

Indiana High School Athletic Association

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Blake Ress, Commissioner

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WARREN CENTRAL REPEATS AS CLASS 5A CHAMPION

Warren Central ran for over 300 yards in the game and limited Fort Wayne Snider's potent running attack as the Warriors (14-1) repeated as Class 5A state champions with a 35-23 victory at the RCA Dome in Indianapolis.

The win signaled Warren's fourth state championship trophy, its second under coach Kevin Wright, to go along with its 4A win in 1984 and a 5A crown in 1985.

Darren Evans rushed for 166 yards on a 5A game record 33 carries and a score while quarterback Dexter Taylor ran off with 104 on 16 attempts and three touchdowns. Of Warren's 68 offensive plays, 65 came on the ground to set a 5A game record which totaled 347 yards.

Snider's powerful ground game came into the contest averaging 336.5 yards per game and, though it was productive, Warren's defense held them to 101 yards below that. Still running back LCJ Martin and quarterback Terrance Hayden combined for 123 and 101 yards, respectively. Hayden finished the game 7 of 14 for 74 yards and two touchdowns through the air.

Warren's Josh Bailey took the opening kickoff 62 yards back to the Snider 37 which set up the Warriors' first score five plays later when Dexter Taylor scored from four yards away. Snider answered the call on its next possession in only two plays when quarterback Terrance Hayden scrambled his way 32 yards for the touchdown.

Running back Darren Evans then capped an impressive Warren drive with his one yard carry to put his team back on top. The drive went 14 plays over 80 yards in 4:48.

After Snider was forced to punt, the Panthers downed Jon Rocholl's 54-yard punt at the one yard line. Lightning struck, however, as Taylor found Bailey who beat the defense for a 99 yard touchdown pass resulting in the longest play from scrimmage in the 32 years of the IHSAA State Finals. It was one of only three Warren pass attempts in the game.

To their credit, the Panthers took the ball back down the field in 13 plays covering 76 yards and ended when Hayden connected with De-Andre Sykes from 21 yards out. The extra point brought Snider to within 21-14.

Two mistakes cost Snider dearly over the next two minutes though. After its defense forced Warren into a three-and-out, the Panthers fumbled the punt return at their own 34 yard line. The Warriors advanced the ball down to the five and on third and goal Sedale Moss fumbled the option pitch from Taylor near the 12 but two Snider defenders couldn't get their hands on the bouncing ball before Taylor picked it up on the run and scored to push the lead back to a 14 point advantage with 1:27 to go before the half.

Rocholl kicked a 24 yard field goal with 10:01 to go in the third quarter to cut the margin to 28-17. That score held until late in the game when Taylor added his third score from 10 yards with 3:23 to play and Snider's Jason Pomfred caught a 12 yard pass from Hayden with 1:14 to go. The pass for the two-point conversion failed.

Snider's Andrew Gregory Named Mental Attitude Award Winner

Andrew Gregory of Fort Wayne's Snider High School was named winner of the 2004 Phil N. Eskew Mental Attitude Award in Class 5A Football.

At the conclusion of each state championship game, the IHSAA Executive Committee presents the award to an outstanding senior participant in the football state tournament. The recipient of the award, who was nominated by his principal and coach, must excel in mental attitude, scholarship, leadership and athletic ability. The award is named in honor of the third commissioner of the IHSAA who served from 1962 to 1976 and oversaw the beginning of the state football tournament.

Andrew ranks 18th in his class of 453 and is President of Snider's chapter of the National Honor Society. He is a member of the Academic Decathlon Team, where he was a state champion. He was also the captain of the Hoosier Academic Super Bowl Team and has received National Merit Scholarship recognition. He has applied for acceptance to the United States Military Academy, where he intends to major in Political Science or History.

Athletically, Andrew was a member of the Panthers football squad all four years and competed two seasons as a participant on the track and field team.

He is the son of Penny and Paul Gregory of New Haven.

He becomes the third player from Fort Wayne Snider to claim the mental attitude award in football. The others were Brock Rohrbacher in 1986 and Marcus Heminger in 2002.

Farm Bureau Insurance, the IHSAA corporate partner, presented a \$1,000.00 scholarship to Fort Wayne Snider High School in the name of Andrew Gregory.

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 this weekend's state 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 other merchandise commemorating this year's tournament or for any of our events, visit our friends at [Morris, Inc.](#)

State Finals Programs Available

Couldn't be in Indy 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 by credit card, have your Visa or MasterCard ready and call us at 317-846-6601 Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. EST. Or 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.

Class 5A Game Quotes

Warren Central coach Kevin Wright

I've said this before but I'll say it again. I've never been more proud of a group of kids and coaches than this group. They are a bunch of no names. No superstars, they just play well together as a team. We graduated 42 seniors and 6 division I players from last year's team. Tradition never graduates. Warren has a great tradition dating back to the 70's and 80's.

In a game like this you need to get a couple of breaks. You have to get breaks in a game like tonight. We felt like turnovers were going to make or break us. Sometimes the ball bounces your way and sometimes it doesn't. We were just fortunate tonight.

(On the 99-yard TD pass from Dexter Taylor to Josh Bailey) Kind of ironic for a team that runs the ball as much as we do. Before the game somebody said throw the ball at least 10 times. I told them they better show up early and watch warm-ups because that may be their only chance. Dexter (Taylor) stepped up and made the big throw and Josh (Bailey) made the big catch when he had to. I'm very proud of those guys.

Snider has a great program and in a lot of respects it is like looking in a mirror. I have a lot of respect for them. Coach (Russ) Isaacs is a guy I have always looked up to. He really helped me when I first began coaching. He is a legend in Indiana High School football and an honor to compete against him.

We were really concerned coming into the game with their (Snider) size and speed. They had just dominated everyone they had played. I was holding my breath to the very last second and that is a credit to them. They have a great program.

Controlling the ball is our game plan every week. That is no secret. We are going to run the football and if you don't stop it we are going to keep running the football. We had the one big play throwing the ball (99-yard TD pass) but we hang our hat on running the football. We have an excellent quarterback in Dexter Taylor, excellent skilled players and a tremendous offensive line.

Our defensive coordinator Steve Tutsie and his staff did an excellent job of preparing for them and the kids went out and executed very well.

Fort Wayne Snider coach Russ Isaacs

We stopped them once and made them punt and fumbled the punt and they go in and score. They get a 99 yard touchdown pass and they run in a fumble for a score. Those three plays were the difference in the game.

If you want to be state champions you have to play great. You have to make them make mistakes and we didn't do that. The difference in the game was they made big plays and we did not make any big plays.

Warren Central did exactly what they had to do to win and we did not do what we had to.

We were disappointed that we did not give our best effort in regards to technical execution on our plays.

We didn't have the ball much in the second half and that's a credit to them. They chewed up the clock and kept our offense off the field. We needed a touchdown instead of a field goal in the third quarter and if we had scored (a touchdown) it might have made a difference.

(On Mental Attitude Award winner Andrew Gregory) He's very deserving. He's an excellent student and a good football player. He'll probably get an appointment to a military academy.