7:25, 9:55
- THE SPY NEXT DOOR (PG) 4:30, 6:40, 8:50
- DAYBREAKERS (R) 4:45, 7:10, 9:35
- SHERLOCK HOLMES (PG-13) 4:10, 7:00, 9:45
- ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: THE SQUEAKQUEL (PG) 4:50, 6:50
- AVATAR (PG-13) 9:00

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