

All-WNY girls basketball team

Seniors on first team set to graduate to next level with honors

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The end of their high school basketball careers signaled a beginning to an exciting college career for several members of the All-Western New York girls basketball team. All five players on the first team have earned athletic scholarships, with three graduating to NCAA Division I basketball programs.

Here's a closer look at the first team chosen by The Buffalo News with an assist from local college coaches, high school coaches, pollsters and game officials.

Kallie Banker of Grand Island is a repeat first-team pick. Katie Healy of Lancaster graduates from last year's second team and becomes the Redskins' first first-teamer since Sharon Gross in 1977-1978. Marah Maycock of Randolph and Cassie Oursler of Grand Island were third team picks a year ago. All five first teamers led their teams to championships whether Sectional or league.

Kallie Banker

A big senior year capped off an impressive six-season career for Grand Island's record-setting guard. Playing against defenses that were designed to stop her, Banker still delivered, scoring 16 ppg, six rebounds and five steals. She averaged 10 assists per game, mostly to 6-foot-3 Cassie Oursler in what proved an almost unstoppable combination.

She led her team to back-to-back Section VI Class A and Niagara Frontier League titles, along with earning MVP honors of the season-opening Pastor-Cooper Tournament. In seven games against teams ranked in the Top 10 in WNY, the Vikings went 6-1.

Banker had a big postseason. In the Class A-1 semifinals against Iroquois she scored 18 points in the second half, including 14 in the fourth quarter. In the Class A-1 final against Hamburg, she netted 11 of her 15 in the second half to help her team pull out a one-point

win. A solid floor game helped the Vikings pull out a win over Pioneer in the cross over. She also played well in what was a tough matchup for her team against eventual state champion Rochester East in the Far West Regionals.

Career-wise, Banker will go down as one of the most accomplished in Vikings' history. She is the program's all-time leading scorer with 1,700 points and is first in career assists and career three-pointers. In her four years as a starter, GI finished 47-9 in the NFL, including 27-1 the past two years. Overall she was 74-20 winning four straight Class A-1 crowns.

She's also a six-time NYS Scholar-Athlete, a member of the National Honor Society and found time to be the yearbook sports editor and earn all-NFL honors in volleyball. Last fall she signed a basketball scholarship to Rhode Island of the Atlantic 10.