

**AAA FINALS SET:** After an exciting first week of postseason action in District 6, there are still five LHAC teams still in the running. It will be an all-LHAC 6-AAA final pitting the Trojans of Greater Johnstown against the Golden Eagles of Somerset. Somerset's road to the finals was especially tough because they were forced to win two games as opposed to Johnstown's winning one. Scott Close's team entered the postseason the fifth and final seed in the bracket. They defeated fourth seeded Indian Valley 77-52 to advance and take on top seeded Central. Anthony Papini led the way with 18 points for the Golden Eagles.

"In the Indian Valley game, the scoring of Hemminger, Papini, and Fisher was the difference. The pressure our guards exerted on their guards put the pace of the game to our liking.", noted Close.

A few nights later they edged the #1 seeded Scarlet Dragons 64-62. Once again Papini led the way with 18.

"Against Central, we couldn't have started the game any worse. Their guards did a nice job of taking the three ball away from us. Barron and Judy did an incredible job finishing and rebounding in the second half. Being down 17 in the third, the possibilities of winning didn't look good. I can't describe what our players did to mount such a comeback. Its one of those things that you don't witness too many times in a coaching career.", added Close.

The second seeded Trojans had a very tough contest against third seeded Tyrone, but ultimately prevailed 57-54. Carlton Wyatt had a team-high 18 while Richard Agurs (12) and Paul Weatherly (10) also contributed double digits to the winning cause.

"I am so proud of the way the kids handled themselves. We were down 4 points with under 2 minutes left, and we got three straight steals which led to 6 straight points and the lead. I said in our loss at Somerset, that this team will learn from that loss and learn how to finish a game. We did just that. After we took the lead, we took care of the basketball and made 4 of 5 free throws to seal the deal.", said Johnstown coach Dave Roman, Jr.

These two teams split their regular season meetings, with Johnstown winning 65-55 back on 12/17 while Somerset prevailed 63-62 on 2/7. Both teams will advance to the state playoffs regardless of the outcome, but both coaches know this will be a tough task at hand to raise district gold.

Close stated, "The rematch with Johnstown on Wednesday is exciting to be part of. The two games we've played this year have been great games to watch as a fan. Hopefully we can give the fans another great game to watch. Hopefully we'll shoot slightly better than we did versus Central, otherwise we'll be in for a long night."

Roman countered, "Somerset doesn't change a whole lot. Coach Close comes at you with pressure like we do. You will see their 1-3-1 trapping defense. The last time we played them, they played a lot more 2-3 zone against us. We will be prepared for everything, even a little 1-3 chaser or box and one like Tyrone threw at us."

The contest is slated to tip off at 8:30PM on Wednesday 2/25 at St. Francis University.

**AA ACTION:** Two LHAC teams remain in the AA bracket in Cambria Heights and Central Cambria. The top seeded Highlanders knocked off Mount Union 53-48. Three players for Eric Nagel's club were in double digits as Steve Sharbaugh led the Highlanders with 16 while teammates John Link (13) and Ian Vescovi (12) also played vital roles in the win. They will next play against United of the Heritage Conference in a game that will take place Tuesday 2/24 at 7:30PM at Central Cambria High School.

Highlanders' coach Eric Nagle commented on the win, a big one for the program, as well as the upcoming contest with the Lions of United: "The Mount Union game was a great win for the players, It was their first playoff victory. Mount Union is a really good team, we knew they would come out and play hard and we responded, Steve Sharbaugh and John Link shot the ball really well which opened the inside for Ian Vescovi.

As for United we know that they are a really good team, Bobby Simon and Ross Monrue are really good players and for use to win we need to keep them in check."

The other team still alive in the 6-AA bracket is Steve Traino's Central Cambria Red Devils. They beat Richland 65-52 in a play-in game. Jordan Miller led the way for CC with 42 points on the Rams. A few nights later they upset second-seeded Bishop McCort 85-67. Miller again led the Red Devils, this time with 46 points and in the process surpassed the 2,000-point mark and also broke the CC single-season points scored record (previous mark was 801 by Randy McKavish). Also dropping double-digits for Coach Traino was Jeff Wasilewski with 15.

Coach Traino weighed in on the Red Devils' recent success: "All of our kids are playing with more confidence. We're doing the little things better. When you have a player like Jordan Miller that draws some much defensive attention, it opens up things for the other guys and they are all stepping up. Penns Valley was a very good team. We were lucky to escape with a win. I thought Tim Myers and Eric Espe gave us a big lift in the second half."

CC will take on Penns Valley, also on Tuesday 2/24 at 7:30PM but their game will be at the Altoona Fieldhouse.

**CLASS A BRACKET:** Just one Class A team from the LHAC left here and it's top dog Bishop Carroll. They defeated fellow LHAC member Bishop Guilfoyle 39-38. Chad Panick's 14 and Luke Paronish's 12 paced the Huskies in the close contest.

BC Coach Cosie Aliquo weighed in on this first round game: "I can't say enough about the game against BG. That was 2 teams just flat out battling every possession. It was a good win but just one win. We can't settle for just one win we want to keep this going and see how far we can go in the state tournament. My players have been great all year, 17-6 is not to bad at this point."

BG defeated Glendale a few nights earlier 66-47 to earn the right to play BC. Joe Mooney's 15 led the way for the Marauders while Nick Johnston (13) and Chris Brown (12) also contributed nicely in the victory.

The Huskies advance to take on Conemaugh Valley out of the WestPAC on Wednesday, 2/25 at 7:30PM at Central Cambria High School.

"The game against CV should be a good one Coach Lupek is a great coach and I know they have a good bit of size so I hope we can counter that with some of our size.", said Aliquo.

**RANKINGS:** With apologies to Led Zeppelin, the song remains the same here. Only Bishop Carroll, still honorable mention in the Class A rankings, represent the league.