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SECTION B **Business** Community **Classified Ads** Health

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WIAA DIVISION 2 & DIVISION 3 BOYS BASKETBALL STATE CHAMPIONSHIPS **BEST IN STATE** Pewaukee, Lake Country Lutheran bring home the gold ball



Dave Badcliffe/Freeman Staf

LEFT: Pewaukee's boys basketball team celebrates after defeating La Crosse Central in the WIAA Division 2 state championship game Saturday at the Kohl Center. RIGHT: Lake Country Lutheran senior Johnny Nehls holds up the gold ball as his teammates celebrate around him after the Lightning defeated West Salem in the WIAA Division 3 state championship game Saturday at the Kohl Center.

Pirates take down La Crosse Central to repeat as Division 2 state champs

By Dave Radcliffe dradcliffe@conleynet.com 262-513-2655

MADISON David Burkemper couldn't help but laugh

And who could blame him? He and his players were having the time of their lives.

On the grandest stage Wisconsin high school basketball has to offer, Pewaukee showed everyone what it's capable of when firing on all cylinders. It was a shooting like yesterday when Ash-

display for the ages as the waubenon made us play their Pirates came one 3-pointer style, I get frustrated because shy of matching the state I want people to see, especialtournament record and com- ly in a venue like this, how pleted their quest for back-toback titles with a 67-48 victory over La Crosse Central in the WIAA Division 2 state cham- hey, this is who we are." pionship game Saturday at the Kohl Center in Madison.

"I know I don't make a lot of friends out there with smiling nent before running into the like that, but I'm just enjoying uber-efficient offense that is watching my team play," Burkemper said. "Sometimes

good these kids are.

"And tonight, that smile was me showing the world

It was no laughing matter for the Riverhawks (28-2), who hadn't lost to an in-state oppo-Pewaukee (27-3).

See **PIRATES**, PAGE 3B

Lightning refuse to be denied again after finishing as state runner-up last year

By Mark Hutchinson mhutchinson@conleynet.com 262-513-2693

MADISON — There are no panic buttons in the Kohl Center locker rooms.

But that was OK with the Lake Country Lutheran boys basketball team.

The Lightning didn't even look for one despite facing a rare halftime deficit, 31-29, at that juncture of the WIAA Division-3 state championship game Saturday.

time doing it, and they rode 54-4. home with the first gold ball in program history.

during a 13-2 run that paved West Salem. The Lightning, who dropped the 2021 D-3 state final to Racine St. Catherine's, finished their

They knew what was 2021-22 campaign at 28-2 and required, they wasted no ran their two-year ledger to

Senior center Ben Lubbers, who scored six of his career-LCL, ranked second in the and team-high 22 points durstate and seeded second in ing the surge, mixed his the state field, scored the first metaphors while sitting 10 points of the second half alongside coach Mark Newman and senior teammate the way to a 67-56 victory over Luke Haertle at the postgame top-ranked and top-seeded media conference as he reeled in the years he and his teammates spent together.

See LIGHTNING, PAGE 3B

WIAA DIVISION 1 BOYS BASKETBALL STATE CHAMPIONSHIP: Neenah, Brookfield Central

Lancers overpowered by Rockets in state final

Brookfield Central only led for 81 seconds throughout the night

By Dave Radcliffe dradcliffe@conleynet.com 262-513-2655

MADISON — Nobody on the floor was more talented than Andrew Rohde

But the overall talent of Neenah was too much for one man to overcome.

Despite a heroic individual performance by the senior guard, Brookfield Central would have to settle for a silver trophy. The topseeded Rockets had four players score in double figures en route to winning their first state title since 1978 with a 64-52 victory in the WIAA Division 1 championship game Saturday night at the Kohl Center.

"At one point in time I said to one of my assistants it was like every time we left somebody open, they made a shot," Brookfield Cen-tral coach Dan Wandrey said. "They'd get inside and hurt us there.

"Their impressiveness is that nobody's really all that impressive. But part of that is because there's almost no gap from one through seven or eight."

The Rockets (29-1) only trailed for 81 seconds, making just under half of their field-goal attempts and only turning the ball over four times.

"They're a really well-coached team and their half-court offense, it's really hard to guard," Rohde said. "But I was just honored to be

here and nobody expected us to make it this far. So I think that's an accomplishment and we proved a lot of people wrong.'

There's no doubt about that.

Not much was expected of the No. 3 seeded Lancers (24-6) entering the season after they lost David Joplin and Ben Nau, among others, to graduation last year. Both were key contributors when Central won its first state title in 2019, when it knocked off Neenah in the semifinals before downing Sun Prairie.

As it turned out, so was Rohde, who emerged as an important role player on that championship squad. Biding his time before becoming the top dog his senior season, Rohde made the most of it as he set a two-day record at the state tournament with 55 combined points, including a gamehigh 34 against Neenah.



Dave Radcliffe/Freeman Staff

Brookfield Central senior guard Andrew Rohde pulls up for a jumper during See LANCERS, PAGE 3B the WIAA Division 1 state championship game Saturday at the Kohl Center.

WOMEN'S MARCH MADNESS: Oklahoma 78, IUPUI 72 **IUPUI** drops close game in first tournament appearance

McLimore leads Jaguars with 18 points

By Cliffe Brunt ÁP Sports Writer

NORMAN, Okla. — Taylor Robertson scored 17 of her 22 points in the second half to help fourth-seeded Oklahoma beat No. 13 seed IUPUI 78-72 on Saturday night in the first round of the women's NCAA Tournament.

IUPUI coach Austin Parkinson was disappointed that the Jaguars failed to properly guard Robertson one of the nation's best 3point shooters — after halftime. Robertson shot 4 of 9 on 3s after the break.



Associated Press

LEFT: Oklahoma guard Kelbie Washington (10) drives past IUPUI guard Natalie Andersen (24) and Rachel Kent (22) during the second half of a first-round game in the NCAA women's college basketball tournament on Saturday in Norman, Okla. RIGHT: Oklahoma guard Madi Williams (25) guards IUPUI guard Anna Mortag (21) in the first half of a first-round game in the NCAA women's college basketball tournament on Saturday in Norman, Okla.

"We covered her great in the points. That was tough." first half and lost her on some really pretty easy points for the Sooners (25-8), Notre Dame defeated Mas-"I thought we did a poor switches we would normally who got a tournament win sachusetts 89-78 earlier in

ond half," Parkinson said. you leave her open, it's three

Madi Williams added 21 job on Robertson in the sec- make. A player like that and for first-year coach Jennie the evening.

Baranczyk. Oklahoma will host Notre Dame in a second-round game Monday.

Rachel McLimore scored 18 points for IUPUI.

Macee Williams, the fourtime Horizon League Player

See IUPUI. PAGE 2B

Former Mukwonago, **Brookfield Central** standouts shine in tournament loss

NORMAN, Okla. — Former area standouts Natalie Andersen and Anna Mortag put up a pair of good performances off the bench for IUPUI in a 78-72 loss to Oklahoma in the first round of the NCAA women's basketball tournament on Saturday.

Andersen a former Mukwonago star and 2019 Freeman Girls Basketball Player of the Year contributed across the board for the Jaguars, finishing with four points, two rebounds, one assist and one steal over 17 minutes of action.

Meanwhile, Mortag — Brookfield Central's scoring and rebounding leader and the 2020 Freeman Girls Basketball Player of the Year scored 14 points in 13 minutes while also recording four rebounds and one block.

IUPUI finished the year with a 24-5 record.

short. They were just not going in.

In the game of basketball, that hap-

pens all the time, so I just try to find

as many ways that I can impact the

game as possible, and that was

rebounding, playing defense and

(Howard) and Sam (Heicher) can all

knock down shots. If they're going

to double-team me, then we'll just

have Noah shoot 3s or be like, 'OK,

double-team me and I'll find Ben

Howard, who totaled 16 points,

helped fuel the early second-half

outburst with a trey and a tradition-

al three-point play within a span of

30 seconds. He also chipped in with

five rebounds, four assists and two

in the state semifinal by foul trou-

ble, seized his last opportunity with

the Lightning in a big way. He sank

11 of 17 shots from the floor includ-

ing an emphatic slam dunk with 6

seconds to play that put an exclama-

tion point on the championship con-

"On Thursday, I felt like a caged dog with all those fouls," Lubbers

said. "But today, I came out the cage.

It felt nice. It was good to go out with

but the atmosphere in this gym is

just amazing, and that kind of got

me going. It was all adrenaline. I felt

like I could jump out of the gym

today, I'm not going to lie.

'I actually started off a little slow,

Lubbers, who was limited to 14 minutes. 46 seconds of playing time

and he'll make the shot.'

steals in the game.

'Guys like Ben and Noah

just finding my open teammates.

Lightning

From Page IB

But nobody cared.

"I honestly think this is the cherry on top of everything we've gone through," Lubbers said. "Our seventh-grade team won the state championship. Our eighth-grade team lost it. Then we go through losing regional finals freshman year, losing there again sophomore year. going to state junior year and winning it senior year.

"It's a Cinderella story if you ask me."

Haertle, the most accomplished athlete in LCL history, collected team highs of 49 points, 22 rebounds, 13 assists and five steals during his two state tournament games on Ab Nicholas Court, where he will play his college basketball for the University of Wisconsin.

He, too, shared a few flashbacks as he put his school's seventh state title conquest in perspective.

"It's just such an amazing feeling to be able to do this with my best friends," Haertle said. "These are guys who've always been there for me. You know, all of those days where we put work in where all of our friends who don't play basketball weren't there — like Saturday morning shootarounds. You were like, 'It stinks getting up this early,' and then you went through school the entire day.

"When you get here, you're like, 'There's no place I'd rather be than playing basketball with my friends.' It's constantly just fun; it's not work. It's like, 'Yeah, I'll just go play basketball.

LCL coach Mark Newman actually enjoyed just being a fan Saturday while directing his team on its historic journey.

"It was just a great game," Newman said. "West Salem is outstanding. I actually said to their coach that it was really fun watching their game until we started thinking about how we were going to actually stop them.

"I had the same feeling when we were playing Pewaukee earlier this season.'

The title game was no walk in the park, though.

"They're a fun team to watch play, but you don't want to have to pre-pare for them," Newman said of West Salem's Panthers, who finished 27-2. "They're big, strong and go to the boards. As the game progressed, we got a little more com-

"The way they shot the ball

from 3, I'll tell you what — if

there's a better team in the

state of Wisconsin ... Pewau-

kee's as good as it gets," La

Crosse Central coach Todd

Fergot said. "I don't know

what else we could have

Pirates

From Page IB

done."

fortable with their early pressure and we got much more comfortable with keeping them off the glass and shut down that avenue of scoring.

"I was just really impressed with our guys' composure as the game wore on. I wasn't really surprised by that. It's how they've been from the time they were young, and when I say that, I mean like into the junior program. It was a really exciting day.

Everyone who spoke from the podium after the game agreed that LCL's second-half surge was pivotal.

"We were up two at halftime," said West Salem coach Mark Wagner, whose team's only other loss this season came to Eau Claire Memorial on Jan. 15. "They made a little run and we used a timeout.

"After the timeout, their run continued. During that stretch, I thought we had some looks right at the basket; we just didn't convert. I thought we had open looks and the ball just didn't go in for us. We could have at least minimized the run and kept us closer, within striking distance."

Newman was asked what changes he made during his halftime speech.

"Minor adjustments, but just things you have to do well against a good team," he said. "We had to box out every time, because we gave them seven offensive rebounds in the first half. That's seven additional possessions. You can't give any team that, especially a good team.

"We talked about being strong with the basketball. Our movement was so limited in the first half. We just moved a lot better later and took care of simple things like when you catch the ball, you hold onto it tighter.

'Actually probably the biggest thing we talked about, and it started about midway through the first half, was that Luke is such a good scorer, but such an unselfish player, and we just said, 'Ben, this is a time where they're going to pay too much attention to Luke and he's going to be such a magnet that you have to take advantage of that.

"He really did. His desire to score came up, and that just made them pick their poison a little bit more.'

Haertle, who scored a season-high 35 points in his team's state semifinal victory, had no problem playing the role of distributor Saturday. He and his team thrived on it.

"When you're playing out there, vou can sense that, 'OK, my shot's not falling," Haertle said. "There were a couple of times where I got wide-open looks and they fell just

throws by Noah Compan with

remaining. But it wasn't long of the way. Devon Fielding before the lead would enter knocked down a 3 to make it double figures and stay there. 54-42 with 6:06 remaining, but Sophomore guard Nick Pewaukee answered with a Janowski pulled up for 3 in game-clinching 10-0 run, cultransition to begin an 8-0 minating spurt that barely required a Janowski found Momcilovic minute of game action. with a lob to give the Pirates a

three after a pair of free new mindset." The Riverhawks never got 17 minutes, 42 seconds within closer than 10 the rest when Nick Senior wing Josh Terrian 64-42 lead with 3:42 to go.

quest.

a bang.

then found junior wing Milan Momcilovic for a driving time players play in prime-great team. They're going to players showed out today," Nick Janowski said. As did everyone who saw the floor for Pewaukee. While Terrian couldn't find his shooting touch, he contributed seven rebounds and ki, who was held to just one five assists. Seniors Logan Dobberstein and Kollen Osterman played their roles to a T and also got in on the 3point barrage, which was led by a combined 11 long-range bombs from the Janowski bros. "We started out the season ing this is my last game and averaging 40 3 attempts a many shooters and we were trying to get everybody kind of makes it easy for slowly whittled that down subpar game and then come They taught us, hey, we've got

It paid off in a big way. Momcilovic missed just three shots over Pewaukee's two state games, as the 6-foot-8 wing converted 7 of his 9 field-goal attempts. And fittingly, both Ashton and Nick were 6 of 10 from the field.

ter shot selection."

"I feel like on a lot of 3s we did what we needed to do, but 64-42 lead with 3:42 to go. we all know Pewaukee," "I'm a big believer in prime- Fielding said. "They're a to them. They just hit a lot more than we expected them to.'

McConkey (22) and sophomore forward Tamarrein Henderson (4) look on during the WIAA Division 3 state championship game Saturday at the Kohl Center. going and getting in my rhythm, I felt comfortable. When they were doubling Luke, I fed off of that, because he'll find you. You just have to keep your hands up and be ready for it. I give most of it to Luke for finding me.'

LCL needed all of the heroics to hold off a comeback bid by the Coulee Conference champions, who pulled within seven points several times. Peter Lattos, a 6-foot-7 junior forward, was largely responsible for the comeback bid as he scored nine of his game-high 23 points after picking up his fourth foul with 7:21 to go.

"I missed an open 3 — a wide-open look," Lattos said. "I think that would've shifted the momentum completely. I think we were really close to turning that game around.'

points and then some since the Lightning held junior guard Carson Koepnick, West Salem's leading scorer at 16.7 points a game, to six points. They limited him to one field goal in seven tries.

"They really locked onto Carson."

"But we needed Carson to be more

"And then once I started getting involved. They did a good job. When we ball-screened for him. they did a good job on that as well. That's a

> West Salem focused much of its attention on containing Haertle following his big semifinal outing. Wagner admired how the LCL standout handled the pressure.

> Wagner said. "He gets in the lane and he sees the floor so well. It's hard to take everything away from him. I didn't think we kept the ball our of his hands well enough. Once he gets the ball, he's going to make

> "He didn't necessarily shoot it great, but he found other people, and we had to rotate and left people open on the back side for rebounding for them. We had some double-teams, and we just couldn't get him stopped. He found people for layups. He's awfully good seeing the floor.'

> Haertle was asked how it felt to win a state championship on the court where he'll play his college hoops. He certainly familiarized himself with the floorboards.

> "It's super cool," Haertle said. "Playing for the state championship, the nerves don't go away no matter where you are. But it was still calming taking in the moment, like, 'Luke, look where you are. Look who you're doing it with.

> "Without God, none of this would be possible. He really just allowed me to be the player I am, gave me the friends I have, gave me the coach I have to make all of this happen."

good, athletic kid."

"He's just so good with the ball."

plays. The Panthers needed all of Lattos'

Wagner said. "I thought it opened up some driving lanes for some of our other kids. We had some kicks, but they certainly did a great job on Carson and stayed home on him. Maybe we should've done a few more things to try to get him some shots. I thought when we got into our offense, we got pretty good shots





Dave Radcliffe/Freeman Stat Lake Country Lutheran senior forward Luke Haertle puts up an off-balance shot as West Salem junior forward Brett

Not only did the top-seeded Pirates knock down 15 triples, but they did so on just 28 attempts. Overall, they shot 60% from the field and scored 1.457 points per possession.

"I think this ranks right up there with all the best offensive displays," Pewaukee senior guard Ashton Janowski said. "A lot of people talk about our offense, but I think it all starts on the defensive end when we buy in and really lock in, That kind of leads to easy run-outs and transition 3s and when we have teams scrambling, they can't really guard us.'

That was evidenced by the Pirates' 18 points off just seven Central turnovers, as they really got out and running in the second half.

Pewaukee led 30-25 at halftime and second-seeded La

layup before hitting Ashton time moments, and our best hit those shots. Tip your cap Janowski for another trey at the 15:34 mark, making it 38-27.

The Janowski brothers and Momcilovic each scored 19 points. It was a welcome showing for the elder Janowsfield goal against the Jaguars the previous day in a grind-itout 60-49 victory.

"Yesterday I was kind of timid in the start, just getting used to everything, but I think it was just coming out today being aggressive knowleave it on the floor," Ashton game because we have so Janowski said. "My coaches and teammates have all the trust in the world in me. It shots," Burkemper said. "We someone like me to have a after starting to play Neenah. Crosse Central closed within in today with a completely to have maybe a little bit bet-

Fielding had 17 points to lead La Crosse Central, who never led by more than one but kept it close throughout a first half that saw eight lead changes.

Then the second half happened, and the Pirates were soon running around the Kohl Center floor with their newest addition to the trophy case.

"Obviously extremely exciting to win back-to-back,' Burkemper said. "We started talking about it as soon as last year's game (state final) was over, so there's been a little added pressure on these kids.

The amount of work that this group put in together, I'm just so proud."

Dave Radcliffe/Freeman Staff

Pewaukee sophomore guard Nick Janowski tries to score on La Crosse Central senior forward Noah Compan during the WIAA Division 2 state championship game Saturday at the Kohl Center.

TE CHAMPI

Dave Radcliffe/Freeman Staff

The Brookfield Central boys basketball team holds up the silver ball after the WIAA Division 1 state championship game Saturday at the Kohl Center.

Lancers

From Page IB

"Brookfield Central long before me was a storied basketball school, Wandrey said. "We've had a lot of really good players. He just blew every season that anybody else ever had — guys that have played major D-I, Power 5 conference basketball — what Andrew did this year was just unmatched. To score and rebound and assist and defending and impact the game the way he did, it was one of the best seasons that I've ever seen."

Rohde put up 27 of the Lancers' 46 field-goal attempts and made 13 of those, but nobody else made more than three.

"The things that we had been doing through this last month or six weeks of the season where maybe Andrew's scoring had come down a little bit and the guys around him had picked up their scoring, that kind of went away today," Wandrey said. "It wasn't for a lack of effort or anything like that. We got some good shots that didn't go in.'

Central wouldn't taste the lead again after a 3-pointer by Brady Corso gave the Rockets a 5-4 lead with 14 minutes, 8 seconds left in the first half. A Rohde triple brought the Lancers within 16-14 at the 7:37 mark, but Neenah answered with a crucial 12-0 run over the next four-plus minutes.

walk-through today, sometimes it's was asked of him during his fourhard to tell if they're running a set year varsity career, finished with

play or if it's just their their motion offense because they're just all really smart," Wandrey said. "They played together. They read each other really well. They play off each other really, really well."

The Rockets settled for a 31-22 halftime lead and saw that cushion trimmed to 38-33 on a driving layup by Rohde with 12:48 remaining. But Central couldn't get any closer from there.

The Neenah lead returned to double figures, and this time for good on a layup by 6-foot-7 forward JJ Paider, who was a force down low all night. That made it 48-37 with 7:31 to go, and the Lancers were held scoreless for nearly seven minutes.

"JJ, he pretty much did whatever he wanted," Wandrey said. "He positioned very well. He kind of just does a really good job in the paint to kind of defensively clog it up.'

Paider had a double-double, finishing with 14 points and 18 rebounds. Senior guard Chevalier Emery Jr. led the Rockets with 19 points, while Carter Thomas and Corso added 15 and 10, respectively.

"Emery's really tough to handle," Wandrey said. "He got into the paint against us almost at will."

The Neenah lead grew as high as 19 at 62-43 with 1:35 to go. By then, Wandrey had begun subbing out his starters, the last of which was Rohde after he threw down a twohanded dunk.

The 6-foot-7 St. Thomas (Minn.) We talked to the team at our recruit, who fulfilled every role that

ON THE WEB

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nearly 1,500 points as a Lancer.

"Just being on the team the last four years, it's really helped me become the player I am today." Rohde said. "I've played against guys like Ben, Cole (Nau), David Joplin, and I've learned from all of them. So that really helped me a lot and coach obviously helped me develop into this role.

"I just kind of took it and put my foot on the gas."

Rohde admitted as the game wore on that he felt the wear and tear of the state tournament, especially coming off an emotional comefrom-behind victory over Menomonee Falls the night prior. But along with senior teammates Logan Grunwald, Bennett Murray, Robert Bloom and Jack Tinnen, he left it all on the floor.

Now it will be on returning players like sophomore forward Jack Daugherty, junior guard Drew Edmond and freshman guard Anthony Rise to take the next step.

"It's what our program is kind of built on," Wandrey said. "Obviously we've had a stretch of incredible players since I've been the boys coach. Just have to find the next one to keep developing.

"So the message will be this feeling stings and hurts. What are you going to do to see if you can get back here again next year?