

2015 Clay County Boys State Tournament

BASKETBALL Digest

(All photos contained in this digest are courtesy of Carla Endicott.)

March 25, 2015

Dawgs' inspirational season one for history books

2014-15 team one of only 6 to make state

By **THOMAS P. WEAVER**
HORIZON Editor

MURFRESBORO—The 2014-15 Clay County Bulldog basketball team put themselves among elite company by making the state tournament for only the sixth time in school history and along the way they picked up a huge following as black and gold fans flocked to see what the team would do next.

What was even more impressive about the feat was just a year before they took to the Middle Tennessee State Murphy Center floor here earlier this month, they suffered through a .500 season that came to an abrupt end in the District 7-A play-in game.

"After the season last year I posted our stats alongside a couple of the other state tournament teams' stat-sheets in the locker room and highlighted some of the things it would take to get to that level," head coach Rob Edwards said. "I didn't know if they would even

look at it, but apparently they did.

"What they accomplished this year is just a testament to this team's work ethic and character. They were determined to get better and it paid off."

Though a Knoxville Grace Christian heart-breaking buzzer-beater closed the books on the Bulldogs' campaign in the Class A State Tournament opener, the team's overall success well outweighs the final fleeting moment of disappointment.

"If you were to tell me at the beginning of each year I could have a team achieve what this one has, I would take it every time," Edwards said, "and there's a hundred more coaches out there who would say the same thing, because when you add it all up there's not many teams that have gotten to this level."

The math is easy. Add a 25-plus win season, a top-five AP poll ranking, an undefeated District 7-A mark, a conference championship, a Region 4-A championship, and a monster home sectional victory all to the rare State Tournament appearance—it more than equals major success.



2014/2015 Clay County Bulldogs (27-5)

LaTrone Bowman - 00
Matt Maxfield - 1
Dylan Maxfield - 3
Peyton Smith - 4
John T. Dodson - 5
Jon W. Browning - 10

Seth Ogletree - 11
Austin Hensley - 14
Josh Endicott - 21
Taylor Brown - 22
Tyreke Key - 23
Justin Boles - 24

Clay Copass - 30
Dawson Russell - 33
Taylor Strong - 34
Alan Scott - 44
Wyatt Mabry - 55
Head Coach - Rob Edwards

Assistant Coaches - Doug Strong, Matt Walker.
Managers - Andrew Meadows, Ellie Ogletree, Zoie Birdwell, Emmy Upton, and Kendal Johnson

Regular season

The Dawgs' set the stage for their deep post-season run early with an undefeated 10-0 regular-season start and the fan frenzy began with the year's opening tip.

Sophomore sensation

Tyreke Key slammed home a John Wayne Brown-ing alley-oop pass with authority on the first play of Clay County's season setting the tone for what was to come.

Key went on to lead the team in scoring, assists,

steals, and crowd-pleasing dunks—which amped up the Bulldogs' style of play and inspired the black and gold fan base.

"We got off to a great start and people started to take notice," Edwards said of what he described as

the best community support he's witnessed in his 15-year career. "We played a style that people wanted to come see... pressure defense creating fast-break opportunities and we got


See **DAWGS** page 2

CONGRATULATIONS FROM THESE LOCAL BUSINESSES!



THANK YOU BULLDOGS FOR A GREAT SEASON AND
ADVANCING TO THE STATE TOURNAMENT FOR ONLY THE 6TH TIME!

Your Hometown Choice!



BANK OF CELINA
A branch of Citizens Bank of Lafayette
"We Serve Thousands of Customers...ONE at a Time!"
East Lake Ave.
243-3161

Bertha's Quik Shop & Wash, LLC

Go Bulldogs!



243-3143



Macon Bank & Trust Company
Celina Office: 931-243-3124
www.maconbankandtrust.com
Equal Housing Lender • Member FDIC
The Best in Community Banking Since 1919.

Rich's Heating & Cooling

Johnny Rich, owner • TVA Certified



Rheem office 243-2778 • cell 260-4568

JAMES D. WHITE, JR.

Attorney
at Law

jdwhite@info-ed.com
101 Green Street
Celina, TN 38551

243-3535
fax 243-3902



Stop by & see what's new!



Dale Hollow 1-Stop
243-2636 • Celina, TN • Across Obey Bridge

Dawgs

Continued from PAGE 1

to play a lot of players—all at a fast pace.

“It was fun to watch.”

Highlights of the first half of the season included a big win over Goodpasture over the Thanksgiving holiday and a pair of early District 7-A victories against Clarkrange and Monterey.

Then came the team’s first setbacks.

A tough road trip to Class AA Macon County resulted in a 57-50 defeat followed by dropping two of three at the highly-competitive Monticello

Banking Company Holiday Classic.

“Those three came against a high level of competition,” Edwards said. “We found out we could play with good teams like that and it showed us how good we could be.”

After regaining their footing by knocking off Pickett County in Byrdstown, Clay County had another eye-opening stumble that Edwards described as possibly “the most important game of the year.”

The Dawgs fell by two points to Red Boiling Springs on their home court—which served as their last loss of the regular

season.

“We knew it was a game we should’ve won,” he said, “but it made us refocus and, looking back, it was probably the best thing that could’ve happened.”

Clay County followed the loss to their neighboring-county rival with another 10-0 win-streak to close out the schedule, while climbing to number four in the statewide Associated Press poll with a 22-4 regular season record.

Along the way they compiled an 8-0 undefeated conference mark—which is an accomplishment in itself.

“In my time I only know of two other teams that have done that,” Edwards said of the unblemished conference mark. “We did it a few years back and Pickett did once that I know of.”

“It’s a pretty big task to pull off and something they should be proud of for sure.”

To ensure they remained unbeaten in conference play, seniors Latrone Bowman and Taylor Brown made big plays to help their team notch an overtime win over Clarkrange in their final district game.

“Latrone had a big steal and Taylor knocked down free throws to win the game,” Edwards said. “Without that, we don’t go 8-0.”

Key was named the District 7-A MVP and six-foot eight-inch classmate Josh Endicott got the Defensive Player of the Year nod at the end of the regular season—while senior John Tanner Dodson and junior Wyatt Mabry were named to the all-conference team. Clay County honorable mentions included

Brown, along with juniors Browning, Justin Boles, Clay Copass, and Matt Mayfield—while Seth Ogltree made the all-freshman team.

“All of those guys deserved the recognition, because they improved greatly from last year,” Edwards said. “That, plus the huge addition of Josh, got us where we needed to be heading into the post-season.”

District tourney

The conference season-sweep handed the Dawgs the District 7-A Tournament #1 seed and guaranteed them a region berth, but the coach said his team wanted to make a statement with their first postseason win and they did.

“I was concerned going in,” Edwards said of their conference-tourney opener versus Pickett County. “This team had never seen success in the postseason, but they didn’t show it.”

The Dawgs, behind a game-high 25 point MVP performance from Key, flexed their muscles with a 77-55 blowout of Pickett County in which Dodson (12) and Mabry (11) also reached double-digits.

After the 7-A showdown was postponed multiple times, Clay County eventually claimed the conference title by default when the tournament was cancelled due to the massive winter storm of 2015.

Key was named the event’s most valuable player, while Endicott, Mabry, Dodson, and Brown joined him on the all-tournament team.

Region tourney

The 7-A championship seeded the Dawgs at the top of the Region



TEARING IT DOWN—Tyreke Key kept black and gold fans on their feet this season with rim-shaking dunks like this one captured on the Dawgs’ home court. (photo courtesy Carla Endicott)

4-A Tournament alongside Goodpasture from District 8-A—a team they were destined to clash with for the title.

It also allowed them to host their first-round game in Celina in front of their hungry Dawg Pound fans—who were again treated to a show.

Key kicked off his 27-point performance with another rim-shaking two-handed slam leading a balanced attack in the 76-58 dismantling of Watertown.

Mabry topped the rest with 16 points, Dodson had a dozen, Endicott scored 10, and Boles added nine in the convincing win that led to a semifinal match-up with conference foe Clarkrange at Watertown High School.

That game turned out to be a battle, but the Dawgs again prevailed knocking off the Buffaloes 50-41 to advance to the championship.

Key was limited in the contest as Clarkrange held him below the double-digit mark (9), but Mabry and Endicott carried them through with their inside

game. Both big guys recorded double-doubles as they dominated the paint.

Mabry scored a game-high 18 points to go along with his 10 rebounds, while Endicott dropped in 10 points and pulled down 12 boards in the nine-point victory securing the team a sectional berth, but they weren’t satisfied with just getting a shot at the State Tournament—they wanted to play at home.

In order to accomplish that, they had to down the heralded Goodpasture Christian private school—a task the team took to heart.

After four back-and-forth epic quarters, Key calmly sank a pair from the charity stripe with under 10 seconds left in regulation to send the game into overtime where they gutted out the thrilling victory.

After traded baskets, Clay County held the ball for the last shot with the game tied at 55.

That’s when Dodson

See **BASKETBALL** page 3

WAY TO GO DAWGS!

Congratulations to all the Bulldog players on making State Tournament!



Clay County FARM SUPPLY

408 Brown St. • Celina • 931-243-4169

Congratulations to the

Clay County High School Bulldogs for making it to the TSSAA State Tournament!

from Celina Director Ronald Bailey and all of your friends at:

Tri-County Electric

“owned & operated by those we serve”

thanks for the great season - we’re so proud of you!

105 East Lake Avenue • Celina, Tennessee 38551
931-243-3133 • www.tccmc.org



TOP NOTCH COACH—Head coach Rob Edwards’ team added 27 wins this season to his overall 324-154 15-year record that now includes 3 state appearances, 7 sectional berths, 4 region championships, and 7 district championships. (photo courtesy Carla Endicott)

A Season to Remember!

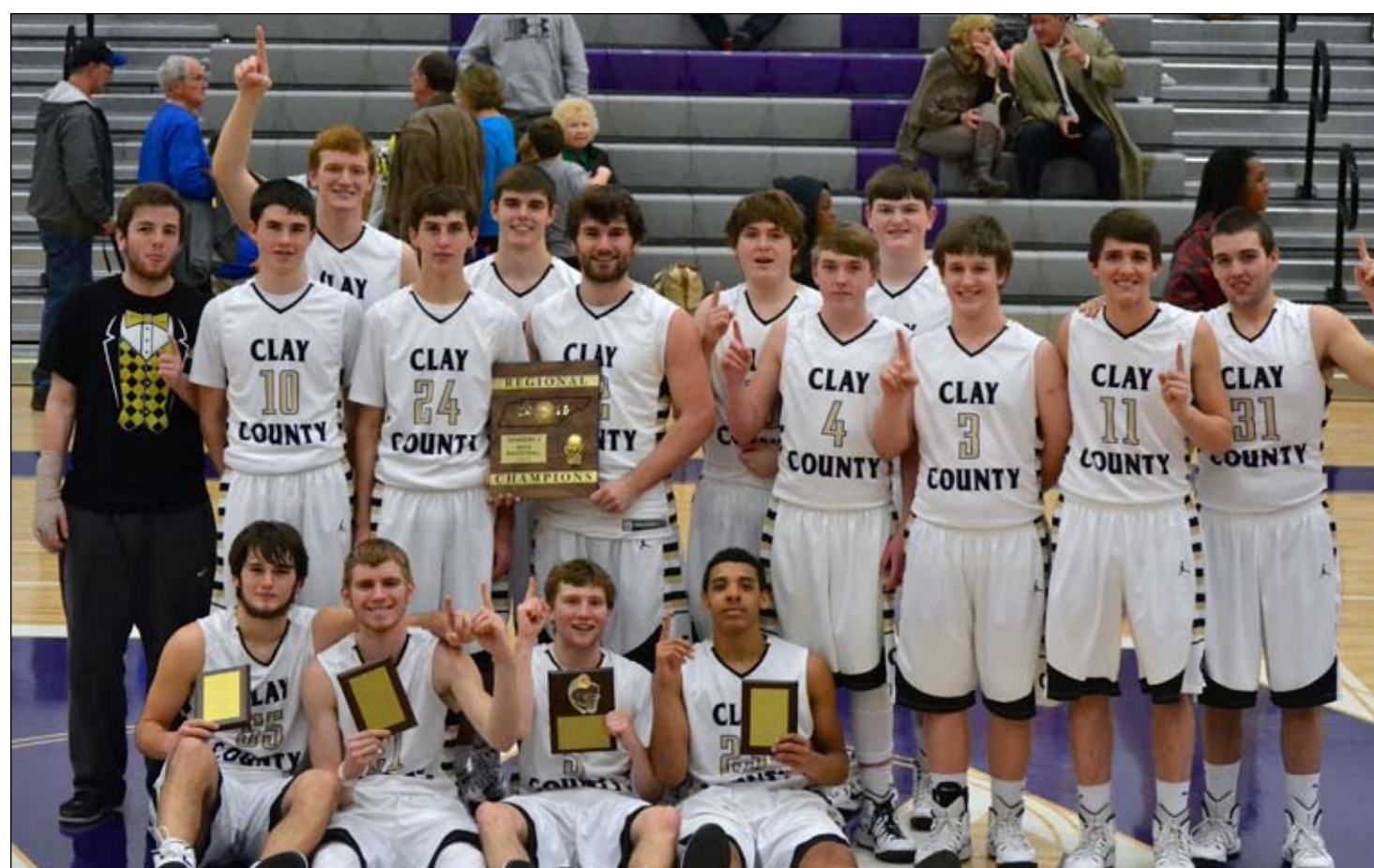
We’ll never forget the Clay County High School Boys Basketball Team’s Great Season!



Owners: Johnny and Joann McLerran
West Side of Public Square • Celina

931-243-5308

© Daniel 1 Academy Hall of Fame	W 75-44
© Van Buren County	W 66-39
© at F.C. Boyd, Sr. Christian	W 72-44
© at Red Boiling Springs	W 55-47
© #10 Ezell-Harding N	W 70-60
Watertown Thanksgiving Classic at Watertown, Watertown, TN	
© #12 Goodpasture N	W 46-43
Watertown Thanksgiving Tournament at Watertown, Watertown, TN	
© Clarkrange D	W 47-31
© at #21 Monterey D	W 64-42
© at Gordonsville	W 50-38
© at Van Buren County	W 60-55
© at Macon County	L 50-57
© Wayne County (KY) N	L 70-87
Monticello Banking Holiday Classic at Wayne County High School, Monticello, KY	
© Clinton N	W 65-48
Monticello Banking Holiday Classic at Wayne County High School, Monticello, KY	
© Freedom (FL) N	L 34-52
Monticello Banking Holiday Classic at Wayne County High School, Monticello, KY	
© at Pickett County D	W 71-63
© Red Boiling Springs	L 44-46
© at Trousdale County	W 94-46
© at #14 Jackson County D	W 81-74
© Cumberland County (KY)	W 63-43
© Macon County	W 61-46
© #21 Monterey D	W 64-62
© Pickett County D	W 80-52
© Gordonsville	W 62-58
© #14 Jackson County D	W 58-48
© at Clarkrange D	W 49-46
© F.C. Boyd, Sr. Christian	W 66-36
© Pickett County N	W 77-55
D7A at Livingston Academy, Livingston, TN	
© Watertown R4A	W 76-58
R4A	
© Clarkrange N	W 50-41
R4A Semi at Watertown, Watertown, TN	
© #12 Goodpasture N	W 58-55
R4A Championship at Watertown, Watertown, TN	
© #19 CSAS Class A Sectional	W 55-47
© #5 Grace Christian N	L 52-54
Class A State Quarterfinal at Murphy Center, MTSU, Murfreesboro, TN	



REGION CHAMPS—The Clay County Bulldogs beat Goodpasture in overtime to claim the Region 4-A Championship—which gave them the opportunity to host their sectional game, a contest they won to advance to the State Tournament. Making the all tournament team were (seated, left to right) Wyatt Mabry, Josh Endicott, John Tanner Dodson (MVP), and Tyreke Key. (photo courtesy Carla Endicott)

Basketball

Continued from PAGE 2

made his mark. Key drove the lane and kicked it to the sharp-shooter who unleashed a bomb with time expiring.

Dodson nailed the biggest shot of his career to set up the team's shot at the Elite 8 on their home court and his game-high 20-point performance was rewarded with the Region 4-A MVP.

Key—who was two rebounds shy of a triple-double in the game (17 pts/10 ast/8 rbs), Mabry, and Endicott joined Dodson on the all-tournament team.

"To win games like that you have to do all the small things right, you have to get a rebound when you need it, get a steal, make a big shot and these guys did that all year," Edwards said. "It's what I call grit, and this team had it."



REGION HERO—John Tanner Dodson hit the shot to claim the 4-A title.

Sectional round

That characteristic set the team up in a venue Edwards described as "like no other existing in high school sports"—a home sectional game.

"The atmosphere was unreal," he said. "That's the most people ever to see a game here."

"It was special and we'll never forget it."

The capacity crowd also took away their share of memories as the Dawgs put on a show for their fans and came away with the 55-47 win over Chattanooga Arts and Sciences to secure their State Tournament appearance.

Dodson got things going early with a three-pointer, before reserves Browning and Boles came off the bench with treys of their own to fire up the crowd.

Browning—whose inspired play came in honor of his father Stacey who had passed away the day before—then made a steal and outletted it to Key to further excite the base when he threw down another dunk before going on to put up a game-high 21-point performance.

Mabry and Endicott then got their games going inside en route to 11 and 10 points respectively to finish off CSAS and advance their team on to Murfreesboro.

State tourney

There they would face Grace Christian and come a lucky bounce away from the final four, but it wasn't to be.

After Mabry—who had

See **STATE** page 4



HOME COURT ADVANTAGE—Tyreke Key (23) and Josh Endicott (21) had big games in front of a capacity crowd in the Dawgs' sectional win advancing them to the state tournament. (photo courtesy Carla Endicott)



CRUCIAL PLAYS—Both Wyatt Mabry and Taylor Brown (22) made timely plays in the state tournament game. Mabry finished with a double-double scoring 12 points, pulling 10 boards, and notching four blocks—one of which was a late game-saver. (photo courtesy Carla Endicott)

Great Job Bulldogs!

Congratulations on a Successful Season!

HEAD EQUIPMENT

Machines and Components to Shape the Earth
800-338-5178 www.headequipment.com

Kudos! Clay County High Boys

FOR MAKING IT
TO THE STATE
TOURNAMENT

CELINA HEALTH AND REHABILITATION CENTER

SERVING YOU FROM OUR HEART

Grace
HEALTHCARE Managed Facility

120 Pitcock Lane
Celina, TN 38551
931-243-3139

The student newspaper distribution plan is sponsored by:

Dale Hollow **HORIZON**
Subscribe today!
Call 931-243-4710

BREAKFAST • LUNCH • TREATS

Celina Dairy Queen • 1008 Gainesboro Hwy

**Tri-County
Electric**
"owned & operated by those we serve"

The more you read, the more things you will know. The more that you learn, the more places you'll go.

- Dr. Seuss, "I Can Read With My Eyes Shut!"

105 East Lake Avenue • Celina • 243-3133
www.tcemc.org

State

Continued from PAGE 3

a huge game with a double-double—turned back their first attempt, GCA rattled in a buzzerbeater to end the Dawgs' season at 27-5.

He finished with a team-leading 12 points to

go along with 10 rebounds, while Key had 11, Dodson 10, Endicott nine, and Boles eight in the 54-52 loss.

For black and gold fans and players, it was a heartbreaking way to end the historic see-saw battle and close out the Bulldogs' year, but the journey getting there is not one of total disappointment.

"Obviously we're disappointed, but what this team has achieved is quite an accomplishment when you look at the big picture," Edwards said. "There's been somewhere around 90 seasons of basketball played here in this county and they were one of six teams that made it that far—that's quite an achievement.

"I hate it for our seniors, but the rest of the guys want to be back here next year and this just gives them the motivation to work harder to accomplish that."

Brown, Dodson, and Bowman saw their careers come to an close with the loss and Edwards said all three of them would be a big loss for the team.

"We're losing a big part of this team, but we're not looking to go backwards," he said. "If we continue to improve and work hard, maybe we can get three points better next year."

LIKE FAMILY-The Dawgs closeness on and off the court led to much of their success.



TYREKE KEY (#23)-Starting sophomore guard, 7-A and 7-A Tourney MVP, led team with 18.4 ppg and 4.4 apg. Also averaged 6 rpg and led team with 56 steals. Scored 21 in sectional win over CSAS.



JOHN TANNER DODSON (#5)-Starting senior guard, 4-A MVP, 7-A all-conference and all-tournament, 9.6 ppg, led team with 54 three-pointers and made 4-A championship game-winning shot.



WYATT MABRY (#55)-Starting junior forward, had several double-doubles this season, 8 ppg and 5.5 rpg. Led team with 36 blocks. Had big State Tournament game with 12 pts, 10 rbs, and 4 blocks.



JOSH ENDICOTT (#21)-Starting sophomore forward averaging 6.6 ppg and a team leading 7 rpg with over 200 on the year. Also had 31 blocks and big postseason double-double performances.

**CONGRATULATIONS,
CLAY COUNTY
HIGH SCHOOL BOYS
BASKETBALL TEAM!**



**H&R
BLOCK**

(931) 243-3435

Appointments Available.
Walk-Ins Welcome!

In recognition of your tournament accomplishments, our office located at **139 E. Lake Ave. in Celina** is awarding a

**\$10.00
H&R BLOCK
GIFT CARD**

with the first 60 paid returns between March 16 - 31.

HRBLOCK.COM

Valid at participating offices for an original 2014 personal income tax return. OBTP#B13696 ©2015 HRB Tax Group, Inc.



TAYLOR BROWN (#22)-Starting senior forward averaging 3.1 ppg and 4.4 rpg. Second on the team in assists and steals. Made huge timely contributions down the stretch for the Bulldogs.



JUSTIN BOLES (#24)-Reserve junior guard with big shot prowess averaging 5.5 ppg. He made 43 three-pointers this season, including timely ones in the State Tourney game where he scored 9 points.



JOHN WAYNE BROWNING (#10)-Reserve junior guard averaging 4 ppg and had 61 assists and 27 steals on the season. Made big contributions all season with his ball-handling and passing.



LATRONE BOWMAN (#00)-Reserve senior forward who made big contributions with limited playing time. Emotional leader and made the team better with his unheralded work ethic in practice.