

Indiana High School Athletic Association

9150 North Meridian Street, Box 40650, Indianapolis, Indiana 46240-0650

Phone: 317-846-6601 ♦♦♦ Fax: 317-575-4244 ♦♦♦ Website: www.ihsaa.org

Blake Ress, Commissioner

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Gibson Southern wins second IHSAA title in Three Years

Gibson Southern used a two-out rally in the bottom of the seventh inning to produce the only run in a 1-0 victory over Pendleton Heights in the Class 3A championship game. ♦ The Titans won their second state championship in their third consecutive trip to the State Finals after claiming the 2A crown in 2003.

Titans junior catcher Amanda Maurer started the game-winning rally with a single to right center in the seventh. ♦ Freshman Kristen Staback pinch-ran for Maurer, stealing second base. ♦ Junior third baseman Kristin King then delivered the game-winning hit with a double to right center to score Staback with the game's only run.

Gibson Southern junior pitcher Carrie Wilderman improved to 22-3 this season with a complete-game four-hitter.

Arabians pitcher Whitney Owens (15-1) took a perfect game into the fifth inning, when Maurer doubled to the left center wall with one away. ♦ Owens scattered three hits over 6 2/3 innings, with two of them coming in the seventh inning. ♦ Pendleton Heights, coached by Scott Hall, finished 30-2 in earning its second IHSAA runner-up finish (2001). The loss ended a 26-game winning streak for the Arabians.

Jason Blackard coached Gibson Southern to its second state title in four finals appearances since 2000. Gibson Southern made its way into the final game after a 2-1 victory over Andean in Friday's semifinal round. Pendleton Heights advanced to the championship contest thanks to a 6-0 win over Belmont on Friday.

Ziliak Named Winner of Mental Attitude Award

Gibson Southern senior first baseman Jennifer Ziliak was presented with the IHSAA Mental Attitude Award for Class 3A following Saturday's championship game. ♦ She became the second Titan to win the award, joining 2003 2A recipient Allison May.

Ziliak graduated 10th in her senior class with a 3.87 cumulative grade point average, earning an Academic Honors Diploma. ♦ She volunteers in the school's Life Skills classroom, working with moderately and severely mentally handicapped students, and she also serves as a peer facilitator. ♦ She is active in her community in 4-H, CLAY leadership group, parish work including working in a soup kitchen, and assisting at YMCA Camp Carson.

♦ Jennifer is an excellent student, a quiet leader, and a good role model, ♦ said Gibson Southern principal Dr. James Isaacs. ♦ ♦ She inspires her teammates with grit and determination, coming back from a broken nose and laceration suffered prior to the sectional opener to play in the championship game two nights later. ♦

On the field, Ziliak helped the Titans to three IHSAA State Finals in her high school career, including the 2003 Class 2A state championship. ♦ She finished with 11 career home runs.

The Mental Attitude Award is presented to a senior player, nominated by her principal and coach, who must excel in mental attitude, scholarship, leadership, and athletic ability in softball.

Indiana Farm Bureau Insurance, IHSAA corporate, presented Gibson Southern with a \$1,000 scholarship in the name of Jennifer.