

# IHSAA Football

## 1996-97 State Finals in Review

Tri-West Hendricks celebrated its first IHSAA state championship in any sport, while four other schools celebrated their new championships in the 24th Annual Indiana High School Athletic Association Football State Finals November 29-30, 1996 at the RCA Dome in Indianapolis.

North Montgomery (Class 2A) and Penn (Class 5A) successfully defended their 1995 state championships, while Zionsville (Class 3A) won the second IHSAA football title in its history and Indianapolis Cathedral (Class 4A) was crowned for the third time.

Four state championship game records were set in the five games of the 24th IHSAA Football State Finals. Those were:

- **Most Combined Points** -- 71: North Montgomery 37, Fort Wayne Luers 34, Class 2A.
- **Most Receptions** -- 12: Clancy Shank, Fort Wayne Luers vs. North Montgomery, Class 2A.
- **Most Interceptions** -- 3: Wesley Kendall, Zionsville vs. Fort Wayne Dwenger, Class 3A.
- **Longest Interception Return** -- 90 yards, Matthew Gerardot, Fort Wayne Luers vs. North Montgomery, Class 2A.

The combined two-day attendance saw 39,804 fans witness the five state championship games in the 13th state finals played at the RCA Dome.

A total of 308 schools and 21,751 participants began competition at the sectional level in the five classes.

### CLASS A

#### Tri-West Hendricks 37, Carroll (Flora) 14

In a battle of unbeatens, Tri-West scored 28 unanswered points in a 14-minute span midway through the game and went on to capture its first IHSAA football state championship. It also was the first of any kind in the school's 22-year history. The victory avenged a 26-13 state championship game loss to Carroll in 1995.

Junior quarterback Dustin Fleece threw touchdown passes of 11, 12 and 70 yards during Tri-West's run to fuel the offense. He finished with 197 passing yards. Junior Chris Volz caught three passes for 90 yards and two touchdowns, and also ran for 104 combined yards on three kickoff returns.

Senior running back Frank Vega concluded an outstanding high school career with 132 yards and Carroll's two touchdowns on 19 carries. With those touchdowns, Vega finished his career with 532 points to rank sixth on the state's all-time scoring list.

The IHSAA Executive Committee selected Michael Lowe of Carroll High School as the 1996 recipient of the Phil N. Eskew Award for Mental Attitude in Class A Football. Lowe was a four-year letterman as a wide receiver and defensive back for the Cougars and set the school record for career pass interceptions. Farm Bureau Insurance, the corporate partner of the IHSAA, presented a \$1,000 scholarship in Lowe's name to Carroll High School.

|                    |   |   |    |    |   |    |
|--------------------|---|---|----|----|---|----|
| Tri-West Hendricks | 0 | 7 | 14 | 16 | - | 37 |
| Carroll (Flora)    | 0 | 7 | 0  | 7  | - | 14 |

Carroll -- Vega 11 run (Hedrick kick).

Tri-West -- J. Bowman 1 run (Ward kick).

Tri-West -- Volz 11 pass from Fleece (Ward kick).

Tri-West -- Ward 12 pass from Fleece (Ward kick).

Tri-West -- Volz 70 pass from Fleece (Ward kick).

Carroll -- Vega 1 run (Hedrick kick).

Tri-West -- Safety, Smith tackled D. Springer in end zone.

Tri-West -- J. Bowman 28 run (Ward kick).

|                       | <b>Tri-West Hendricks</b> | <b>Carroll (Flora)</b> |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| First Downs           | 17                        | 12                     |
| Rushes/Yards          | 31-100                    | 40-199                 |
| Passing Yards         | 197                       | 41                     |
| Passes                | 11-26-2                   | 5-11-3                 |
| Plays/Total Net Yards | 57-297                    | 51-240                 |
| Return Yards          | 155                       | 114                    |
| Punts/Avg.            | 3-36.3                    | 6-28.3                 |
| Penalties/Yards       | 4-25                      | 8-76                   |
| Fumbles/Lost          | 1-1                       | 0-0                    |
| Time of Possession    | 22:12                     | 25:48                  |

Officials -- William Morrison (referee), William Wilczynski (umpire), Tim Sargent (linesman), Donald Slys (line judge), Tim Holmes (back judge).

## **CLASS 2A**

### **North Montgomery 37, Fort Wayne Luers 34**

In a wild offensive battle that saw the teams combine for a state championship-record 71 points and 857 yards, North Montgomery emerged with its second consecutive Class 2A championship. The winning score came early in the fourth quarter on Jason McCormick's 55-yard touchdown reception from Jon Sparks. North Montgomery's defense took over from there, stopping two Fort Wayne Luers drives to preserve the lead.

McCormick closed a brilliant high school career with 124 yards on three catches to raise his career total to 3,604 yards, the best in state history.

For Fort Wayne Luers, senior wide receiver Clancy Shank broke the state finals receptions record with 12 catches for 155 yards. Shank finished the 1996 season as the state's second most prolific pass receiver with 86 receptions 1,180 yards and 11 touchdowns.

North Montgomery, coached by Charley German, finished the season 13-1. Fort Wayne Luers, coached by Matt Lindsay, completed the season 8-6.

Matthew Gerardot of Fort Wayne Luers set a championship game record when he intercepted a North Montgomery pass and returned it 90 yards for a touchdown in the second quarter.

The IHSAA Executive Committee selected Tim Flagg of North Montgomery as the 1996 recipient of the Phil N. Eskew Award for Mental Attitude in Class 2A Football. Flagg was a four-year starter for the Chargers at linebacker and served as a tri-captain in 1996. Farm Bureau Insurance, the corporate partner of the IHSAA, presented a \$1,000 scholarship in Flagg's name to North Montgomery High School.

|                  |   |    |    |   |   |    |
|------------------|---|----|----|---|---|----|
| North Montgomery | 0 | 7  | 23 | 7 | - | 37 |
| Fort Wayne Luers | 7 | 14 | 6  | 7 | - | 34 |

Fort Wayne Luers -- Shank 33 pass from Stanski (Kramer kick).

North Montgomery -- McCormick 51 interception return (Laskowski kick).

Fort Wayne Luers -- A. Banks 30 pass from Stanski (Kramer kick).

Fort Wayne Luers -- Gerardot 90 interception return (Kramer kick).

North Montgomery -- Templeman 7 run (Templeman run).

North Montgomery -- McCormick 49 pass from Sparks (Laskowski kick).

Fort Wayne Luers -- Egts 34 interception return (Stanski pass failed).

North Montgomery -- Ratcliff 71 pass from Sparks (Wolf run).

Fort Wayne Luers -- Gerardot 68 pass from Stanski (Kramer kick).

North Montgomery -- McCormick 55 pass from Sparks (Laskowski kick).

|                       | <b>North Montgomery</b> | <b>Fort Wayne Luers</b> |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| First Downs           | 15                      | 20                      |
| Rushes/Yards          | 42-169                  | 28-57                   |
| Passing Yards         | 279                     | 352                     |
| Passes                | 10-18-3                 | 21-37-2                 |
| Plays/Total Net Yards | 60-448                  | 65-409                  |
| Return Yards          | 99                      | 262                     |
| Punts/Avg.            | 6-39.3                  | 4-36.0                  |
| Penalties/Yards       | 4-30                    | 5-41                    |
| Fumbles/Lost          | 3-1                     | 3-2                     |
| Time of Possession    | 25:53                   | 22:07                   |

Officials -- Steve Bagbey (referee), Doug Stremming (umpire), Mike Anoskey (linesman), Mark Holsapple (line judge), Alan Deskin (back judge).

### **CLASS 3A**

#### **Zionsville 14, Fort Wayne Dwenger 7**

Zionsville's outstanding defense came through with a big game and delivered the Eagles their second IHSAA Class 3A football title.

Zionsville forced four turnovers and limited Fort Wayne Dwenger to 149 yards in total offense as it completed a 14-0 season under the direction of first-year coach Larry McWhorter. Fort Wayne Dwenger, coached by Andy Johns, completed the season 12-2.

After a scoreless first quarter, Zionsville tallied the game's first score just before halftime on a 30-yard pass from Ryan Buckley to Josh Kelly. Zionsville's defense recorded its own touchdown midway through the third quarter when Shane Wagner blocked a Fort Wayne Dwenger punt. Andrew Metzler picked it up at the Fort Wayne Dwenger 12 and scored to give the Eagles a 14-0 advantage.

Fort Wayne Dwenger's lone score came on the second play of the fourth quarter when Eric Wilkins combined with Jon Rhinehart for a 32-yard passing touchdown.

Zionsville's Wesley Kendall sealed the victory when he grabbed his third interception of the game in the end zone with 57 seconds left to play. Kendall became the first player in state finals history to intercept three passes in a game.

The IHSAA Executive Committee selected Wesley Kendall as the 1996 recipient of the Phil N. Eskew Award for Mental Attitude in Class 3A Football. Kendall was a three-year starter for the Eagles as a safety and quarterback. Farm Bureau Insurance, the corporate partner of the IHSAA, presented a \$1,000 scholarship in Kendall's name to Zionsville High School.

|                    |   |   |   |   |   |    |
|--------------------|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| Zionsville         | 0 | 7 | 7 | 0 | - | 14 |
| Fort Wayne Dwenger | 0 | 0 | 0 | 7 | - | 7  |

Zionsville -- Kelly 30 pass from Buckley (Wills kick).

Zionsville -- Metzler 12 blocked punt return (Wills kick).

Fort Wayne Dwenger -- Rhinehart 32 pass from Wilkins (Gray kick).

|              | <b>Zionsville</b> | <b>Fort Wayne Dwenger</b> |
|--------------|-------------------|---------------------------|
| First Downs  | 9                 | 11                        |
| Rushes/Yards | 32-106            | 35-59                     |

|                       |        |        |
|-----------------------|--------|--------|
| Passing Yards         | 181    | 90     |
| Passes                | 9-16-2 | 6-24-3 |
| Plays/Total Net Yards | 48-287 | 59-149 |
| Return Yards          | 35     | 105    |
| Punts/Avg.            | 6-34.2 | 9-30.1 |
| Penalties/Yards       | 8-63   | 4-36   |
| Fumbles/Lost          | 2-2    | 2-1    |
| Time of Possession    | 23:39  | 24:21  |

Officials -- Gunars Janelsins (referee), Lou Hurrle (umpire), Roger Holder (linesman), Doug Coddington (line judge), Dennis Kelly (back judge).

## CLASS 4A

### Indianapolis Cathedral 27, Hobart 7

Devin Schaffer rushed for 162 yards and two touchdowns to lead the Irish to their third IHSAA state football championship and first in Class 4A. In doing so, Cathedral became the 10th school to win IHSAA football titles in two different classes. The Irish claimed Class 3A state titles in 1986 and 1992.

After taking the opening kickoff and marching 59 yards in five plays for the game's first score, Indianapolis Cathedral stopped Hobart on downs and scored again on a five-play, 80-yard drive to take a 14-0 lead. With nearly four minutes still to play in the first quarter, the Irish had a 21-0 lead after Kevin Drew blocked a Hobart punt and Robert Brogan recovered in the end zone.

The teams traded third-quarter touchdowns, but Hobart could not mount a challenge as it finished as a state football runner-up for the seventh time. Coached by Don Howell, the Brickies finished the season 12-2 while making their 11th championship game appearance under Howell in the 24-year history of the tournament. Indianapolis Cathedral completed a 14-0 season under the direction of Rick Streiff.

The IHSAA Executive Committee selected Durriell Brown of Indianapolis Cathedral as the 1996 recipient of the Phil N. Eskew Award for Mental Attitude in Class 4A Football. Brown was a two-way starting lineman for the Irish and served as a co-captain. Farm Bureau Insurance, the corporate partner of the IHSAA, presented a \$1,000 scholarship in Brown's name to Cathedral High School.

|                        |    |   |   |   |   |    |
|------------------------|----|---|---|---|---|----|
| Hobart                 | 0  | 0 | 7 | 0 | - | 7  |
| Indianapolis Cathedral | 21 | 0 | 6 | 0 | - | 27 |

Indianapolis Cathedral -- Schaffer 41 run (kick failed).

Indianapolis Cathedral -- Walker 27 run (Fox to Simpson pass).

Indianapolis Cathedral -- Brogan blocked punt return (Witcher kick).

Hobart -- Torres 1 run (Batistatos kick).

Indianapolis Cathedral -- Schaffer 13 run (kick failed).

|                       | <b>Hobart</b> | <b>Indianapolis Cathedral</b> |
|-----------------------|---------------|-------------------------------|
| First Downs           | 12            | 12                            |
| Rushes/Yards          | 38-167        | 38-181                        |
| Passing Yards         | 81            | 86                            |
| Passes                | 6-21-2        | 6-10-0                        |
| Plays/Total Net Yards | 59-248        | 48-267                        |
| Return Yards          | 117           | 121                           |
| Punts/Avg.            | 7-32.9        | 4-44.0                        |
| Penalties/Yards       | 1-15          | 1-14                          |
| Fumbles/Lost          | 0-0           | 1-0                           |
| Time of Possession    | 24:12         | 23:48                         |

Officials -- Richard Boer (referee), Robert Mahnic (umpire), Terrence Bley (linesman), John Goss Jr. (line judge), Steven Dahlkamp (back judge).

## CLASS 5A

### Penn 17, Ben Davis 14

Penn rallied from a 14-3 deficit to claim its second consecutive Class 5A state title and third IHSAA football championship overall.

In avenging a 24-0 regular-season loss to Ben Davis that ended a state-record 89-game regular-season winning streak that began in 1985, Penn never lost its poise. The Kingsmen overcame a 220-yard rushing performance from Ben Davis senior De'Wayne Hogan that ranked as the highest rushing total in the 1996 state finals.

Senior quarterback Nic Boehnlein directed the rally by hitting Kevin Flanagan for an 82-yard scoring pass late in the third quarter and then tossing the game-winning 31-yard score to Ricky Siri with 53 seconds left to play.

For the game, Boehnlein hit seven of 13 passes for 195 yards. Flanagan totaled 114 yards on three catches.

The IHSAA Executive Committee selected Scott Becker of Penn High School as the 1996 recipient of the Phil N. Eskew Award for Mental Attitude in Class 5A Football. Becker was a starting running back for the Kingsmen who rushed for a team-high 73 yards in the championship game. Academically, he ranked No. 1 in his senior class. Farm Bureau Insurance, the corporate partner of the IHSAA, presented a \$1,000 scholarship in Becker's name to Penn High School.

|           |   |   |    |   |   |    |
|-----------|---|---|----|---|---|----|
| Ben Davis | 0 | 0 | 14 | 0 | - | 14 |
| Penn      | 3 | 0 | 6  | 8 | - | 17 |

Penn -- Miller 35 field goal.

Ben Davis -- Graham 39 pass from Phillips (Aguirre kick).

Ben Davis -- Hogan 2 run (Aguirre kick).

Penn -- Flanagan 82 pass from Boehnlein (kick failed).

Penn -- Siri 31 pass from Boehnlein (Boehnlein pass to Flanagan).

|                       | <b>Ben Davis</b> | <b>Penn</b> |
|-----------------------|------------------|-------------|
| First Downs           | 12               | 10          |
| Rushes/Yards          | 43-205           | 30-59       |
| Passing Yards         | 101              | 195         |
| Passes                | 5-11-0           | 7-13-2      |
| Plays/Total Net Yards | 54-306           | 43-254      |
| Return Yards          | 101              | 45          |
| Punts/Avg.            | 2-31.0           | 3-37.7      |
| Penalties/Yards       | 6-55             | 4-27        |
| Fumbles/Lost          | 1-1              | 1-0         |
| Time of Possession    | 24:46            | 23:14       |

Officials -- Eric Harmon (referee), Lee Aldridge (umpire), Larry Good (linesman), Gordon McCain (line judge), George Plesac (back judge).