

THE REMAINING LHAC TEAMS ELIMINATED: Unfortunately, the remaining four boys' teams that were representing the LHAC in the PIAA state basketball playoffs were eliminated this week. Central Cambria went down to General McLane 67-54, Reading Central Catholic eliminated Bishop Carroll 48-33, Bishop Guilfoyle lost 50-46 to Serra Catholic and Pittsburgh North Catholic defeated Bishop McCort 54-39.

I'll do a brief capsule of each team's final contest below, but before I do that I would like to congratulate each and every team, their players and coaching staffs on a terrific year. It was fun following all the LHAC teams through the playoffs this season.

LANCERS, WALKER TOO MUCH FOR CENTRAL CAMBRIA: Coach Steve Triano's dream season came to an abrupt halt last Tuesday night at the hands of the District 10 champion General McLane Lancers as they lost 67-59. 6-4 senior Shawn Walker was the story, dropping 29 on the Red Devils and ending their season. CC was paced by Mike Gowen's 26 points while Jordan Miller chipped in 15 in the loss.

Central Cambria finishes the season with a 24-4 mark while McLane improved to 25-3 with this win. Later in the week, the Lancers defeated WPIAL power Blackhawk and advance to the state semifinal round to take on Steelton-Highspire in a game that will take place on Tuesday, 3/11.

TROJANS OUST CRUSHERS: The Trojans of Pittsburgh North Catholic eliminated Bishop McCort from the PIAA Class AA bracket last week with a 54-39 win. Mike Cruz had 11 while Zak Boyd had 10 for Pat Hollern's club in the loss. PNC was paced by Henry Pwono's 14-point performance.

McCort's season ends with a 24-4 record while the win improved the Trojans' mark to 25-4. However, the Trojans' season came to an end after they suffered a 86-60 loss to Jeannette in a game that was marred by a postgame fight.

TEAM FROM EAST ELIMINATES HUSKIES: Despite another team-leading scoring performance from Victor Tranquillo (17 points), the Bishop Carroll Huskies were eliminated from the state playoffs by Reading Central Catholic in a 48-33 contest.

The Huskies end the season 15-13 and Coach Cosie Aliquo, despite the loss, reflected positively on the season, "We had just a great year, one I'll never forget because we just never gave up. The district title was a team effort but I'm so happy for seniors to go out with that title. When I got the job they were the ones that gave me the chance to coach this team. I want to thank all the fans for coming out to see us play and hopefully we can do it again next year."

This win gave the Cardinals a 17-12 mark and they advanced and defeated Math, Civics and Science out of Philadelphia 63-57 in overtime. RCC will play Freire Charter, also of Philadelphia, Tuesday, 3/11 in the state semifinals.

EAGLES BOUNCE MARAUDERS: Logan McDannell's 17 points just weren't enough as Pat Grubbs dropped 22 on the Marauders and ended Coach Dave Benton's squad's season with a 50-46 loss.

BG ends the year with a 20-9 mark while the win gave Serra a 27-2 record. They are still alive as they defeated Bentworth 81-54 in the quarterfinal round. The Eagles will take on Kennedy Catholic in the state semifinals on Tuesday 3/11.

GETTING BACK TO WORK: One LHAC team that didn't make the state playoff round was the Westmont Hilltoppers, but Coach Dave Roman, Jr has a good feeling about the group of guys he has returning to his team for the 2008-09 season. "We started individual workouts on Monday. We usually don't get back in the gym until May 1st, but all of my returning kids are hungry and they begged me to get back in the gym. We are not use to being home during the state playoffs.", Roman said.

Hopefully the Hilltoppers will add to the number of LHAC teams advancing to state play next season.

FAREWELL AND THANKS!: This will be the final installment of the LHAC BasketBlog of the year. I want to thank each and every coach and athletic director that helped make this weekly column something very fun for me to do and hopefully a success. Thanks to all the readers that have taken the time to email me and I hope you all enjoyed this piece throughout the basketball season. If you have any ideas or thoughts to how it could be improved, don't hesitate to email me at doug.keklak@trojannation.net. Thanks again!