

# **MARTINSVILLE CAPTURES INAUGURAL TOURNAMENT OF CHAMPIONS TITLE**

Martinsville completed a season for the ages March 21 at Hinkle Fieldhouse in Indianapolis with a determined 74-61 triumph over Southridge to win the inaugural IHSAA Girls Basketball Tournament of Champions title.

The 1998 Class 4A state champions put the exclamation point on a 29-0 season and extended the state's third-longest girls basketball winning streak in history to 53 games before a crowd of 2,500. The only teams with longer consecutive winning streaks than Martinsville are Fort Wayne Northrop with 57 consecutive victories from 1985 to 1987, and Bedford North Lawrence, with 55 straight from the start of the 1990-91 season until losing in the 1992 state championship game.

Martinsville, coached by Jan Conner, led at every quarter stop. But the Artesians were pushed to the finish by a Southridge team that battled all the way. The Class 2A state champions, coached by Stan Roesner, finished 22-6.

Martinsville led 19-10 after one quarter, 39-29 at halftime and 64-50 at the third quarter stop.

Southridge senior forward Kara Meyer led all scorers by hitting 10 of 17 shots, including five three-point goals, for 28 points. Martinsville was paced by its senior guard tandem of April Traylor with 28 points and Kristen Bodine with 17.

Martinsville had advanced to the championship game with an 89-45 triumph over Class A state champion Bloomfield in Friday's semifinals. Southridge moved on with a 66-54 victory against Class 3A state champion West Lafayette.

Since the advent of the IHSAA state tournament series for the 1975-76 season, only eight other teams have finished the season unbeaten. And of those, only Bedford North Lawrence in 1990-91 can match Martinsville's victory total.

Martinsville joins former single-class state champions Warsaw (1976, 22-0), East Chicago Roosevelt (1977, 24-0), Warsaw (1978, 22-0), East Chicago Roosevelt (1979, 23-0), Crown Point (1984, 26-0), Fort Wayne Northrop (1986, 29-0), Noblesville (1987, 27-0) and Bedford North Lawrence (1991, 29-0) in the unbeaten ranks.