

# Crocker Makes It To The Big Show - Goes To State Playoffs

By Gary Knehans

The year following the Waynesville's state basketball tournament debut, the Crocker Lions made it to the 'big show' as well. The Lions swept through the Regional Tournament by beating Willard, Lebanon, and then Marshfield in the championship game 36-to-31. This brought the Lions' record for the season to 32 wins and only 6 losses.

At this point in the season, Charles Mackney led Crocker in scoring with 523 points. Joe Helms had scored 412. Marvin Singleton had connected for 311 points.

The Lions gave fans plenty to cheer about in the state tournament, which was held in Springfield. In their opening round game March 13, the Crocker boys fought a see-saw battle with Hornersville and eventually prevailed 37-to-34 in a game considered by many to be one of the best in the tournament.

Then came Versailles, who had defeated the Lions both times they played in the regular season. Crocker played strong defense on Versailles' dangerous, star forward, limiting him to just one field goal and one free throw in the first half. This allowed the Lions to possess a three-point lead at halftime. Versailles took the lead in the second half, but the Lions



Crocker Lions of '46-47 pictured after winning the championship of the Richland sub-regional tournament. (Kneeling)--Marvin Singleton. (Front, left to right)--Doyle Pummill, Bob Simpson, Charles Mackney, Arthur Rowden, and Joseph Helms. (Back, left to right)--Coach Hubert Neal, John Johnson, Harry Davidson, Bud Newcomb, and Wayne Daugherty.

whittled that margin down to just a single point with just a few seconds to go. With the ball in their possession, they raced down the court but the buzzer sounded

before anyone could fire a shot. Versailles went on to finish second in the state tournament that season. The hardwood heroes of that Crocker

team of 1946-47 were Charles Mackney, Doyle Pummill, Arthur Rowden, Joe Helms, John Johnson, Wayne Daugherty, Bud Newcomb, Marvin Singleton, Bob

## St. Louis Cardinals 3, Fort Wood Allstars 0

Fresh from winning the World Series the previous fall, the St. Louis Cardinals traveled to Fort Leonard Wood for an exhibition game on July 25, 1945. The game was supposed to have been played two days earlier, but National League officials at the last minute scheduled a makeup game on that date, postponing the Cardinals All Stars contest forty-eight hours.

The Cardinals' lineup wasn't the same as the previous year because some players had left to join the war effort. One of them was Harry Gumbert, now a Fort Wood soldier and the All-Stars' leading pitcher. He was joined on the squad by Ray Mack, former Cleveland Indian second baseman.

The World Champions struck first, pushing one run across the plate in the top of the second inning. There the

score remained for the next five innings until the Cardinals crossed the plate twice in the top of the eighth. Cardinal shortstop "Slat" Marion led the offense, scoring the first run and driving in the other two.

Redbird hurler Al Jurisich went the distance, scattering eight hits. But Jurisich needed several outstanding defensive plays by rookie sensation Al Schoendienst to preserve the shutout. Because the Army field didn't have an outfield fence, Schoendienst twice had to race back into a crowd of fans to haul in tremendous fly balls smacked by Mack.

The game was attended by some 10,000 soldiers, who wildly cheered the action on the field. This was the third year in a row that the Cardinals visited Fort Leonard Wood for an exhibition game.



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