

2001 IHSAA Boys Basketball State Finals

Class A Championship Results

ATTICA RALLIES FOR STATE CHAMPIONSHIP

Attica hit only two of four free throws in the closing seconds of the game, but it was enough for the Red Ramblers to hang on for a thrilling 64-62 victory and the Class A state championship on Saturday (March 24) at Conseco Fieldhouse in Indianapolis.

Senior Josh Smith and sophomore Travis Kirby both hit the front end of their two free throws to give Attica its first state championship in school history. It was Attica's second trip to the basketball state finals and the first since 1929 when the finals were a 16-team affair.

With the game tied at 62-62 and :07.8 seconds remaining, Kirby sank the first free throw and missed the second but Blue River Valley lost the rebound out of bounds. On the in-bounds pass, Kirby was fouled and made the first of two free throws. Blue River Valley got the rebound after the miss, but the downcourt pass for a last shot was intercepted and thrown into the air by Attica's Mark Mattern as time expired.

Blue River Valley led 54-40 with 6:27 to go in the game, but Attica went on a 20-4 run capped by two free throws by Ryan Francis that put the Red Ramblers back on top at 60-58. It was their first lead since the 6:36 mark of the second period.

Attica led 20-17 after the first period, but trailed 32-31 at the half. Blue River Valley held Attica to just five third period points for a 46-36 lead to begin the fourth.

Smith, the winner of the Class A Football Mental Attitude Award in November, finished the game with 19 points, 11 in the first half. Kirby and Francis finished with nine points each. Ten of Attica's 12 players were part of the Red Ramblers' state runner-up team in football.

With his 19 points, Smith ended the year at 24.0 points per game and 12th among the state's scoring leaders this year.

Blue River Valley was led by Kyle Cox's 30 points, the second-best output in a Class A championship game. Brody Boyd of Union (Dugger) scored 35 in the 2000 title contest. The 30 points improved his season average to 24.4 per game bumping him into a tie for 10th place this season in per game scoring. It also gave him 1,838 points for his career to tie him for 73rd place in state career scoring.

Philip Griffith finished with 11 points and nine rebounds and Brandon Cool with 10 points for Blue River Valley.

Blue River Valley held a 33-22 rebounding advantage, but were hurt by 25 turnovers. Attica scored 19 points off those miscues.

The Red Ramblers (21-6) were coached by Ralph Shrader. Blue River Valley, coached by Barry Huckleby, finished 22-5 in its first state finals appearance in any sport.

BLUE RIVER VALLEY'S BROWN NAMED TRESTER AWARD RECIPIENT

Andy Brown of Blue River Valley High School was selected by the IHSAA Executive Committee as the recipient of the Arthur L. Trester Award in Class A Boys Basketball.

A starting forward for the Vikings and its defensive stopper, Brown also participates in tennis and baseball.

Brown serves as the president his school's National Honor Society, has volunteered for Habitat for Humanity and also has been a fund-raiser for Riley Children's Hospital in Indianapolis.

Academically, Brown maintains a 3.6 GPA and plans to pursue accounting next fall at Ball State University.

Brown is the second Blue River Valley athlete to be awarded a mental attitude award in the last two years. Heather Blevins became the school's first winner during the 1999-00 school year when she was selected for the award in gymnastics.

Farm Bureau Insurance, the corporate partner of the Indiana High School Athletic Association, presented a \$1,000 scholarship to Blue River Valley High School in the name of Brown.

CLASS A POST-GAME QUOTES

Blue River Valley Coach Barry Huceby

"We thought coming in (to the tournament) that this might be the best game of the day. We made some turnovers and they hit some threes down the stretch. In the fourth quarter they came back on us and we couldn't stop their run at the end."

"It's tough to have a good offense when your center's on the bench. In the first half, it was 8-3 in our favor in fouls. We got called on a lot of fouls in the second half. When we were up by 14 points, we didn't take control and they found a way to wear us down in the stretch."

(On Kyle Cox) "All year he's gone to the line a lot. He'll get past you and they'll foul him or he'll pull up and hit the three. But he didn't go to the line in the first half."

"Defensively, we did the job on them in the third quarter but in the fourth quarter it was their (Attica's) turn. Again, it was difficult to run a simple offense when your center is on the bench."

Blue River Valley's Kyle Cox

"They used their speed and quickness to their advantage. I think they used their experience in football to their advantage. They got 28 points in the fourth quarter. You have to hand it to them. They weren't going to give up. You have to give credit to them for that."

Blue River Valley's Andy Brown

"It's kind of hard to be happy after this kind of loss but tomorrow it might feel better. But right now, I'm just concerned about my teammates."

Attica Coach Ralph Shrader

"If you'd told me I would walk into the interview room after the game after being down 14 in the third quarter and be introduced as the 2001 Class A state champions I would have thought you were crazy."

"Our kids continued to battle. We continued to do things offensively by spreading the court and moving the ball. We didn't have a true post player. We wanted to flash and make their big players react to us and I thought we'd be all right."

"I thought they did a super job on Josh (Smith) throughout the game. We did a poor job of trying to force the action to him and we forgot about team balance that got us this far. Later on we picked up the intensity a little. We made it more of a full court game, a run-and-jump kind of game which was to our advantage."

"I thought the kids showed a lot of heart and determination. I had players that were sitting on the bench and weren't playing in the third and fourth quarters. During timeouts (the players on the bench) were talking about heart and how they wanted to go out. That shows the nice chemistry we have."

Attica's Josh Smith

Travis Childress	1	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Andy Moody	3	1-1	0-0	0-0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Nate Larson	9	1-3	0-0	0-0	3	0	3	0	2	2
Totals	160	23-48	5-16	13-20	22	16	20	16	18	64
Percentage		.479	.313	.650						

Team Rebounds: 3

Score by Quarters:

Blue River Valley	17	15	14	16	--	62
Attica	20	11	5	28	--	64

Officials: Bryce Heller, Mike Waisnora.