

1998 IHSAA BOYS BASKETBALL

TOURNAMENT OF CHAMPIONS

GAME SUMMARY

LAFAYETTE CENTRAL CATHOLIC RALLIES IN DOUBLE OT

Class A state champion Lafayette Central Catholic overcame a double digit deficit in the fourth quarter and survived a double-overtime battle for a 113-106 victory over Alexandria in the first game of the Inaugural IHSAA Tournament of Champions April 3 at the RCA Dome in Indianapolis.

The Knights (25-3) earned themselves a spot in the title game against Pike.

For the game, both teams shot over 55 percent from the field and over 50 percent from three-point range which resulted in a record scoring performance. The 219 points scored in the game was the highest combined total at any level in the history of the IHSAA tournament. The previous mark was 212 points when South Bend Riley ousted Valparaiso, 112-100, in the 1990 Michigan City Regional.

Trailing 64-50 at the end of the third quarter, Lafayette Central Catholic outscored Alexandria 35-21 in the fourth to send the game to overtime. The Knights hit six of nine attempts from three-point range in the quarter, including four treys from junior guard Dan Schukraft who tied for game honors with 32 points.

Alexandria junior forward Dan Lustig, who came in averaging 3.4 points per game, broke loose for 32 points, including a three-pointer with :09 second left in regulation that knotted the game at 85 and forced overtime.

In the first overtime, Central Catholic owned a 97-94 lead with just a few ticks remaining. Alexandria's Jeff Closser stole an inbounds pass from under his basket and fired to senior forward David Porter who buried an off-balance three-pointer from the left corner with no time remaining to send the game to double overtime.

Schukraft hit two free throws with :24.7 second left in the second overtime to give Lafayette Central Catholic a five-point cushion at 111-106 and put the game out of reach.

Lafayette Central Catholic extended its winning streak to 15 games. Alexandria, which won the IHSAA Class 2A state title, finished 20-7.

QUOTES

Central Catholic Head Coach Chad Dunwoody -- "This is the type of game you saw because both teams were very relaxed. When you're relaxed you can shoot the ball very well and both teams did. Both teams were state champions and had nothing to lose -- the crowd wasn't much of a factor -- there's probably some people out there who are kicking themselves. We scored 80 points in the second half and that's phenomenal. We did a good job of spreading out Alexandria's defense. With four minutes remaining (in regulation), I told the kids, 'If Alex is going to press, that's perfect. If you'll be patient, you'll get some open shots'."

Central Catholic Junior Guard Dan Schukraft -- "In the first half I couldn't hit anything. In the second half I got much better. After I hit a couple of shots, I really felt I couldn't miss."

Central Catholic Senior Guard Brad Metzger -- "I'm a senior and I didn't want to go out a loser. So I really left it out there on the court. I think everyone wanted to give everything they had to make this moment count."

Central Catholic Senior forward Erik Franklin -- "It was a war out there. This was one of the most physical contests I ever played in. I was wiped out. It was the most physical game I've played all year with maybe the exception of the Cathedral game."

Alexandria Head Coach Garth Cone -- "Finally we can relax. No regrets. It is certainly a disappointment. But you saw a great game. My hat's off to Catholic -- I didn't come here thinking big or little. Just good against good."

(On big lead in second half) -- "When we got up 13 or 14, I told our coaches this is when we haven't done well all year."

(On opinion of T of C) -- This was just another weekend game in February. Last Saturday, we went home and did (celebrated) our number with our community just like the other champions did. Then we had to focus for six days on this game. We tried to approach it with not a lot of stress, to have fun and play hard. We accomplished that. We knocked each other around and helped each other up and then went back to knocking each other around. There was no real pressure but the team focused and got the job done and I'm very proud of them.

Alexandria junior forward Daniel Lustig -- "My cousin from Denver came in. He's on spring break and he said high school basketball was better in Colorado. So I had to show him. I told Rusty (Garner) that I felt like shooting tonight and he said 'Then shoot,'. I missed my first then hit one and they kept falling. I was 2 for 11 in three-pointers before tonight so I don't know what happened."

Alexandria senior forward David Porter -- "This was a great game. Exactly what I had hoped for. What was it 111-106? That's the game I want to go out on, win or lose."