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Teams converge on Essex for Red Raider Rebound



RED RAIDER REBOUND CHAMPIONS –
Girls:
Colchester North Colts (left)
Boys:
Maidstone Eagles (right)



Some of the best elementary basketball teams in the county came to Essex as EDHS hosted its annual Red Raider Rebound tournament. The popular February roundball classic saw the girls' teams competing last weekend while the boys faced off this past Saturday.

This was the 20th year Essex Red Raiders have hosted this tournament and as usual the competition was fierce - but at the end of the day everyone went home tired but happy, full of hot dogs, wearing their new T-shirts and carrying souvenir team pictures to show their grandchildren.

In the ladies' division, Maplewood captured the Consolation Championship, defeating Jack Miner 23-14. The championship game saw league rivals Colchester Colts and Maidstone Eagles face off. The Eagles had already defeated the Colts in league play but on this day the Colts prevailed by a score of 33-22 to capture overall honours. High scorers were Dana Bodi for Maidstone and Brandi Masse for Colchester.

In the boys' division, the consolation final saw Colchester take the floor against Gosfield. This was a

thriller with the game being decided in the last ten seconds as Gosfield prevailed 35-32. Kyle Spencer scored 13 points for the Colts and Justin Orton, who was also an all-star, chipped in 17 points for the winners.

There was an enthusiastic crowd in the gym for the final with Maidstone facing Maplewood. Many of the fans were there to watch the Maidstone standout player, young Ryan Ellsworth.

At the half, the score was 27-18 for Maidstone with Ellsworth scoring 19 points. Maplewood hurt their cause by missing several inside shots, perhaps intimidated by Ellsworth's many blocked shots.

In the second half the Tigers made a spirited comeback, and tied the score at 51-51, but Ellsworth poured in the last four points and Maidstone took home the title, 55-51.

Ellsworth finished the game with 37 points, while Brandon Hamilton scored 15 for Maplewood. Kevin Stephen was chosen to the all-star team for Maplewood and Ryan Ellsworth was everybody's choice for the champion Maidstone Eagles.

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