

Eugene Quint Defends State Crown

Axemen Cop District Toga For Third Successive Year

For the third straight year Eugene high, defending state hoop champs, romped undefeated to the District 6 toga to qualify again for the annual extravaganza. The Henry Kuchera-coached squad was the first team in the state to clinch a berth in the tourney this year. They open tourney play against the strong LaGrande Tigers at 7:30 Wednesday night.

In addition to taking the state banner last winter the Axemen finished fourth in 1945 action. The Eugene team placed one man on the all-state first selections last season, Ty Lovelace at forward, who has now graduated, and one on the second team, Gene Miner at guard. Miner is back this year, and he paced the district in scoring, and proved to be the big gun in the city team's offense.

A blow to hopes of repeating last season's performance was suffered recently when Gene Rider, first string center and top-notch backboard artist, was found ailing, and allowed to play only a limited amount by doctor's orders.

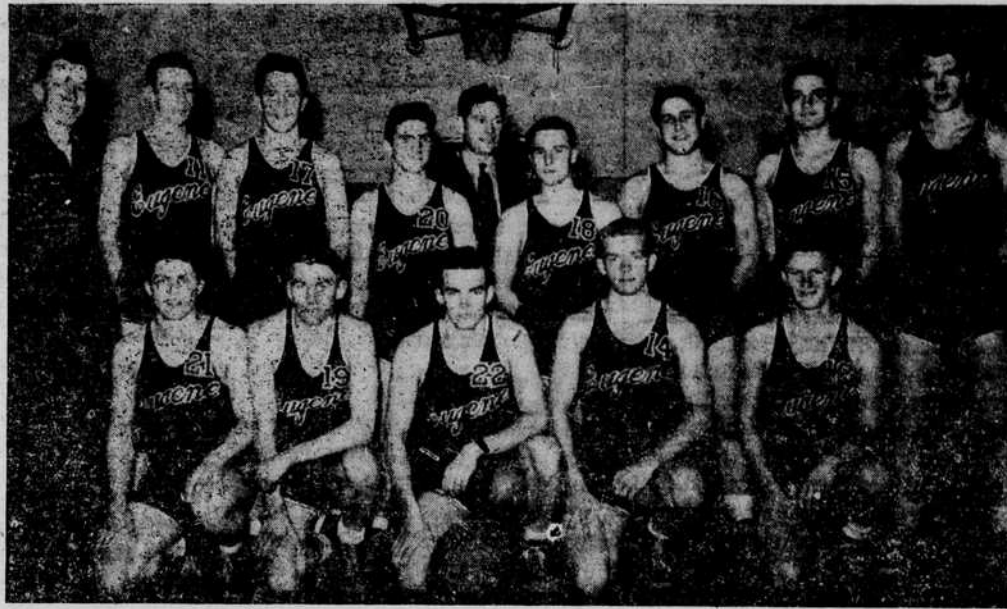
The Axemen do not sport any lanky men in the lineup this season, but make up for this lack in speed. With Miner and Ernie Wilde at the guard spots the Axemen pack a potent fast-break, and are capable of producing plenty of points. The fore court chores are handled by Rider, when he is able to play, and Don Ruth and Dick Garrett at forwards.

Six of the squad earned letters playing on last year's winning team, and two of the six, Miner and Wilde, are two year veterans. The other four holdovers are Dean Linder, Rider, Ruth, and Garrett. All but Linder, a junior, are se-

niors this years.

Plenty of trouble is anticipated for the defenders this year, in contrast to their relatively easy win of last season. Starting off against the LaGrande outfit is a severe test, and the locals are expected to have to put out their utmost if they hope to get past their upstate rivals.

Last season in the tournament the Axemen easily brushed off Hillsboro, 48-23, in the opener, outtran Marshfield, 55-46, and then passed Medford, 33-22, to advance into the finals. Against Washington of Portland the Eugene boys racked up their most effortless win of the event, walking over the Colonials 53-27, to carry off the honors.



DISTRICT 6 . . . The defending state champions, the Eugene Axemen, front row, Miner, Wilde, Rider, Ruth, Garrett; back row, Bales (student manager), Lasson, Hubbard, Wolf, Coach Hank Kuchera, Welch, Smith, Linder, Banks.

Dist. 5, Marshfield

In the district 5 race, Coos Bay (Marshfield) High cinched the tournament berth by downing Myrtle Point, 57-35 in a final five-minute replay of an earlier season game that was halted by power failure. The champs also took a regular contest by a score of 55-44. Coach Bill Borchert, former University of Oregon athlete, has five letter-winners back from last year's district champs.

Dist. 7, Lebanon

District 7 will be competently represented by the Lebanon Warriors who are repeaters from last year when they went to fourth place in the state tournament. Coach Bill Borchert, former Univer-

sity of Oregon athlete, has five letter-winners back from last year's district champs. copped the tourney berth by ending on top of the heap in the district league scramble.

Dist. 9, Hillsboro

Hillsboro High's Spartans, coached by Don Kirsch, ex-Oregon athlete, won the ticket to Eugene from district 9. The champs boast a well balanced squad who will give plenty of trouble to the "ceded" quintets in the tournament. The Spartans downed Tigard, 47-35, in the district tourney to qualify.

Dist. 10, Astoria

Astoria was the second team in the state to clinch a tourney berth. Coach Wally Palmberg used a heavy 40-game season schedule to condition and train an inexperi-

enced squad. Though their season had a shaky start the Fishermen finished strong to walk away with district 10 honors.

Dist. 11, Salem

Salem emerged all-victorious in the district 11 post-season double elimination tourney to walk away with that district's state tournament spot. The Vikings also tucked away the championship of the tough Big Six league during season play, to become one of the favorites in the coming casaba classic at McArthur court.

Dist. 1, La Grande

Representing district 1 in the 1947 prep tourney will be the La Grande high basketeers. The smooth-rolling Tigers are mentored by Don Mabee, former all-stater himself, who started his coaching duties at La Grande in brilliant fashion by moulding a Tiger squad that swept aside all opposition to land a tourney berth.

The husky East Oregoners are paced by a trio of six-foot-one veterans, Coleman, Jarroud, and Courtney. They square off with the 1946 champion Eugene team in first-round action.

Dist. 3, Redmond

Little Redmond high was diminutive in size only this season, as it battled its way to the district 3 crown. The Panthers proved their hoop ability by toppling the formidable Bend squad to land a tourney berth.

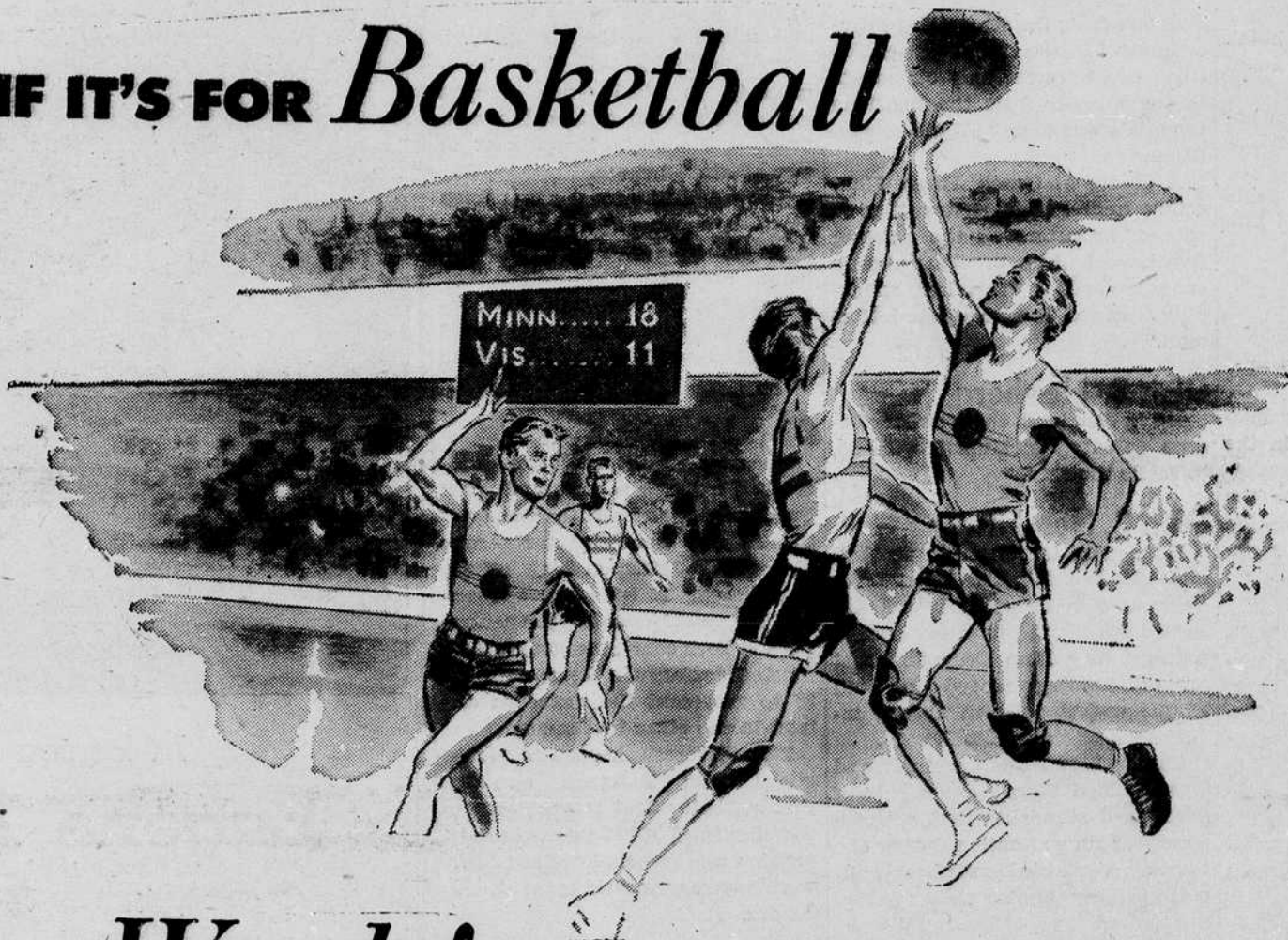
They must overcome a pre-season jinx to remain in the running, however, for the maroon and gold

(Please turn to page four)

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