

Casey-Westfield, Nokomis look Peoria ready

Patoka, Red Hill seek respect, more upsets

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EFFINGHAM – The **Casey-Westfield Warriors** finally got firing on all cylinders this past week at the Oblong IA Regional.

Coach Jason Hanson's team went on a roller coaster of a ride in 2014-15, with injuries and sporadic play and looked like anything but a regional title contender heading into the postseason.

Coming off of regular season ending 78-44 thrashing from Effingham St. Anthony on the road, the Warriors limped into the regional with a 14-12 record.

However the ABV IA preseason top-ranked club 'flipped the switch' and took care of business to win the regional with wins over Neoga and St. Anthony and then stunned previously unbeaten Dieterich in the title game, 53-48.

In just five days time, C-W turned around their fortunes, beating St. Anthony 57-33, before turning Dieterich's dream season into a nightmare.

Coach Hanson's Warriors are led by Trey Thompson, a 5-foot-10 senior, with 11.1 p.p.g., Cody Hollensbe, a 6-foot senior (10.7 p.p.g.) and Dylan Lawrence, a 6-foot-1 senior, (9.9 p.p.g.).

Corey Carver, a 6-foot-5 forward, spent most of the winter rehabbing his knee he hurt playing football.

But his return the last 14 games was needed as he was a big factor in the Warriors resurgence late in the year.

He has averaged 7.9 points a game since his return and on Friday night Carver came up big with 18-points and 10-rebounds while Hollensbe scored 13, grabbed seven rebounds and dished out a pair of assists.

Five-foot-ten senior guard Darius Fisher (7.5 p.p.g.) added 13-points on Friday night.

Casey-Westfield will face Patoka on Wednesday night.

The other Warriors in the sectional topped Marion County rivals Odin for the second consecutive season to win a regional crown.

Patoka head coach Joe Eddy has a good one in 6-foot-2 sophomore guard Jered Cain, who averaging a robust 22.5 points a contest and 7.3 rebounds for the Egyptian Illini Conference champs who are now 21-9 after their 57-54 overtime win.

Cain scored 18-points in the win for the Warriors, while teammate Garrett Belcher, a 6-foot-3 sophomore, added 19-points on Friday after netting 11 in a semifinal win over Christ Our Rock Lutheran.

Belcher averages 12.9 p.p.g., 5.5 r.p.g., while teammate Dylan Back, a 6-foot junior, adds 11.4 p.p.g. to go with 5.1 r.p.g.

The Warriors won the Wayne City Holiday Tournament back in December and are in search of their first ever sectional crown.

The next team on the list is the **Nokomis Redskins** who are no strangers to postseason success.

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Head coach Steve Kimbro has taken his Redskins deep into state tournament many times, with 13 regional titles, four sectional championships and four trips to the "Elite Eight" in this, his 34th year as the head coach at Nokomis.

Since the state has went to four-classes, the Redskins have made two trips to Peoria, with a second place finish in 2008 and a third place finish in 2013.

This season, Nokomis is 18-11 but when you consider their schedule of tough larger school opponents, this team has been through some wars.

Nokomis outlasted Altamont, 57-55, in overtime to claim the title of the Stewardson-Strasburg 1A Regional.

The two top guns for the Redskins are an inside-outside combo.

Six-foot-two sophomore Reid Detmers and 6-foot-6 senior Marcus Chausse both average double-figures for the Redskins.

Chausse tops the club with a double-double with 20.8 points and a massive number (10.6) of rebounds a contest while Detmers adds 13.8 points a game.

Five-foot-ten sophomore Andrew Harpstreath chips in 5.6 points a game while 6-foot-3 freshman Brayden Sabol averages 5.8 p.p.g.

Another freshman, Hendrix Barnes, contributes four points a game.

The surprise entry into the St. Anthony sectional are the **Red Hill Salukis**, who won their own regional championship by downing fellow LIC club Edwards County, 49-46 for just its seventh win of the season.

Head coach Bryan Havill's club struggled all season and entered the regional 4-22.

But three consecutive wins has the Salukis back in the postseason hunt.

Coach Havill picked up his fourth regional title and the school's 13th overall with the win over the Lions on Friday night.

Five-foot-nine junior guard Dalton Murray tops the club with 14.7 points a game while Kameron Vinsel, a 6-foot-1 sophomore, adds 14.6 p.p.g.

Ryan Kolb, a 6-foot-5 senior center, posts 7.2 points a contest for a club that didn't win a conference game but turned it on against a 'less than impressive' field at home in the 1A regional. Vinsel scored 23-points, including three 3-pointers in the fourth quarter, in the title game triumph.

They did pick up a good regular season win over Fairfield but they had little else to brag about until they snagged the regional crown from Edwards County, a team they split two games with this season.

The Salukis topped the Lions at the LIC Tournament and then lost the regular season battle on February 6.

Jack Bullock is the Editor/Web Publisher of A Baseline View.com. For the past 18-seasons, ABV has covered boy's high school basketball in southern Illinois. Previews, Rankings, Scores, Standings, Tournament Brackets and Game Stories for over 100-teams.