

Shorthanded champs grind past Ensworth, set CPA rematch

Jake Nichols

jnichols@farragutpress.com

As the defending Division II-AA state champion, Webb School of Knoxville is no stranger to postseason pressure. But after losing guard Zahnyah Rockett to a season-ending ACL injury Feb. 6, the Lady Spartans had to adjust on the fly.

They found answers in a gritty 45-41 win over Ensworth in the state quarterfinals, advancing to face Christ Presbyterian Academy — last year's title-game opponent — in Thursday's semifinals at Austin Peay. "With her, she's such a disruptor," Webb coach Greg Hernandez said of Rockett. "To lose her, it's been big trying to

figure out lineups, but the girls have really responded." Meeyah Green led Webb with 15 points while Kyndall Mays added 14 and Corisa Lowery chipped in 10. Hernandez praised the collective effort, noting Mays' key baskets and free throws and Green's unselfish play. "It was one possession at a

time," Hernandez said. "They were really physical with us. We had to grind out possessions." Now Webb turns its attention to CPA, a familiar foe. "They returned everybody, so it's a very familiar situation," Hernandez said. "We just have to guard the ball, limit possessions and find a way to impose our will."

Hawks

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deal for us and hopefully it becomes the standard."

Tennessee Tech baseball signee Jax Sparks led HVA with 19 points, while Smith totaled 12 with eight points each from Mike Fritts and Kristian Oliver, who also led the team with nine rebounds.

"We really struggled in the last four minutes of the game to just hold onto the ball," Arendt added. "It got really physical, and with our lack of weight, we struggle with that sometimes; Central threw us around like rag dolls — but we did enough to hang on."

The physical nature of the game spoke to Arendt's relief, which he detailed as he drove to practice. When he arrived, he began preparing the Hawks

for Tuesday's tilt with FHS.

"I hope they're not satisfied, but you never know with teenagers," he said. "Farragut is a better team than we are on paper, but you still have to go play the game. So we'll give great effort and find out what happens."

That game will tip off after press time, so results will be available online. Regardless of the result, though, Arendt reinforced his pride in his team — and in Smith specifically.

"He probably thought I would jump and shoulder bump him in that moment, but he might not realize I leave the ground," Arendt said with a chuckle. "So when he jumped, I just bear-hugged him. He's a special kid and a stud."

"Kymani chose Hardin Valley because he knew he would have opportunity here, and he



Photo courtesy of Hawk Aerial Imaging

liked us. The relationship is crucial between a point guard and head coach, so I'm excited about his future. He's a dream to coach."

Wiggins and Pedro Sabat were all recognized. Farragut's athletes include Owen Petoskey, Noah Haag, Fletcher Haddad, Aaron Heatherly and Ryan McCue.

The Hardin Valley athletes are Samuel Mann, Brody

Lamb, Dylan Umansky, Andrew Perkins and Mikael Arce. Catholic selections are Brogan Corley, Brooks Johnston, George Mancini, Mitch Cannon and Mark Bartholomew.

Finally, Webb athletes are

Catholic

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ter but they have some great basketball players and great athletes," Mains said. "They came out and scored the first nine points, and the crowd was just nuts in that cracker box."

"It was a tough environment, but things didn't come unraveled for us. We had some games, like the three games against Webb, where we really fall apart. But we learned from it and we didn't fall apart."

Cade Murphy led the way for Catholic's offense as he scored 21 points. He also posted a double-double as he pulled down 10 rebounds. Landon Lee added 14 points for the Irish, who advanced to the state quarterfinals with an 81-55 victory at home over Christian Brothers School.

Bearden

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over the winter holiday break. Justin Nordin scored 26 points for Bearden while Sean Capshaw had 20 for the Bulldogs in a game whose outcome was never in doubt.

"I think it helped us having a home game," Parrott said. "You always want to be at home in those situations in the first round."

Shavar Young, Marvin Hicke, Michael Pemberton, Jay Lowery and Baxter Johnson.

Congratulations to these student-athletes for their hard work on and off the field this past season.

CARE

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phabetical order:

At Bearden, these athletes are Will Taylor, Grant Cross, Seth Henry, Alonzo Sanchez

and Paxton Parrott. CAK's stars are Gabe Linkous, Cooper Houser, Benton Blevins, Tucker Darga and Kyler Cook.

Over at Concord Christian, Andrew Lumsdaine, Allistair Middlebrook, Eli Wolfe, Jude



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