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LBB Claims Second Straight District Title

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By Andrew Cato, ShowMe Times Sports Editor

SIKESTON - The old adage "defense wins championships" was proven by the Dexter Lady Bearcats in the Class 4, District 1 Championship game on Friday night. LBB's high-pressure defense dismantled the Notre Dame Lady Bulldogs on the way to a 62-38 victory in a rematch of last year's title game.

LBB head coach Chad Allen was quick to compliment the Bulldogs; the two teams split the regular season series 1-1.

"Notre Dame always puts a good team on the floor; Coach Peters does a good job with them. I thought Notre Dame played extremely well, especially after losing Alison Bradshaw last year," Allen said. "They were focused this year and definitely had a great season."

The most recent contest between Dexter and Notre Dame saw the Lady Bulldogs squeak out a 52-51 victory on their home court. Seniors Summer Burger and Brooke Bohnert combined for 40 points in that game, and Allen noted it as a key in his team's preparation for the title game.

"I thought our girls worked extremely hard these last few weeks preparing for Notre Dame," he said. "We focused on Bohnert and Burger, trying to stop them; they are two

great players. The biggest difference, we shot 29 percent from the field last time we played. I thought we gave a much better defensive effort tonight."

"For the most part, I thought we did a really good job offensively tonight," Allen continued. "I thought our girls were really focused this game; they came out and had a great defensive effort tonight."

Paige Patterson had another breakout game for the Lady 'Cats; the sophomore has flown under the radar of All-State junior Brittany Harris for most of the regular season, but has really stepped up her game in the last several weeks. Patterson paced the Lady 'Cats with 18 points, and added nine boards and four blocks in the win.

"Paige had a great game last night, and she turned around and had a really good game tonight, Allen said. "She's stepped up her play, and is getting pretty hard to stop inside there."

The Lady Bulldogs held a one point lead at the 5:15 mark of the first quarter, but the Lady Bearcats were able to put together a 13-6 run to close out the frame with a 17-11 lead.

Notre Dame pulled within two points midway through the second quarter, but it was the closest they would get for the rest of the night. A steal from Erika Cobb set up an 8-0 run to give LBB a 27-17 lead heading into halftime.

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A trey by Miranda Fowler was the only spark Notre Dame had in the second half; the Lady Bearcats' press gave the Bulldogs fits early in the third, and forced a 10 second violation at the 3:30 mark. An offensive rebound and putback from Harris brought the score to 42-28 heading into the fourth.

Cobb knocked down a trey in the early fourth quarter to give the 'Cats a 14 point lead. A 10 footer from Harris gave LBB a 20 point lead at 1:45. LBB would run out the clock to take home a 62-38 victory.

"We talked about our defense at half. We wanted to come out with a lot of intensity in the second half and try to wear them down. I thought they did a really good job against [Notre Dame's] press-breaker offense," Allen commented. "We've worked that really hard for the last few weeks, and we took that away in the second half. I know we got at least one 10

second violation, and I think a couple five-second violations in the half-court. They played a great game defensively tonight."

The Lady Bearcats improve to 23-4 on the season with the win.

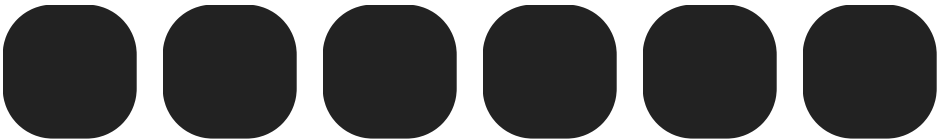
In District 2, the Park Hills Central Rebels were able to hand North County a 59-54 loss to claim their district title; the Lady 'Cats will meet the Rebels in sectional action on Wednesday (Feb. 29) at Mineral Area College; tipoff is set for 6:00 p.m.

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