



## Title drought over as Penn claims MCC championship

OSKALOOSA — William Penn entered Wednesday night's Midwest Classic Conference matchup with Ashford hoping to at least secure a share of the league title with a win, but the stars aligned perfectly and the Statesmen actually left Penn Gymnasium on Senior Night as outright conference champions for the first time since 1983 after winning 88-76.

With the victory, Penn (17-12, 11-2) claimed its first conference championship in men's basketball in 23 years, helped by a pair of wins by from Iowa Wesleyan (beat St. Ambrose 107-105) and Mount Mercy (beat Viterbo (Wis.) 64-52). Iowa Wesleyan, St. Ambrose and Viterbo now move into a three-way tie for second at 9-4, two games behind the Statesmen with just one game remaining.

The Statesmen, winners of

a season-high five straight games (most since January of the 2003-04 season), also tied the school mark for most wins in league play with the 1980-81 squad who finished 11-3 in the Iowa Conference.

Penn struggled in the early minutes, falling behind by double digits at 16-6 just 5:43 into the contest. Fortunately from that point on the Statesmen were electric, outscoring the Saints 37-11 to close out the first half and hold a 43-27 advantage at the break.

The host team was led at halftime by the usual suspects of Ryan Norman, with 13 points, and Norman Prather, with 11 points.

The second stanza produced little tension as Penn held its double-digit margin for the entire 20 minutes, including going up by as much as 21 points courtesy of a three-pointer by Norman to lead 48-27 with 18:12 left.

Ashford produced a strong run on the heel of that score, tallying 13 of the game's next 15 points to get within 10 points at 50-40, but it was the last serious threat the Saints (5-22, 1-12) would muster.

Norman paced the Statesmen with 22 points in addition to six rebounds and a pair of steals. Prather, one game after scoring 40 points to lead Penn to a victory over Grand View, came back down to earth a bit, but still scored 20 points in addition a team-high eight rebounds, a game-high four assists, and two steals.

Brad Nicholson also reached double figures with 15 points, including a team-high three shots from behind the arc. He also led Penn with three steals. Justin Wyatt also joined in with nine points off the bench, including making all three of his attempts from the field.

Craig Wamsley finished

with six points off the bench, while Travis Cox and Anris Reeves both added five in the win.

The Statesmen finished the game with a solid 47.0 field goal percentage and was very strong from the charity stripe with a 80.8 percentage (21-26). Penn also took the rebounding battle with a 42-32 edge, including a 12-5 advantage in offensive boards.

"This was an incredible evening for the Statesmen program," Statesmen coach John Henry said. "I'm just so happy for all of our players. They have worked so hard and done everything we've asked of them. They persevered through injuries and sickness to get here, which makes this extremely gratifying."

"These guys can play some serious defense across the board. It takes guts and desire to play defense.

Anybody can make baskets, but these guys truly believe in our system which is defense and rebounding. It isn't always pretty but we get it done.

### Statesmen claim first league crown since 1983

OSKALOOSA — For the first time in 23 years, the William Penn men's basketball program claimed the league throne.

The Statesmen, who finished last season at 19-14 overall with an 11-3 Midwest Classic Conference record, claimed their first league title since 1983 and was once again within a heartbeat of advancing to the NAIA National Tournament. Penn advanced to the MCC Tournament Finals for the third year in a row, and for

the second year in a row, it had the ball to tie or win the game, but the stars refused to align and the Statesmen fell short of their goal again.

"Last year was a dream season by winning the league championship," William Penn coach John Henry said. "Even with that, we didn't win the conference tournament and that is our goal coming into this season. We want to be at nationals, whether that be by winning the tournament or receiving an at-large bid."

### Oskaloosa bank robbers on trial

What began in the early morning of May 8 in Oskaloosa ended in Yellowstone National Park in June as two Rose Hill men alleged to have robbed Community 1st Credit Union were apprehended by park rangers.

Justin Michael Shrader, 24, stood trial this past November in federal court in Des Moines and admitted that he pointed a shotgun at credit union employees in connection with the robbery.

Shrader was sentenced to 11 years and nine months in prison and has agreed to testify against Aaron Michael Rafferty, 32, at his trial which is slated to begin on Jan. 8.

It was reported both men were carrying backpacks and sawed-off shotguns and forced bank employees to give them

money from the bank vault and the teller drawers. As they departed, one of them left what appeared to be an explosive device on the floor of the bank, which later was determined to be a decoy.

Rafferty and Shrader reportedly stole a bank employee's vehicle for a getaway car which was later recovered in a wooded area approximately 15 miles northeast of Oskaloosa.

Approximately one month later, National Park law enforcement personnel encountered Rafferty and Shrader in the course of investigating a hit-and-run motor vehicle accident in Yellowstone National Park in Montana. Both men had rented and were staying in a cabin in Canyon Village, part of Yellowstone National Park.

## Armed men hold up local bank

By MICHAEL SCHAFFER  
The Oskaloosa Herald

OSKALOOSA — Community 1st Credit Union, 1506 A Ave. East, in Oskaloosa, was robbed of an undisclosed amount of money Monday at gun point at approximately 8:30 a.m.

Oskaloosa police report two gunmen armed with long-barreled rifles gained entry into the credit union as an employee was unlocking the front doors for the start of business Monday. Once inside, they demanded of the employees present to start filling the back packs they were carrying with large bills. The robbers then fled the scene in a car that belonged to one of the credit union employees.

The vehicle used to flee the scene was a 1998 four-door, blue Honda Civic, with license plates registered in Keokuk County with a tag number of

484 BUU. The car has some damage to the mid-driver's side. Police are asking if anybody sees this vehicle to use caution and stay away and call the Oskaloosa police department at (641) 672-2557.

Terry Maloy, vice president for strategic planning for Community 1st Credit Union, said no employees were injured during the robbery. He said the full contingent of employees at that branch were not present at the time of the robbery.

"We had just opened so we didn't have all six employees here," Maloy said. "I believe there were three people at the time."

Maloy said the credit union will remain closed today. As of late Monday, the amount of money taken was still undetermined.

After the two unidentified robbers fled the credit union, the employees went to lock the front doors when they noticed a small

package on the floor. Because the package had what looked like an electronic circuit board attached to the top of it, they believed it to be a bomb. Police said the object was left behind by the robbers. The fear of a bomb in the building caused the employees to flee and they met up with police just west of the credit union, near Wiggs Store, at the corner of Geneva and A Avenue East, approximately 150 yards away.

Vehicles from the Oskaloosa police department and the Mahaska Hospital Emergency Services were used as barricades to stop traffic from gaining entry to the frontage road from the west. An Oskaloosa fire truck was used to stop traffic from gaining access to the frontage road from the east.

By approximately 10 a.m., all traffic on A Avenue East between 11th Street and Highway 23 had ceased and was being diverted. The

Oskaloosa Fire Department had set up a command post just northeast of the credit union on the frontage road, approximately 30 yards away. An unidentified truck with Dallas County license plates hauling a non-descript trailer arrived shortly before 10:30 a.m. It parked next to the fire truck near the credit union. At approximately 10:56 a.m., a remote-controlled robotic machine was seen entering the credit union. At approximately 11 a.m., the State Fire Marshall Bureau of Arson and Explosives arrived and parked their large truck next to the other two vehicles on the frontage road. The robot emerged from the building at approximately 11:08 a.m., and dropped an object on the concrete parking lot just west of the entrance to the credit union. An official walked over and picked up the object as the robot was seen entering the building for a second time.

## Two Osky teens die in shooting

By MICHAEL SCHAFFER  
The Oskaloosa Herald

OSKALOOSA — Oskaloosa Police, responding to a 911 call reporting a shooting, arrived at 701 Third Ave. East, Wednesday at approximately 6:35 p.m., and found two young males, both suffering from gunshot wounds.

Brandon Bunnell, 13, and Joseph Ballantyne, 17, both of Oskaloosa, are reported to be the two victims involved.

Both were treated at the scene and then transported to Mahaska Health Partnership in Oskaloosa. Bunnell remained at the Mahaska Health Partnership in Oskaloosa. He has since died from his wounds, according to a press release from the Oskaloosa Police Department.

Ballantyne was later airlifted to Iowa Methodist

Hospital in Des Moines. According to a public relations spokesperson with the hospital, he was subsequently transferred to Iowa City.

A spokesperson for the University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics said no information was available concerning a Joseph Ballantyne. As of press time, the Mahaska Health Partnership had yet to issue a statement. The condition of Ballantyne is as yet unknown.

Several people at the scene said it appeared to be an accidental shooting. Most at the scene agreed that Ballantyne accidentally shot

Bunnell before turning the gun on himself.

Jason Allsup, 30, of Oskaloosa, said he called 911 to report the shooting at approximately 6:35 p.m. He said an ambulance arrived approximately five minutes later.

Allsup said Bunnell, Ballantyne himself and another kid had just finished working on his car. Bunnell and the other kid then left. Allsup said 10 minutes after that he heard two shots. He said it sounded like a shotgun.

"The other kid was screaming, so I went to the garage and I seen Brandon," Allsup said. "I seen the kid,

Joe Ballantyne. He still had the gun in his hand."

Allsup said he found Ballantyne near a bush on the northwest corner of the neighbor's house. He said both boys were still alive when the ambulance arrived.

Elisha Spriggs, 17, of Oskaloosa, said she knew Ballantyne from working with him at Dairy Queen. Spriggs said Ballantyne was "a great guy, funny. It was great working with him."

The Oskaloosa Police Department has requested the assistance of the Iowa Division of Criminal Investigation. The investigation is ongoing.

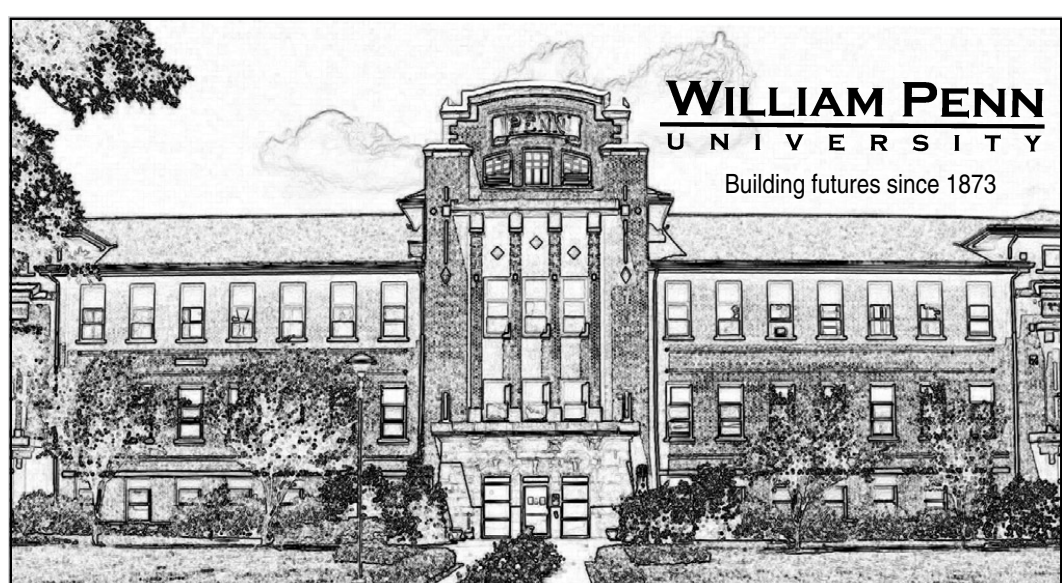
Dawn Stephens, executive director of Crisis Intervention Services, said if anybody is affected by the shooting and needs emotional support, to call (800) 270-1620.



Brandon Bunnell



Joseph Ballantyne



*Forest Cemetery would like to thank the community for their support in 2006 and we wish everyone a Peaceful New Year.*



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