

ESPN
122 NIAGARA
SAGARIN

THE SCHOOLS

No, there's no such thing as a Purple Eagle. The nickname for the one-time Catholic seminary is derived from the eagles that used to perch on the university's buildings and a color associated with royalty throughout history. That's just the beginning of this program's quirky story. As a member of the Western New York Little Three, along with St. Bonaventure and Canisius, Niagara has been part of a rich hoops tradition for more than a century.

BEST TEAM: 1953-54 The starting five of Larry Costello, Baltico "Bo" Erias, Charlie Hoxie, Ed Fleming and Jim McConnell were all NBA draft picks after their careers at Niagara. They made it to the final four of the NIT, and, after disposing of Western Kentucky in the third-place game, 71-65, they also clinched their best finish (24-6) under coach John J. "Taps" Gallagher.

BEST PLAYER: G CALVIN MURPHY (1967-70) The three-time All-America was a 5'9" dynamo: devastating from the perimeter, fierce on D and an improbable dunk artist (although only in practice, because dunking was outlawed during games from 1967 to '76). Murphy scored 68 against Syracuse as a junior in 1968. The next season, he blazed Niagara's first trail to the Tourney.

BEST COACH: JOHN J. "TAPS" GALLAGHER (1931-43, '46-65) In 31 seasons, the

Gentleman Coach led Niagara to 26 winning seasons and seven NITs. But the best testament to his ability is the list of his pupils: future NBA coaches Hubie Brown, Larry Costello and Frank Layden.

GAME FOR THE AGES: Sure, defeating Siena in six overtimes on Feb. 21, 1953, was impressive. But busting No. 2 St. Bonaventure's 99-game winning streak at the Olean Armory on Feb. 25, 1961, was epic.

HEARTBREAKER: In the 1993 MAAC tournament finals, Niagara was poised to make its first NCAA Tournament in 23 years, riding its trapping defense to a 10-point halftime lead over Manhattan. But the Purple Eagles paid the ultimate price for failing to put the game away in the second half. With nine seconds left and the game tied at 67, Jaspers star Keith Bullock (30 points) missed a five-footer off the front iron, setting off a loose-ball scramble that ended with a controversial Dwayne Daniel foul on Manhattan's Chris Williams in the left corner. Williams made one of two from the line for the 68-67 win, and Niagara stayed in bracketology exile for another 12 years.

FIERCEST RIVAL: Ever since 1907, Niagara and Canisius have been crossing over the Erie Canal to duke it out. While Niagara holds a 94-72 series lead, Canisius has come up big against the Purple Eagles at some very inopportune times. Canisius snapped Niagara's 37-game home winning streak in 1935 and spoiled the ribbon-cutting of the Niagara Falls Convention Center in 1974 by handing Niagara its first loss in its new home.

FANFARE AND HOOPLA: Don't call Niagara "chicken." That's the mistake St. Bonaventure made before a 1961 game in which it was going for its 100th straight home win. With the Purple Eagles about to come out for warmups, a purple-painted bird guided by a leash clucked all around the court, to the delight of the Olean Armory crowd. The Purple Eagles got the last laugh, however, winning 87-77. In fact, they are still laughing about it: In their trophy case, you'll find a stuffed replica of the faux-chicken.

FAN FAVORITE: G PHIL SCAFFIDI (1975-80) As captain of the 1978-79 squad, Scaffidi was on his way to setting the school's all-time assist record when he was diagnosed with adrenal cancer. After undergoing eight hours of surgery and grueling rehab, the six-foot guard returned to the court six times during the next season and set the career assist record (since surpassed) in a game against Cleveland State on Jan. 21, 1980. Sadly, two months later he died. After the season, the U.S. Basketball Writers Association posthumously honored Scaffidi with its Most Courageous Award. Today, his No. 3 hangs in the Gallagher Center and a campus gym has been named in his honor.

CONSENSUS ALL-AMERICAS	
1969, '70	Calvin Murphy, G
FIRST-ROUND PRO PICKS	
1951	Zeke Sinicola, Fort Wayne (4)

PROFILE
Niagara University, Niagara, NY
Founded: 1856
Enrollment: 3,825 (2,927 undergraduate)
Colors: Purple and white
Nickname: Purple Eagles
Current arena: John J. "Taps" Gallagher Center, opened in 1949 (2,400)
Previous: Niagara Falls Convention Center, 1974-82, 1988-96 (N/A); Buffalo Memorial Auditorium, 1941-96 (18,000); St. Vincent's Gym, 1906-49 (N/A)
First game: 1905

All-time record: 1,348-1,044-1 (.564)
Total weeks in AP Top 20/25: 20
Current conference: Metro Atlantic Athletic (1989-)
Conference titles:
Western NY Little Three: 6 (1948, '49, '50 [tie], '53, '54, '55)
MAAC: 3 (1999 [tie], 2001 [tie], '05 [tie])
Conference tournament titles:
MAAC: 2 (2005, '07)
NCAA Tournament appearances: 3
NIT appearances: 13
Semifinals: 2

TOP 5

- G Alvin Cruz (2001-05)
- G Calvin Murphy (1967-70)
- F Charlie Hoxie (1951-55)
- F Juan Mendez (2001-05)
- C Alex "Boo" Ellis (1955-58)

RECORDS	GAME	SEASON	CAREER
POINTS	68 Calvin Murphy, vs. Syracuse (Dec. 7, 1968)	916 Calvin Murphy (1967-68)	2,548 Calvin Murphy (1967-70)
POINTS PER GAME		38.2 Calvin Murphy (1967-68)	33.1 Calvin Murphy (1967-70)
REBOUNDS	31 Alex "Boo" Ellis, vs. Kent State (Jan. 7, 1957); vs. Villanova (Dec. 28, 1956)	526 Alex "Boo" Ellis (1957-58)	1,533 Alex "Boo" Ellis (1955-58)
ASSISTS	22 Jackie Knowles, vs. Iona (Jan. 19, 1974)	195 Gary Bossert (1986-87)	630 Alvin Cruz (2001-05)

SEASON REVIEW											
SEASON	W-L	CONF.	SCORING	COACH	RECORD	SEASON	W-L	CONF.	SCORING	COACH	RECORD
1905-1914	67-54-1					1924-25	12-7			Peter Dwyer	
1914-15	8-9			A.V. Barrett	37-33 .529	1925-26	12-6			Peter Dwyer	46-27 .630
1915-16	4-6			Tom Tracey		1926-27	8-7			William McCarthy	
1916-17	2-5			Tom Tracey	6-11 .353	1927-28	11-5			William McCarthy	
1917-18	8-3			John O'Shea		1928-29	12-9			William McCarthy	
1918-19	1-0			John O'Shea	9-3 .750	1929-30	9-11			William McCarthy	
1919-20	6-2			John Blake		1930-31	12-10			William McCarthy	52-42 .553
1920-21	15-4			John Blake		1931-32	19-5			John J. "Taps" Gallagher	
1921-22	27-4			John Blake	48-10 .828	1932-33	13-6			John J. "Taps" Gallagher	
1922-23	13-4			Peter Dwyer		1933-34	11-9			John J. "Taps" Gallagher	
1923-24	9-10			Peter Dwyer		1934-35	13-6			John J. "Taps" Gallagher	

SEAS.	W-L	CONF.	POSTSEASON	SCORING	REBOUNDS	ASSISTS	COACH	RECORD
1935-36	17-6						John J. "Taps" Gallagher	
1936-37	12-10						John J. "Taps" Gallagher	
1937-38	8-13						John J. "Taps" Gallagher	
1938-39	11-8						John J. "Taps" Gallagher	
1939-40	12-7						John J. "Taps" Gallagher	
1940-41	13-7						John J. "Taps" Gallagher	
1941-42	16-6						John J. "Taps" Gallagher	
1942-43	20-6						John J. "Taps" Gallagher	
1943-44	no team							
1944-45	7-6						Edward Flynn	
1945-46	11-8						Edward Flynn	18-14 .563
1946-47	13-8	2-2					John J. "Taps" Gallagher	
1947-48	15-9	3-1					John J. "Taps" Gallagher	
1948-49	24-7	3-1					John J. "Taps" Gallagher	
1949-50	20-7	2-2	NIT FIRST ROUND				John J. "Taps" Gallagher	
1950-51	18-10	2-2					John J. "Taps" Gallagher	
1951-52	8-21	0-4					John J. "Taps" Gallagher	
1952-53	22-6	4-0	NIT QUARTERFINALS				John J. "Taps" Gallagher	
1953-54	24-6	3-1	NIT THIRD PLACE				John J. "Taps" Gallagher	
1954-55	20-6	3-1	NIT QUARTERFINALS		Ed Fleming 15.5		John J. "Taps" Gallagher	
1955-56	20-7	2-2	NIT FIRST ROUND	Alex "Boo" Ellis 22.9	Alex "Boo" Ellis 18.0		John J. "Taps" Gallagher	
1956-57	12-13	0-4		Alex "Boo" Ellis 24.3	Alex "Boo" Ellis 20.1		John J. "Taps" Gallagher	
1957-58	18-7	0-2	NIT FIRST ROUND		Alex "Boo" Ellis 19.5		John J. "Taps" Gallagher	
1958-59	15-7						John J. "Taps" Gallagher	
1959-60	13-12			Al Butler 28.8			John J. "Taps" Gallagher	
1960-61	16-5		NIT QUARTERFINALS				John J. "Taps" Gallagher	
1961-62	16-8						John J. "Taps" Gallagher	
1962-63	14-4						John J. "Taps" Gallagher	
1963-64	8-12						John J. "Taps" Gallagher	
1964-65	4-17						John J. "Taps" Gallagher	465-261 .640
1965-66	11-13				Manny Leaks 15.3		James Maloney	
1966-67	12-13				Manny Leaks 14.0		James Maloney	
1967-68	12-12			Calvin Murphy 38.2	Manny Leaks 14.2		James Maloney	35-38 .479
1968-69	11-13			Calvin Murphy 32.4			Frank Layden	
1969-70	22-7		NCAA REGIONAL SEMIFINALS	Calvin Murphy 29.4			Frank Layden	
1970-71	14-12						Frank Layden	
1971-72	21-9		NIT RUNNER-UP				Frank Layden	
1972-73	9-16					Al Williams 6.6	Frank Layden	
1973-74	12-14						Frank Layden	
1974-75	13-14						Frank Layden	
1975-76	17-12		NIT FIRST ROUND				Frank Layden	119-97 .551
1976-77	13-13						Dan Raskin	
1977-78	14-12						Dan Raskin	
1978-79	6-20						Dan Raskin	
1979-80	11-16	11-15					Dan Raskin	44-61 .419
1980-81	11-15	11-15					Pete Lonergan	
1981-82	19-10	7-2					Pete Lonergan	
1982-83	11-18	5-4					Pete Lonergan	
1983-84	10-18	5-9					Pete Lonergan	
1984-85	16-12	11-5					Pete Lonergan	67-73 .479
1985-86	14-14	10-8					Andy Walker	
1986-87	21-10	14-4	NIT SECOND ROUND			Gary Bossert 5.4	Andy Walker	
1987-88	15-15	12-6				Gary Bossert 6.3	Andy Walker	
1988-89	9-19	6-12					Andy Walker	59-58 .504
1989-90	6-22	5-11					Jack Armstrong	
1990-91	8-20	6-10					Jack Armstrong	
1991-92	14-14	8-8					Jack Armstrong	
1992-93	23-7	11-3	NIT FIRST ROUND				Jack Armstrong	
1993-94	6-21	3-11					Jack Armstrong	
1994-95	5-25	2-12					Jack Armstrong	
1995-96	13-15	6-8					Jack Armstrong	
1996-97	11-17	5-9					Jack Armstrong	
1997-98	14-13	10-8					Jack Armstrong	
1998-99	17-12	13-5		Alvin Young 25.1	Kevin Jobity 7.7	Jeremiah Johnson 5.0	Joe Mihalich	
1999-2000	17-12	10-8		Demond Stewart 22.9	Nate Bernosky 6.8	Daryl Greene 5.0	Joe Mihalich	
2000-01	15-13	12-6		Demond Stewart 19.6	James Reaves 7.7	Daryl Greene 5.0	Joe Mihalich	
2001-02	18-14	12-6		Daryl Greene 14.8	James Reaves 8.8	Alvin Cruz 2.5	Joe Mihalich	
2002-03	17-12	12-6		Juan Mendez 18.4	Juan Mendez 9.0	Alvin Cruz 5.8	Joe Mihalich	
2003-04	22-10	13-5	NIT FIRST ROUND	Juan Mendez 20.5	James Reaves 9.6	Alvin Cruz 6.0	Joe Mihalich	
2004-05	20-10	13-5	NCAA FIRST ROUND	Juan Mendez 23.5	Juan Mendez 10.6	Alvin Cruz 6.4	Joe Mihalich	
2005-06	11-18	7-11		Charron Fisher 18.3	Clif Brown 8.2	Stanley Hodge 3.8	Joe Mihalich	
2006-07	23-12	13-5	NCAA FIRST ROUND	Charron Fisher 20.6	Clif Brown 9.7	Stanley Hodge 4.0	Joe Mihalich	
2007-08	19-10	12-6		Charron Fisher 27.6	Charron Fisher 9.5	Anthony Nelson 5.1	Joe Mihalich	
2008-09	26-9	14-4	NIT FIRST ROUND	Tyrone Lewis 16.2	Bilal Benn 9.3	Anthony Nelson 5.5	Joe Mihalich	205-132 .608