

## Bears take ROPSSAA title

By GARY MCCARTHY  
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Jose Ann Johnson made her final high school basketball game a memorable one. The six-foot-three forward poured in 14 points Thursday night to help the St. Edmund Campion Bears capture the Region of Peel Secondary School Athletics Association women's Senior Tier I hoops crown by beating the rival Notre Dame Knights 58-46 at Sheridan College in Brampton. "This is very, very big for me," said Johnson, who heads to Duquesne University in Pittsburgh next year on a basketball scholarship. "I wanted to win ROPSSAA before I finished playing in high school and this is it."

Johnson did most of her damage in the first half, scoring eight points as the Bears pulled away early with a 19-8 lead in the first period and held their 11-point margin, 33-22, to start the third period.

"We wanted to make sure we came out with some jump," said Johnson. "Not to be mean or anything like that, but we wanted to crush their (Knights) hopes early."

The Knights played the Bears even in the second period of the all-Brampton final but over-all, Campion was more than the Knights could handle.

"It seems as though we were always in a hole," said Notre Dame coach Lisa Ciancone. "We'd get close but then we'd have a mental breakdown. We made too many mental mistakes. But they (Bears) were tough all night." It might have been a different story had the Knights capitalized early in the game. But Notre Dame failed to score on three layup shots in the first couple of minutes and never recovered.

"We missed too many easy shots," said Ciancone. "We could have been up 6-0 but we missed those three layups in a row right off the bat."

"This is just awesome," said Campion coach Nicolette Stewart. "We executed well but we weren't expecting to be up by so much. We played them during the regular season and we only won by three points."

Campion and Notre Dame finished 1-2 in the North Division standings during the regular season. Campion won 48-24 the first time the two teams met on Oct. 13. Two weeks later, the Bears held on for a 39-36 victory.

"We knew there would be a lot of pressure from them," said Stewart, "but I think we were a little stronger at all five spots."

Captain Teleshia Riley was just behind Johnson in scoring with 13 points for Campion and Sade Iriah had 11. Cassandra Edwards led the Knights with 13 points and Mary Asare added 11. Chenel Johnson chipped in with eight points for Notre Dame.

The Ascension Eagles from Mississauga captured the women's Senior Tier II championship earlier Thursday night by beating the rival St. Francis Xavier Tigers 47-42.



**FINALS BATTLE.** Jose Ann Johnson (22) of St. Edmund Campion Bears battles with L'Ashante Henry from Notre Dame during Thursday's ROPSSAA Tier 1 senior girls' basketball final. Although the Bears won both teams advance to OFSAA 4A next week in Hamilton. *Photo by Bryon Johnson*

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