

Indiana High School Athletic Association

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Blake Ress, Commissioner

March 5, 2005

Tri-Central wins Third Straight Class A Championship

Tri-Central became the first school to win three consecutive Class A titles with a 47-46 triumph over Northeast Dubois on Saturday morning at Conseco Fieldhouse in Indianapolis. ♦ Tri-Central (19-7) joins Fort Wayne Bishop Luers (1999-2002) as the only schools to win at least three straight titles, with Luers winning four in a row (3-2A, 1-3A) during its championship reign.

Tri-Central took the lead for good early in the fourth quarter and then held on to earn their third crown in a row. ♦ The Trojans led 47-42 in the final minute, but Northeast Dubois mounted a furious rally with Leigh-Ann Kluesner hitting a three-pointer to narrow the gap to 47-45 with 11 seconds remaining. ♦ Following a turnover, the Jeeps ♦ Tia Wineinger made 1-of-2 free throws with six seconds left to trim the lead to 47-46. ♦ After another turnover, Northeast Dubois got a final opportunity. ♦ Wineinger ♦s shot was blocked by Kaci Allen with two seconds on the clock, but the Jeeps ♦ Lauren Stemle got the rebound and got off a shot in the paint that just missed at the final buzzer.

Tri-Central ♦s Kaci Allen led all players with 20 points along with team highs of seven rebounds and three assists. ♦ Junior guard Meranda Burnett joined Allen in double digits with 12 points, dishing out a game-high seven assists and adding three steals.

Kluesner led three Northeast Dubois players in double figures with 18 points, along with eight rebounds. ♦ Wineinger finished with 13 points and seven boards, Allison Matheis chipped in 10 points, and Stemle led all players with 11 rebounds.

Northeast Dubois, coached by Alan Matheis, raced to an 8-2 lead on its way to a 10-9 edge after the first quarter. ♦ Tri-Central used an 11-3 run in the second quarter to move ahead, holding a 29-20 advantage at halftime. ♦ Tri-Central led 34-28 in the third quarter before Northeast Dubois finished the period with a 7-0 surge to take a 35-34 edge into the final eight minutes. The Jeeps finished 20-6.

The one-point victory is the tightest margin in Class A history, eclipsing Tri-Central ♦s two-point triumph (57-55) over North Vermillion in 2002-03. Tri-Central was coached by Kathie Layden.

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 A Game Quotes

Coach Kathie Layden

Tri-Central Head Coach Kathie Layden

♦ Was it exciting enough for you? ♦ I thought in the third quarter, when we got our 10-point lead we were playing with a lot of confidence. ♦ We were taking good shots and taking care of the ball like we have all season. ♦ But when we got into foul trouble it kind of changed our game plan. ♦ We were lucky to pull it out at the end. ♦

On defending the last play

♦ We wanted to protect the basket by playing a tight man-to-man inside. ♦ They had good movement, which kind of broke us down, and they were able to get a couple of shots off. ♦ And me, I had my eyes closed. ♦

Overall play in the second half and the last few possessions

♦ I thought we had the momentum going into the locker room at halftime. ♦ Things were going our way and I thought we were in control until the very end. ♦ We got the ball to the right people at the right time to score. ♦ They made it tough on us to get the ball inbounds, something that we haven ♦t had a problem with all year. ♦ I give a lot of credit to the Northeast Dubois defense. ♦ I think we all had the jitters and we were very fortunate to pull it out at the end.

Rebounding as a key to the game

◆ They (Northeast Dubois) were very aggressive on the boards.◆ We watched a lot of film on them and I knew that they weren't going to fast break on us.◆ So, I told the girls to go ahead and crash the boards and that worked to our advantage and at the same time kept them from trying to fast break.◆

#24 Meranda Burnett

◆ I felt like I was going to be easier to get the ball to others rather than get my own shots.◆ I knew if I could get the ball inside to Kaci (Allen) she would draw the foul or make the shot.◆

On her third consecutive state finals appearance

◆ It helps to know what's going on and what to expect once you get here.◆ I think we are a tourney team.◆ We always set our minds on winning the game.◆

On the last possession (2.4 seconds)

◆ I saw my life flash before my eyes on that final possession.◆

Coach Alan Matheis

◆ It took us awhile, that first half, to adjust to their intense pressure.◆ The second half we talked about how to handle the pressure and be a stronger offensive team.◆

◆ In the first quarter we took the lead but made a mistake at the end◆we should've had more of a lead.◆ They hurt us in that second quarter.◆ Tri-Central took control of the game in the second quarter and I knew we needed to make some adjustments at halftime.◆

◆ In the third quarter, we ran the offense better and were able to handle their pressure.◆ We were able to get our shots and play more under control.◆ By adjusting in the third quarter, we were able to get the lead back.◆ But, when they got the lead back in the fourth quarter, we had to change our attack.◆

◆ Our kids are in good shape and athletic.◆ I thought we played well enough in the fourth quarter to win the basketball game.◆ We have come back all year in the fourth by putting on full-court pressure.◆ We then made some big plays and got the game closer.◆ We had a couple of chances to win it at the end.◆

◆ It looked like we got fouled maybe twice in the last two seconds and they didn't call either one.◆ But, I don't want to take anything away from Tri-Central or our team.◆ We played a good game and Tri-Central played a tremendous game.◆ It's a shame it had to come down to a situation like that.◆

◆ Leigh-Ann (Kluesner) played well, especially in the second half.◆ But, it was a team effort.◆ We brought a huge amount of fans along and that was a big support to us, especially in the fourth quarter.◆