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20th Anniversary of the Bearcat Final Four in Boys Basketball

FEBRUARY 15TH 2024 BY DEE LOFLIN

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Dexter, MO - This marks the 20th anniversary of the 2003-2004 Dexter Bearcat Final Four boys basketball team. It was 20 years ago the team entered the season having advanced to the District Championship each of the previous three years, and coming up short. The Bearcats advanced to the Championship for the fourth year in a row and claimed the first basketball title for the Bearcats in 28 years.

They then traveled to Mineral Area College and played the second ranked team in class 4, DeSoto. They ended up beating DeSoto 45-42.

They then traveled to the Farmington Civic Center to play the quarterfinal game against Lutheran South. They defeated LS 63-43 sending the 'Cats to their first ever Final Four appearance in Columbia, Missouri.

They unfortunately the 'Cats fell short in Columbia and had to face Vashon Wolverines who at the time were 29-0 and USA Today ranked them as the #1 team in the nation.

To be honest it didn't matter what happened in Columbia, it was the journey to Columbia that was the fun part. Doing what hadn't been done in 28 years and eventually taking the program to a place it had never been and to this day hasn't returned to the Final Four.

Members of the team were Scott Admire, Aaron Jackson, Andrew Stuever, Derek Roberts, Nick Chamberlain, Andrew Boone, Chris Guethle, Kyle Espey, Eric Rinehart,

Anthony Elfrink, Levi Dawson, James Ford, Justin Devers, Cale Williams, Taylor Pyle, Derek Demaree, and Josh Miller. Coaches were Eric Sitze, with assistant coaches Rob Nichols and Daniel Sexton.

The Bearcats were pushed hard all year long by Coach Sitze. He was able to find something in this group no one else could have and he challenged them to give 110%. He refused to be happy with anything else. In four short months Coach Sitze will close the door one last time in the old gym, his legendary practices and intensity will never be replaced. Eric Sitze was born to be a basketball coach and he's done a great job over the last 28 years.

Thank you Coach Sitze for your commitment to the Dexter girls basketball program and the boys basketball program these past three decades. Bearcat fans appreciate you more than you will ever know.

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