

2002 IHSAA Class A Girls Basketball State Finals

March 2, 2002, Conseco Fieldhouse, Indianapolis

North Vermillion Edges Hebron For Class A State Title

The battle between the top two ranked teams in Class A lived up to its billing as North Vermillion edged Hebron, 45-42, in the 27th Annual IHSAA Girls Basketball State Finals at Conseco Fieldhouse.

With a one point lead and one second remaining in the game, senior forward Sherri Norman sealed the victory for the Falcons with a pair of free throws for the final margin. Hebron's desperation shot at the buzzer fell short. Hebron had possession of the ball with 4.9 seconds left following a timeout when Norman made a steal on the in-bound pass and was fouled by Hebron's Lauren Bechtold, her fifth of the game.

It was the first state championship in any sport for top-ranked North Vermillion, a school of 254 students, located in Vermillion County along the Illinois state line in west central Indiana.

Hebron held a 9-7 first quarter lead, but North Vermillion took a 23-19 advantage into the lockerroom at halftime. The Falcons enjoyed their largest lead of seven points with 1:50 remaining in the third quarter at 32-25, but Hebron went on an 8-2 run to finish the quarter down 34-33.

Kayla Hinkle led North Vermillion with 14 points and Allison Hughes chipped in 12. The Falcons top scorer, Ashley Hughes at 14.9 per game, was held to two points. Hinkle also had 11 rebounds.

North Vermillion, making its first appearance in the girls basketball state finals, finished 25-1, including a 24-game win streak. They were coached by Ken Gentrup.

Second-ranked Hebron was led by Bechtold's 15 points and Lynn Poncsak's 10 points.

The Hawks, coached by Jerry Bechtold (Lauren Bechtold's father), finished 25-3 in its first trip to the state finals.

[Click for Final Box Score](#)

Game Notes

Hebron's Lauren Bechtold Wins Roy Mental Attitude Award

Lauren Bechtold of Hebron High School has been named winner of the Patricia L. Roy Mental Attitude Award for the Class A Girls Basketball.

Lauren is senior class president at Hebron, along with being a member of the Student Council, STOP and the Spanish Club. She has been an Honor Roll student throughout her four years and was named winner of the Top Spanish Award. She also is a member of the Cross Country and Track teams.

Academically, she ranks first in her class of 89 students. She has signed a basketball scholarship to play at Valparaiso University. Bechtold becomes the first Hebron student athlete to win a mental attitude award.

The award is named after Patricia L. Roy, the former assistant commissioner of the IHSAA, who is regarded both statewide and nationally as a pioneer in girls athletics.

Farm Bureau Insurance, the IHSAA corporate partner, presented a \$1,000 scholarship to Hebron High School in the name of Bechtold.

Hebron Ties Class A Three-Pointers Record

Hebron tied the Class A team record for most three pointers made in a state finals game by connecting five times in 16 attempts. Senior guard Lauren Bechtold was responsible for three treys. Bloomfield (1998) and Triton (2000) also hit five three-pointers previously.

State Finals Photographs and Team Posters

Visit the website of [20-20 Photographic](#), the IHSAA's official photographer for its state championship events. The company will display action photographs from this year's Girls Basketball State Finals during the week following the state finals that you may purchase. Also for sale will be team posters commemorating your school's path to the state finals.

State Finals Programs Available

Couldn't be there for the girls basketball state finals? You can still purchase a copy of the official state finals program while supplies last! Programs are \$3.00 if you purchase in person at the IHSAA Office (9150 N. Meridian Street in Indianapolis) or \$4.50 by mail (postage included). To order, send a check for \$4.50 made payable to the IHSAA, a note with your return address and brief description of your request and mail to: IHSAA Programs, PO Box 40650, Indianapolis, IN 46240-0650. Sorry, no credit cards. To further inquire, e-mail Assistant Sports Information Director Jason Wille at jwille@ihsaa.org.

Quotes

Hebron Head Coach Jerry Bechtold

One of our game plans coming in was to attack the basket. We thought we could shoot from the outside, but to be competitive we knew we had to drive. We knew we could put up shots and rebound.

Foul situation in first half. I thought the foul situation hurt us in the first half. We weren't getting to the (free throw) line and we wanted to be there. I won't say the game was over in the first half, but we knew we couldn't dig a four or five point hole in a game of this caliber.

I told our girls if they were going to play one of their best career games this was the one to do it in. My job was to pick all of their little egos and get us on the same page. They're

devastated and I'm devastated for them.

On North Vermillion's Allison Hughes Allison is the type of girl that could go off for 25 points at any given time. We were a little bit concerned at her potential. She finished with 12 points and I thought defensively Crystal (Duffala) did a great job on her.

On the last possession I was under the impression that they (North Vermillion) weren't going to let Lauren Bechtold beat them. I felt I'd rather have someone else take the shot and our discussion in the huddle was to use Lauren as a decoy. We knew they had three fouls to give and that put us in a tough situation.

Hebron Guard Lauren Bechtold

On the last possession We were hoping to use me as the decoy and I was fine with that decision. Our goal was to get Jennifer (Marshall) the ball to see what she could do.

North Vermillion Head Coach Ken Gentrup

We overcame some adversity this year. Our three seniors (Ashley Hughes, Abby Gibson, Sherri Norman) have worked very hard for years to accomplish this. Last year this was a dream and this year it was reality.

We've been in some close games this year. We knew they had good senior leadership. We also knew they are as good, if not better, than we are at the line. Overall, they are very much like we are.

I thought the turning point of our season was the loss to Rockville earlier this season (November 9, 2001). If you can learn a lot from a loss, we definitely did. We learned we could lose at anytime if we didn't play our game. I truly believe we've played well ever since that loss.

North Vermillion Guard Ashley Hughes

Our crowd really gets us going. There is no doubt that the enthusiasm carries over to the court and helps us get fired up to play. I think we did a great job containing Lauren Bechtold. She's going to get her points, but we slowed her down and shut down some of their other key players.

North Vermillion Guard Abby Gibson

Before the game, we knew we had to stay focused and play our game. We reminded each other to keep our eyes level to prevent getting caught up in the fieldhouse and the emotion of the game. I knew we needed a run late in the game to get our crowd going, which in turn, would get us motivated on the court.