

Reding cagers reach D2 finals

Despite late offensive lapse, Sr. Royals upstage Bateman

By Steve LeBlanc
CANADIAN CHAMPION STAFF

Bishop Reding's offence faded down the stretch, but returned just in time to ensure championship hopes weren't extinguished.

A Caitlin O'Connor jump shot with just under a minute remaining and two free throws by Michelle Serafini a few moments later snapped a near fourth-quarter whitewash and gave the Royals a 30-26 decision over the Robert Bateman Wild in Division 2 semifinal action at BR Monday.

The narrow victory put a Reding girls basketball team into championship play for the first time in recent memory, and set up a huge rubber match with the Burlington Central Trojans.

The teams finished one-two this season, with Central winning the only league encounter by a single basket and the Royals avenging that loss two weeks ago with a six-point victory at their own tournament.

Playing all 32 minutes of Monday's contest, O'Connor — BR's fifth-year captain and all-around sparkplug — exorcised the demons of a semifinal jinx with a well-rounded effort.

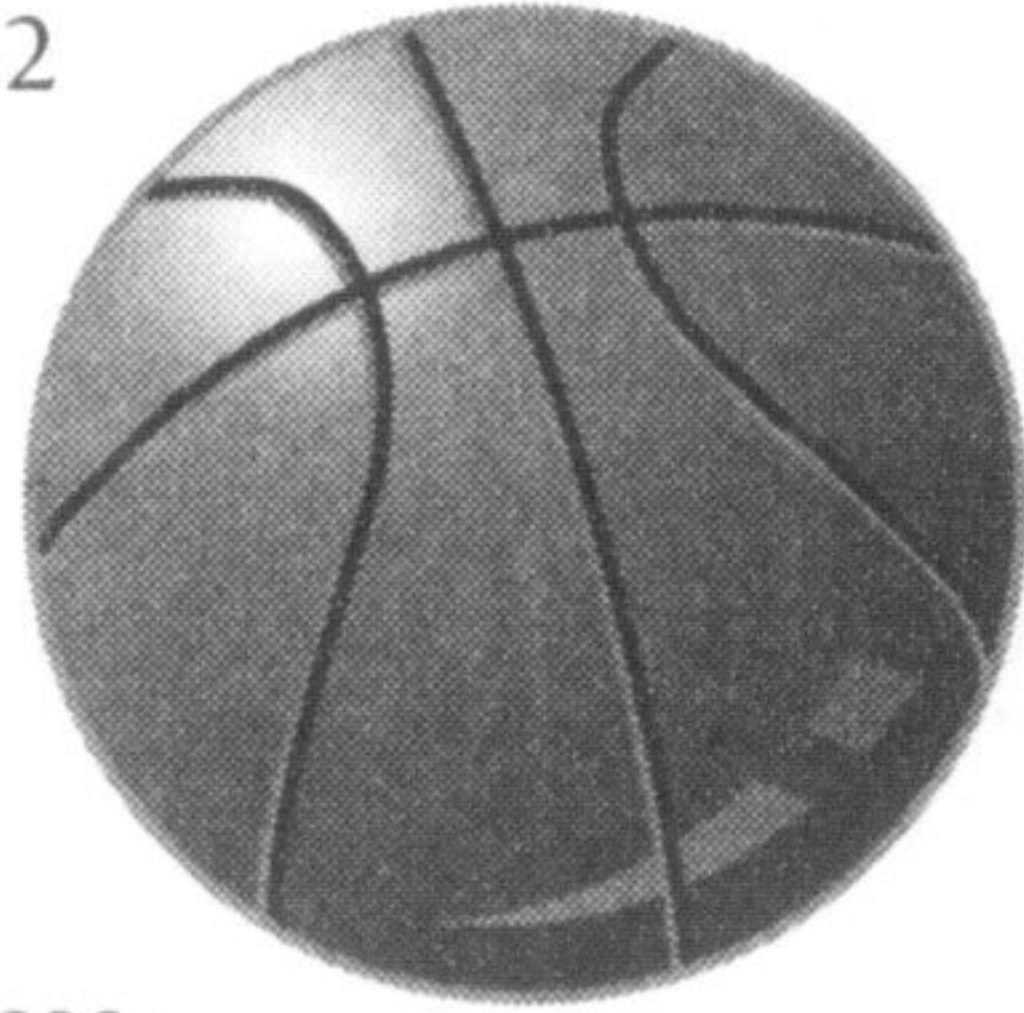
While her scoring touch wasn't quite in top form for much of the game, she did a little bit of everything else — with some big rebounds and a handful of key assists complementing her seven-point afternoon.

She had one of three field goals in the first half, with Carly Fullerton and Rebecca Trischler recording the others.

Returning from a knee injury last week, 10th grader Alex Schroder stepped things up with eight points — including a couple of third-quarter shots to keep Reding ahead — while Kayla Michelson counted six. Serafini and Trischler contributed effective rebounding to the win, while grade 10s Katrien Ecclestone and Melina Mansing saw significant minutes — gaining further development for what looks to be a bright future for the young squad.

The semifinal victory came without the services of starter Krista Dermott, who's currently competing with Ontario's B squad at the Canadian Under-18 Women's Hockey Championships in Kitchener.

The Division 2 senior finals were contested last night at Oakville's Sheridan College.



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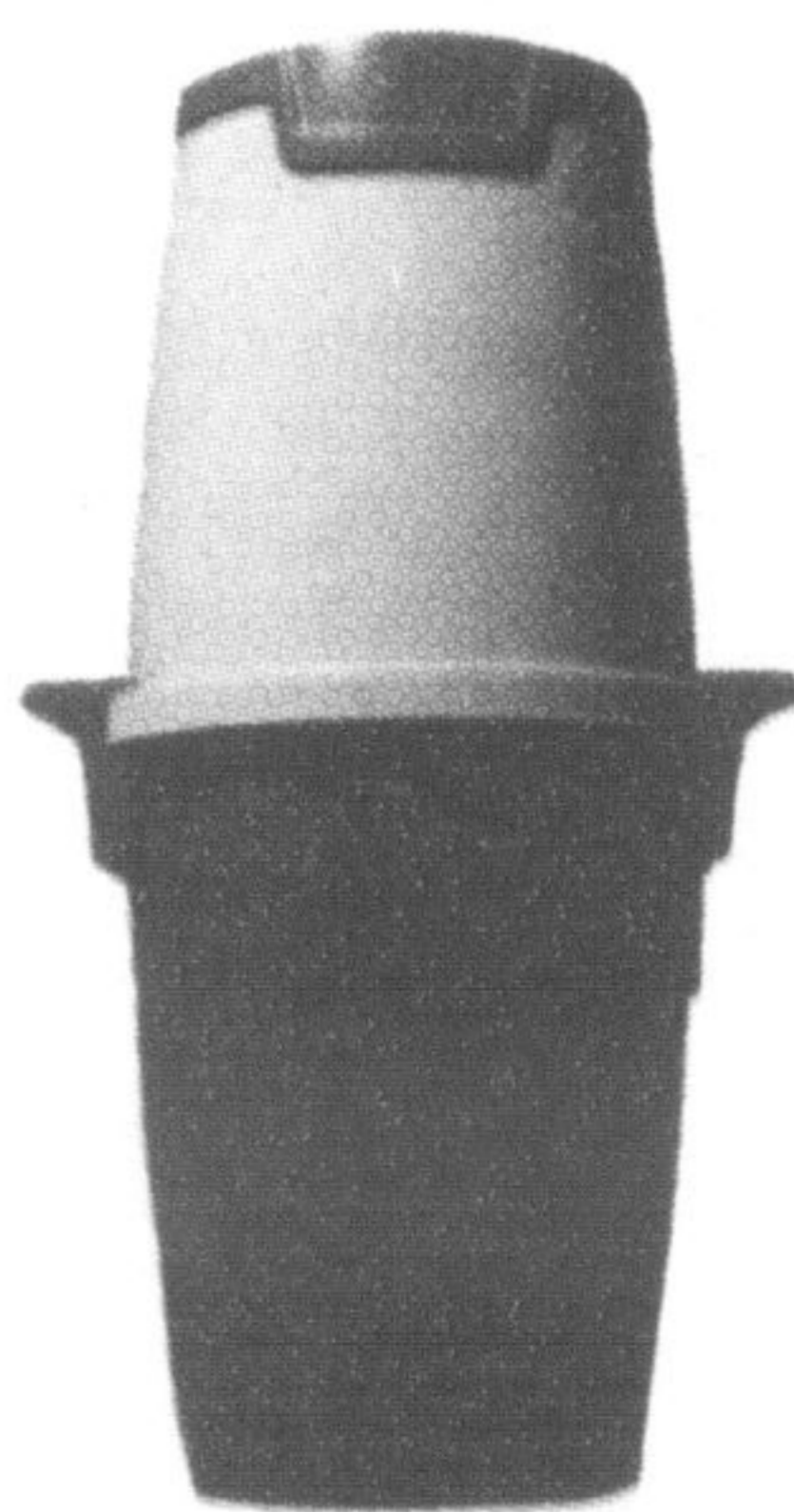
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