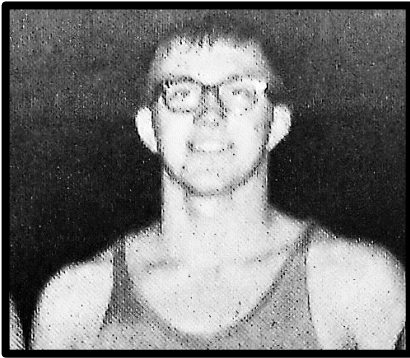


The Time Machine  
**Dynamic Duos of the 1960's**

**1965 Don Stoneman and Tony Schiller**  
**Coach Whitey Aus (10-11)**

The final record of 10-11 was not indicative of this team's potential. Two key players, B. Grangruth and T. Schiller, missed half of the season. However, by tournament time Wadena was at full strength.



*Don Stoneman*

Don Stoneman averaged 17.8 ppg, good for third highest in the district. That average is even more impressive when you consider that Wadena played a slow and deliberate style of ball. Six of Wadena's ten wins resulted with an offensive production of 55 points or less. And in four of their losses the opponents scored 46, 55, 56, and 43 points to claim victory. During Stoneman's three-year career I know he scored over 900 points and may have surpassed 1,000 points. He was named to the Mid-State all-conference team and placed on the WCCO all-state team of the week numerous times.

Junior post player Tony Schiller averaged 13.3 ppg and was the team's leading rebounder. Significant playing time as a sophomore had paid-off this season and would again next year..

This 1965 District 24 tournament was about to get turned on its head. Big underdog Wadena opened the quarterfinal round by upsetting top seed Brainerd 65-46. In the semifinal round, Little Falls was about to meet the new and improved Wadena cage team. The result was another low scoring upset victory at 55-52. On to the title game against guess who? C-I. During the regular season WHS was 0-6 against Brainerd, Little Falls, and Crosby-Ironton. Only the Rangers stood in the way of Wadena going 3-0 in the tournament against those same teams.



*Tony Schiller*

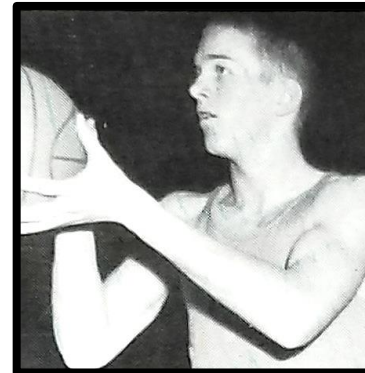
If you read article #23, WHS basketball in the 1960's, you might recall from 1959-69 C-I racked up a 25-game winning streak at our expense. The streak itself was overwhelming. But to add additional pain there were so many times "we clutched defeat from the jaws of victory!" This 1965 District title game would be no different. Only five names appeared in the WHS box score, C-I had six. Our top scorer was Tony Schiller (15). Dave Cambell, Brent Grangruth, Don Stoneman, and Larry Schiller each chipped in 5-9 points in a 43-42 loss.

The District 24 champions were eliminated in the Region 6 tournament by Henning, led by Bob and Dick Peterson. Minnetonka beat Faribault to win the 1965 single class MSHSL tournament.

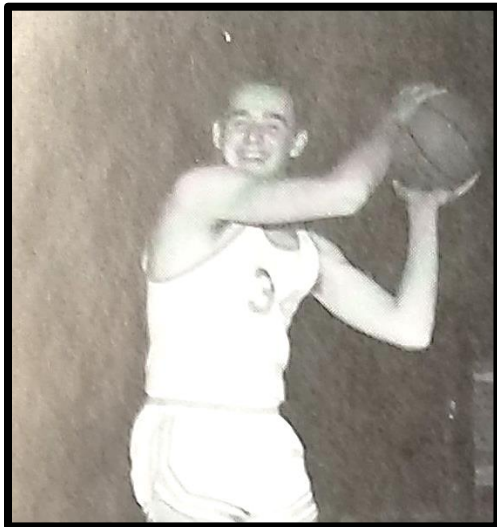
**1966 - Tony Schiller and Dave Campbell  
Coach Whitey Aus (14-7)**

This 1966 WHS team would prove to be Wadena's most successful one in the 1960's. A 12-6 record during the regular season brought optimism to the faithful. Schiller and Campbell had a strong supporting cast with the likes of Jerry Fiskum, Mel Pulju, Larry Shiller, Arlen Damlo, Chuck Folkstad, Francis Plautz, Steve Nelson, Rich Pudas, and John Weiland.

With such a balanced team the top scorers, Schiller and Campbell, averaged less than 14 and 12 ppg respectively. And Schiller again led the team in rebounding with a dozen per game. During the regular season WHS was involved with three one-point games, winning two of them.



*Dave Campbell*



*Tony Schiller*

A lot of similarities to the 1965 tournament except this 1966 team was at full strength all year. In the quarterfinals Wadena rolled over Menahga 72-55 to set up a rematch with Brainerd. Earlier that year Brainerd defeated Wadena 68-59. That was the only time the two had met since WHS crushed them last year in district play. Led by Dave Campbell's 14 points Wadena eliminated the 19-1 Warriors in the district semifinals. Up next, another shot at Crosby-Ironton.

While WHS was defeating Brainerd in a one-point game C-I was doing likewise to Pine River 48-47. Ranger junior forward Tom Middleton hit two free throws at the end of the game to seal the win. The District 24 title game would be a repeat of last year's contest. In more ways than one.

With the score knotted at 38 apiece, and C-I holding the ball for a last shot, an attempt was made with just seconds to go. It missed its mark, was recovered by Tom Middleton, and put up and in at the buzzer for another C-I District 24 crown. I have no stats other than the final score. A great season comes to another bitter end. Henning won their second consecutive Region 6 title and was defeated in triple overtime by eventual state champion Edina.

**1967 - Arlen Damlo and Francis Plautz  
Coach Whitey Aus (10-9)**



*Francis Plautz*

Another well balanced team. Damlo and Plautz both selected to the Mid-State all-conference team, averaging 14.9 and 12.6 ppg respectively. Chuck Folkestad and Daryl Oja also averaged 11 ppg with Folkestad hauling down 13 rebounds per game and Oja dishing out 3-4 assists per game. Their 10-8 regular season record earned them the number two-seed, behind C-I, in the district tournament. Little Falls was seeded fifth and was Wadena's quarterfinal opponent. The Flyers pulled off a 52-49 upset. Brainerd went on to claim the District 24 title, Moorhead prevailed in Region 6, and Edina won its second consecutive MSHSL crown.



*Arlen Damlo*

**1968 – Francis Plautz and Daryl Oja**  
**Coach Whitey Aus (8-13)**



*Daryl Oja*

Plautz averaged 16.6 ppg (2nd in dist) with a game high of 31 vs Park Rapids. A balanced scoring attack from Dave Stormoen 11.3 ppg (10th in dist), Daryl Oja (10.5 ppg, 3.4 apg), and Greg Willis (10.1 ppg, 13 rpg) was evident once again. Plautz and Oja were both excellent football players. Plautz was fast, strong, and powerful. On the basketball court he was nimble and had a fine shooting touch.



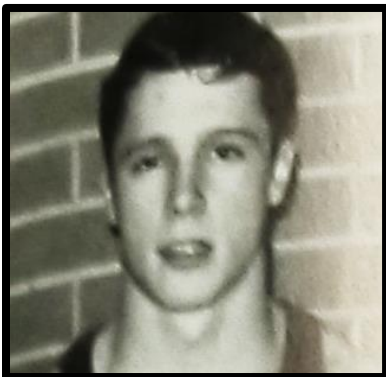
*Francis Plautz*

Oja was a running back in the fall and a quarterback in the winter. The playmaker. The district tourney had WHS winning their quarterfinal game and losing in the semifinal. In the battle for 3<sup>rd</sup> place Staples topped Wadena 57-47. Brainerd prevailed in District 24, Moorhead in Region 6 and Edina, for the 3<sup>rd</sup> consecutive time, was crowned the MSHSL champions. Edina won 69 consecutive games from 1965-68.

**1969 – Greg Willis and Kip Browne**  
**Coach Whitey Aus (10-11)**

Bringing this decade to a close was a tight knit group of guys that loved being in the gym. I know because my lifelong friend, Rick Grewe, and I were the team managers. As 7th graders our schedules allowed us to be at most practices and games. It was great.

As you may remember this team's claim to fame had to do with a little winning streak C-I had over Wadena. From 1959-69 the two teams played 20 times in the regular season and 5 times in the district tournament. Twenty-five consecutive wins for the Rangers. Then early in this season Wadena traveled to C-I and beat the Rangers on their home court. C-I must have had a down year ahead of them? Hardly. When the Rangers came to Wadena for the rematch they prevailed. In the tournament WHS went down to C-I in the semifinal game. C-I beat Little Falls by two points to win the district title. Then the Rangers beat Pelican Rapids by one point in double overtime, to claim the Region 6 crown. At the MSHSL state tournament C-I won their quarterfinal game, lost in the semifinals, and won the third-place contest.



*Kip Browne*

Willis and Browne led the district in scoring with averages of 15.9 and 15.8 ppg respectively. They each scored 20 points in that win over C-I. At seasons end they played Fergus Falls. Browne scored his season high, 32, in that game while Willis added 24. All season long there was strong support from John Flenner (game high 16 pts) and assist leader Jeff Johnson.



*Greg Willis*

I hope you have enjoyed this look back into WHS basketball. See you next time!