

# Indiana High School Athletic Association, Inc.

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Blake Ress, Commissioner

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## **LUERS WINS CLASS 2A STATE CROWN OVER WINCHESTER, 69-67**

Class 2A's third-ranked Fort Wayne Bishop Luers came up with key plays in the closing minutes to hold off No. 4 Winchester, 69-67, sealing its first-ever IHSAA Class 2A state crown at Conseco Fieldhouse. The win capped a 24-3 season for Luers Head Coach James Blackmon, who was also inducted into the Indiana Basketball Hall of Fame on Wednesday in Indianapolis. Winchester was making its third state finals appearance, including falling in double-overtime in 2007.

Winchester had a penchant for making shots all day, building a 20-12 lead after one quarter. By halftime, the Golden Falcons' lead was cut to 37-32 despite Tyler Koch scoring 20 of his game-high 37 points in the first 16 minutes. Winchester shot 50 percent in the first half and limited Luers to just 13-of-35 from the floor.

Luers opened the third quarter on a 10-2 run, led by sophomore DeShaun Thomas to take a 42-41 lead with 5:45 left. There were six ties and five lead changes in the second half alone. Koch helped Luers push its lead back to 51-45 before taking a 57-54 advantage into the fourth quarter.

Luers' Troy Amos opened the fourth with a trey to tie the game at 57 all as the teams began to trade buckets. Junior Jake Kuhn, who came in averaging just under three points per game, got the decisive layup with 1:31 left, making the score 66-64. After a Winchester turnover, the Golden Flashes were forced to foul, putting Lawrence Barnett at the line. A 62 percent shooter, Barnett swished both offerings to give Luers a 68-64 lead with 44 ticks left.

Winchester's Brock Morrison had a shot to tie the game at the end of regulation, but Thomas altered the shot and came up with the defensive rebound to ice the victory.

Despite facing constant double and triple-teams, the 6-foot-7 Thomas ended the game with 20 points, five rebounds and three blocked shots and Barnett added 18 points and eight assists. James Blackmon's nephew, Evan, chipped in 15 points and Amos scored 13 off the bench. Luers shot better than 57 percent from the floor in the second half including 5-of-10 from three-point range. Winchester's efficient attack ended the game shooting 51 percent from the floor.

Koch's 37 set a new IHSAA Class 2A state championship game record, eclipsing the previous mark set by Batesville's Jacob Garvin in 2001. He hit 15-of-24 shots and blocked three shots in defeat. Additionally, Morrison turned in 15 points and a game-high eight rebounds in 24 minutes as a reserve and Brock Ward had six points and six assists.

Winchester closed the 2007-08 campaign with a 23-4 record for 12<sup>th</sup>-year Head Coach Chip Mehaffey.

The following records were set during the Class 2A championship game: Luers matched a Class 2A single-game record with 16 assists, set by Forest Park in 2005. Koch set Class 2A championship game records with 37 points, beating Batesville's Jacob Garvin's previous mark of 30 and hitting 15 field goals, beating Forest Park's Brandon Hopf and Northwestern's Zavier Sanders previous record of 10. Barnett's eight assists tied the Class 2A single-game record while Koch and Thomas matched the single-game record of three blocked shots in a game.

## **LUCAS WICKERSHAM NAMED TRESTER AWARD WINNER**

Following the game, members of the IHSAA Executive Committee named Lucas Wickersham of Winchester Community High School as the winner of the Arthur L. Trester Mental Attitude Award.

The award is presented annually to a senior participant in each classification who was nominated by his principal and coach and has demonstrated excellence in mental attitude, scholarship, leadership and athletic ability.

Wickersham is ranked 16<sup>th</sup> in his senior class of 113, and has a 3.61 GPA. He plans to attend Butler University in the fall, where he will double major in Business and Biology.

Lucas is part of the IHSAA Student Ambassadors Mentor and Role Model programs, as well as the NCAA Stay-in-Bounds Program. He is a member of the National Honor Society and serves as Student Council Vice-President at Winchester Community.

Along with basketball, Wickersham has participated in football, track, and cross country for the Golden Falcons. He is a nominee for the 2007-2008 Wendy's High School Heisman Award.

"After coaching basketball for 20 years, I can honestly say that I have never coached an athlete who works harder than Lucas," says head coach Chip Mehaffey. "His work ethic has been an example for the players in our program and helped lead us to a state runner-up finish last year, and a return to the state finals this season."

He is the son of Michael and Julie Wickersham of Winchester.

Indiana Farm Bureau Insurance, the IHSAA's corporate partner, will present a \$1,000 scholarship to Winchester Community High School in the name of Tyler Wickersham.

The award is named in honor of Arthur L. Trester, the IHSAA's first commissioner who served the Association from 1929-44.

### **VSN MEANS ACTION PHOTOGRAPHY**

Visit our friends at [Visual Sports Network](#), the IHSAA's official photographer for all state championship events and one of the leading action photographers in the Midwest. VSN, which was on site Saturday, has captured hundreds of images from this year's State Finals and will have them ready for viewing and purchase beginning Monday.

### **CHAMPIONSHIP MERCHANDISE AVAILABLE**

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 there 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, have your Visa or MasterCard ready and call us at 317-846-6601 during business hours (Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-4 p.m. EST).

### **CLASS 2A POST-GAME QUOTES**

#### **James Blackmon, Fort Wayne Head Coach**

"I think both teams poured their hearts out there on the floor. I tip my hat to our guys. We kept our composure when we got down. It was a hard fought game and we made plays when we needed to. Winchester had a great game plan."

"At half, we talked about keeping our composure. There are a lot of gimmick defenses thrown at Deshaun (Thomas), sometimes two or three guys on him. In sectionals we saw a box-and-one. Other guys started stepping up and hitting shots, but when Deshaun had opportunities to get looks he knocked them down."

"I try to preach to my guys all year long that we have to play 32 minutes and tonight we really needed it."

(on Deshaun Thomas' performance)

"When you score 22-24 points on a stage like this that's a good performance. Every time he touched the ball he had two or three guys around him and had to work for every shot tonight. He made some good passes when the double and triple teams came."

"As compared to 25 years ago, as a player you seem to have more control. As a coach I'd recognize what needed to be done and try to get guys into the right situations to be successful. Sometimes it's tough on those sidelines."

(on next year's team)

"The future looks awful good. Others may want to talk about it(repeating) but I'm going to enjoy this one and let it sink in for awhile."

## **Chip Mehaffey, Winchester Head Coach**

"I'm really proud of our kids. They played great and gave it everything they had. The seniors are a great group. They have been a lot of fun to coach over the years."

"It was a supreme effort by our players. For their size, we out rebounded them. Our team plays as hard as any team in the state."

"Unfortunately things like in life didn't go as planned. We worked all year to get back in this position."

"The travel at the end wasn't a travel. But I might not have done a good job on a couple of situations as a coach. We missed on some block outs and we missed a couple of rotations. It's all part of it."

(on the last play of the game)

"We practice that situation all year. Our kids have prepared for that all year. We executed it perfectly and we got the shot we wanted. It just didn't go in. If I had a second thought, we might have gone for the three for the win. That's the only second guess I'd have."

"We play as a team, all the players have their roles. Lucas Wickersham's job is to guard the other team's best player. He did a fabulous job on one of the best players in the United States in Deshaun Thomas."

"Tyler Koch's role is to score. He is the quintessential basketball player. He's not had a bad practice or game all year. As you got to see today he is an amazing player. He's just not an Indiana All-Star, he's a Mr. Basketball candidate for next year."