

ACS invitational supplies good small school team

The 1995 lineup for the ACS Invitational included 3A, 2A, and even one 1A school from Point Hope to Valdez and from Houston to Dillingham. The annual tournament matched eight boys teams and eight girls teams from around Alaska in a three day basketball frenzy. The girls teams featured defending 3A state champion Valdez and defending 1A state champion Noorvik. The Noorvik Bears, the only 1A school in the tournament, were

definitely the hottest team in the tourney for their size. The Bears came into the tournament with a 10 and 2 record with both of their losses to the 2A state champs of Tikigaq High School who were across town in the Alaska Invitational. Noorvik, returning all their players from last year's championship team, also beat Point Hope twice this season splitting their four games with the Harpoonettes.

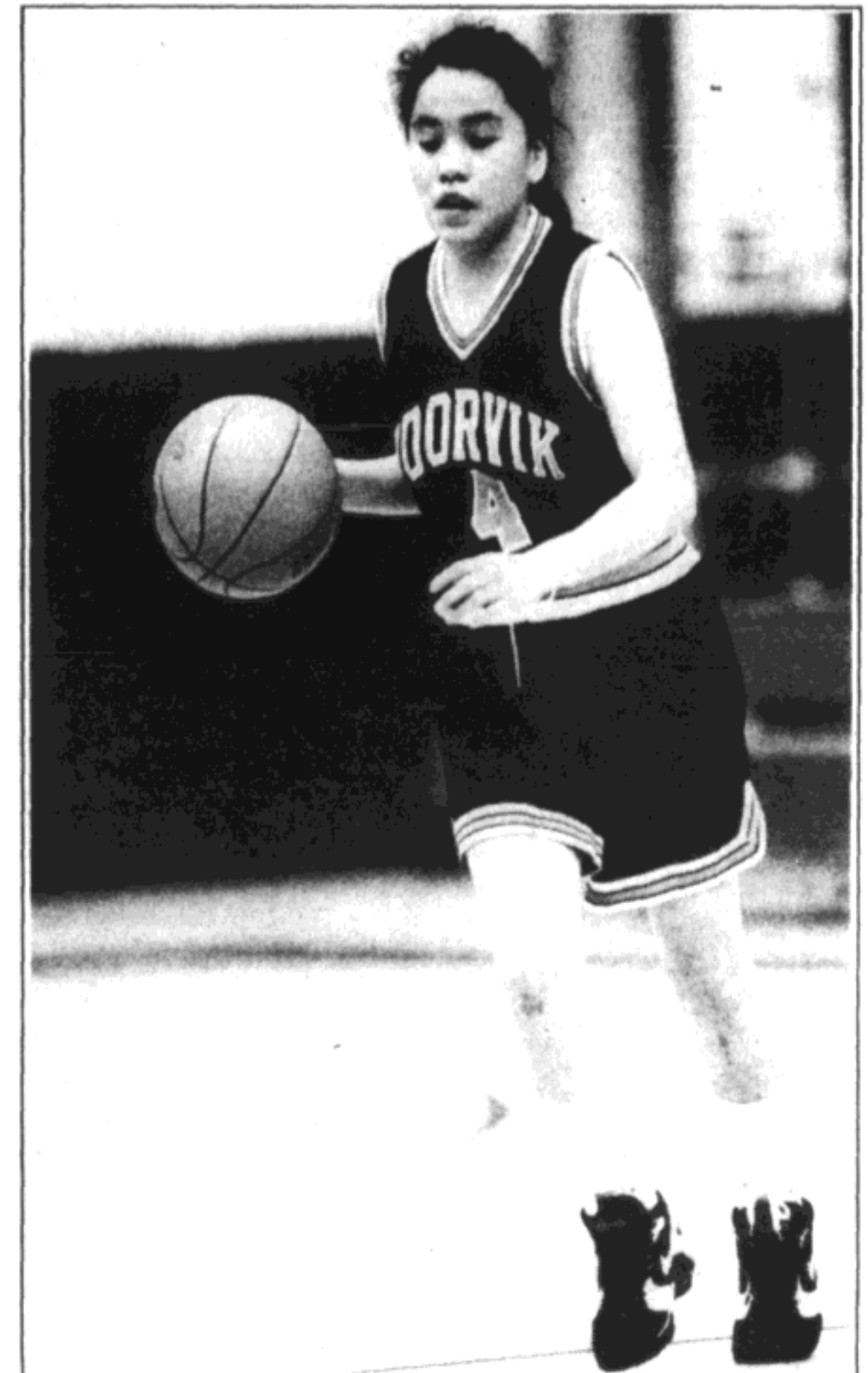
My only complaint with the

tournament organization is that the Bears and the Valdez Buccaneers weren't matched in the upper and lower brackets because the real championship game was between these two teams who met and played on December 29 in the opening round. Valdez won the game 57-54, but it was by no means an easy win. The Noorvik Bears proceeded to win convincingly in the consolation bracket capturing fourth place in the tournament with a 55-39 win over Abbott Loop.

Valdez, coached by Barb Lyons, is a young team having graduated 5 members of their state championship team, four of whom were starters. Coach Lyons' teams are always well-coached and you can count on her to utilize her players' strengths to make the Bucs competitive.

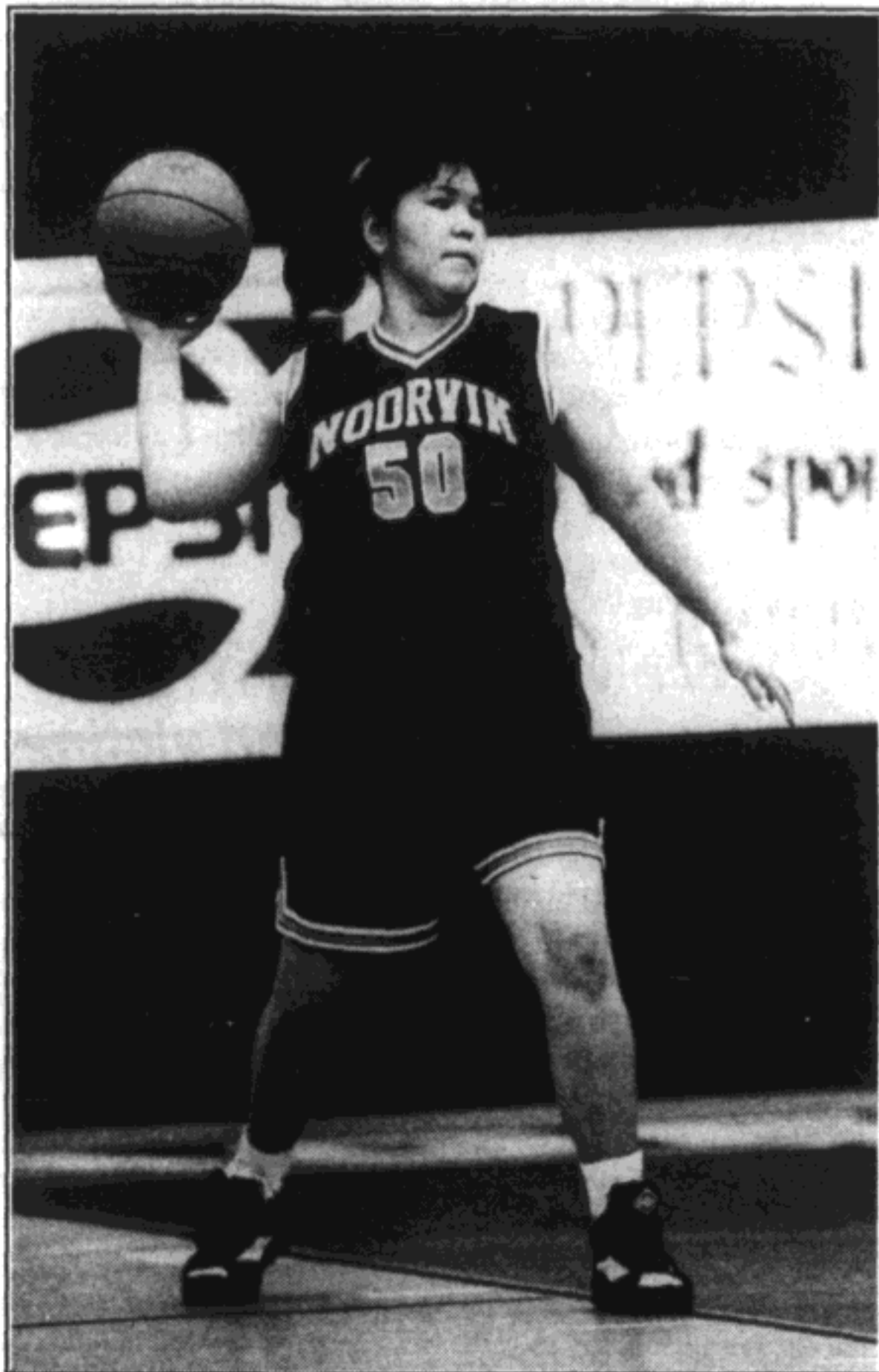
Shauna Wells, a co-captain on the Noorvik Bears, said she was happy to be invited to the tournament because the competition was better. The Bears' players raised all the money for the trip through bake sales and donations, such as the one from NANA Corporation. I spoke with Shauna Wells and Lois Newlin after they were named to the all-tournament team and they were calling for a rematch with Valdez. They enjoyed shopping while in Anchorage and went to see a movie (Dumb and Dumber).

Meanwhile if you saw a bunch of Point Hope people in Anchorage traffic it was because the Point Hope boys were playing across town from the girls. Point Hope fans watched their team play Dillingham in the opening round and Alaska Federation of Natives Vice President Dorothy Larson was at the game cheering her grandson Mike Johnson (Dillingham). The Dillingham



Noorvik's Shauna Wells, co-captain of the 1A state champion Noorvik Bears, brings the ball down court.

Photo by Ray Solomon



Noorvik Bears player Lois Newlin passes the ball across the court.

Photo by Ray Solomon

boys came into the tournament 4-8, but they played against the Harpooners (3-10) who are coached by Rex Rock. The crowd came alive when Tikigaq's #12, 5'2" freshman Clement Frankson was put in the game to guard Dillingham's Brian Clark a 5' freshman also wearing number 12. Dillingham beat Point Hope 69-53 and went on to play ACS losing 65-55 and placing 5th in the

tourney. At one point in the game an injured Point Hope player was tended to by the tribal doctor.

The boys' tournament was won by 3A Houston who beat ACS 66-51. Houston Hawk player, Rucker Houston, was named tourney MVP. He featured a spider web haircut which he said he got after a tournament in Valdez when all the players put designs on their heads.