

The 93rd Annual IHSAA Boys Basketball State Finals

March 29, 2003, Conseco Fieldhouse, Indianapolis

Pike Completes Perfect Season

Top-ranked Pike held off a valiant effort by DeKalb, winning the Class 4A state championship game, 65-52. Pike remained undefeated, joining seven other teams to complete that task, including Cass who won the Class 2A state championship earlier in the day.

Pike, coached by Larry Bullington, finished 29-0 on the season, while fourth-ranked DeKalb finished with a 26-2 record. The Barons were coached by Cliff Hawkins.

Pike and DeKalb played close for the first three quarters, with Pike owning the game's largest lead at nine points at that time. After closing the lead to four at halftime, DeKalb quickly got the lead midway through the third quarter. After two consecutive DeKalb steals that resulted in points, Pike took control with a 13-2 run that bridged the third and fourth quarters. DeKalb drew within six points with 3:23 left in the game, but Pike made their shots down the stretch to secure the victory.

Pike claimed its third state championship in the win. This was the first appearance in a boy's basketball state championship game for DeKalb.

DeKalb's Alex Kock led all scorers with 25 points, also adding 12 rebounds. Pike was led by Robert Vaden with 21 points. Also contributing for the state champions was Justin Cage with 15 points and 15 rebounds, and Courtney Lee with 15 points. Zach Christlieb scored 10 points in his effort for DeKalb.

Alex Kock Wins Trester Award for Mental Attitude

Alex Kock of DeKalb High School was named winner of the Class 4A 2003 Boys Basketball Tournament Arthur L. Trester Award for Mental Attitude. Members of the IHSAA Executive Committee present the award to the outstanding senior participant in each classification of the boys basketball state finals. The recipients of this award, who were nominated by their principals and coaches, must excel in mental attitude, scholarship, leadership and athletic ability in basketball.

Academically, Alex ranks 40th in his class of 239 and is a member of the National Honor Society. He is also very active as a DARE role model and is involved with Students Against Drunk Driving and passes his time and concerns along to the youth of the community in Reading to Young Elementary Students.

His volunteer work includes being a Red Cross Blood Drive volunteer and Auburn Parks Christmas Walk volunteer.

In addition to his basketball efforts, Alex also was a three-year starter and letter-winner with the Barons' football team and was AP Honorable Mention All-State, team captain and team MVP as a senior. Though he is undecided as to his collegiate future, Indiana University is recruiting him as a preferred walk-on at quarterback. He hopes to major in Business once that college decision is made.

Alex is the son of Kathie and Ron Kock of Auburn.

Farm Bureau Insurance, IHSAA corporate partner, presented a scholarship check for \$1,000.00 to DeKalb High School in the name of Alex Kock.

Game Notes

Pike One of Eight Unbeaten Champs In Tournament History

Pike, at 29-0, joins Class 2A champion Cass, as the seventh and eighth teams in the 93-year history of the tournament to finish a season undefeated.

1955-56	Indianapolis Crispus Attucks	31-0
1956-57	South Bend Central	30-0
1968-69	Indianapolis Washington	31-0
1969-70	East Chicago Roosevelt	28-0
1970-71	East Chicago Washington	29-0
1984-85	Marion	29-0
2002-03	Cass (2A)	26-0
2002-03	Pike (4A)	29-0

Third Championship In Six Seasons For Pike

Pike joins Class A state champion Lafayette Central Catholic in winning its third state championship in six seasons. The Red Devils won Class 4A titles in 1998 and 2001 and finished as the runner-up last season to Gary West Side.

Team Posters And Individual Action Photographs Available

Visit 20-20 Photographic, the IHSAA's photographer and the Midwest's Leader in Sports Action Photography, for images captured during Saturday's four championship games! Action photos as well as 20-20's Ultimate Sports Poster will be available for purchase later in the week following the state finals.

IHSAA State Championship Merchandise

For t-shirts and sweatshirts commemorating the 93rd Annual IHSAA State Finals or for any of our events, visit our friends at Morris, Inc.

State Finals Programs Available

Couldn't be at Conseco Fieldhouse for the state finals? You can still purchase a copy of the official souvenir program while supplies last! Programs are \$3.00 if you purchase in person at the IHSAA Office (9150 N. Meridian Street in Indianapolis) or \$5.00 by mail (postage included). To order, send a check for \$5.00 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.

Game Quotes

Pike Coach Larry Bullington

"This was only goal all season. After last year, we just committed ourselves to winning this championship."

"Our guys met the challenge. It was a tremendous year. Being ranked number one, we had the bullseye on our backs right from the start, so we just took it one game at time and just got better as the season went along."

"I wasn't sure we were ever going to hit layup for a period of time, but we kept getting the ball inside and things worked out. In the second half we were able to get a little cushion and then Robert (Vaden) hit a big three and was fouled. That was huge. Then, I really thought we played excellent defense down the stretch."

"We have strength in numbers and no one guy has to shoulder the burden. Each player had his responsibility and just so very proud of them. They not just ballplayers but they are great guys to coach and be around."

"The win not only gave us the state championship but also put us down as one of the greatest teams of all-time. It means a lot to me personally, I've been going to the gym since I was three years old and I know a lot about the history of Indiana basketball, my dad was a coach...it really means a lot to me."

"When we were down one, we really picked it up on the boards and turned up the pressure on our defense. It just mushroomed from there and when I looked up at the board we were up 10."

Pike's Robert Vaden

"When we got behind in the second half, we just picked up our defense and concentrated on our rebounding. We just played really hard and kept our focus."

Pike's Justin Cage

"Tonight we played together and tried to utilize our size and quickness. They (DeKalb) played us tough and I think we showed our toughness when we got behind. We stepped up our defense and started hitting our shots. This is the greatest feeling."

DeKalb Coach Cliff Hawkins

“This is a tremendous group of young people. I couldn’t be prouder. This was a tough loss but it doesn’t diminish from our season.”

“This group of seniors has won almost 70 games with only five losses and three of those coming in the state tournament. We competed well for the northern half of the state. We executed our game plan the best we could but their athleticism got to us. Pike’s a great ball club. We tried to trap a little and they got the ball in low behind the zone and that hurt us. We had trouble defending.”