

TOURNAMENT OF CHAMPIONS

Class 4A state champion Pike jumped out to an early lead and never trailed as the Red Devils captured an 87-44 victory over Class A champion Lafayette Central Catholic in the title game of the Inaugural IHSAA Tournament of Champions played April 3-4, 1998 at the RCA Dome in Indianapolis.

Coached by Alan Darner, Pike finished its championship season at 30-1. Chad Dunwoody guided Central Catholic to a 25-4 season.

Pike's defensive pressure forced eight first period turnovers and held the Knights scoreless until the 2:15 mark of the first period. After trailing 19-4 to begin the second quarter, Lafayette Central Catholic outscored Pike, 20-17, to go into the lockerroom down 36-24. The Knights cut the lead to 38-30 on two straight three pointers from senior Erik Franklin, but Pike went on a 10-2 run to increase its lead to 16 points with 3:47 left in the third. Lafayette Central Catholic never got any closer than 13 points again.

Pike was led in scoring by senior Isaac Kincaid, who finished with a game-high 27 points. Senior Mike Campbell and junior Mark Farris added 14 apiece for the Red Devils. Junior Dan Schukraft led Central Catholic with 15 points and Franklin finished with 13.

Pike had advanced the previous night with a hard-fought 62-58 semifinal victory over Class 3A champion Indianapolis Cathedral. Lafayette Central Catholic earned its way into the title game by surviving a 113-106 double overtime battle with Class 2A champ Alexandria.

The 219 points scored in the game was the highest combined total at any level in the history of the IHSAA tournament. Central Catholic sent the game to overtime after overcoming a 14-point deficit to begin the fourth period.

Rodney Smith was named the tournament's most valuable player by the Associated Press. Joining him on the all-tournament team were teammate Isaac Kincaid, Dan Schukraft of Lafayette Central Catholic, Rusty Garner of Alexandria and Rylan Hainje of Indianapolis Cathedral.