

## **Borden falls to North Daviess Cougars in regional finals, 49-37**

Written by Administrator

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The Borden Braves (19-6) saw their bid for a second straight regional crown go by the wayside Saturday night at Jack Butcher Sports Arena, at the Loogootee Class A Regional finals. Borden was unable to make big shots, and seemed to suffer the slower tempo that the opposing Cougars preferred.

In the two first round games that morning, North Daviess defeated Tecumseh 59-47, and Borden won the second of the semi final games over Northeast Dubois, 74-61.

### **Championship Game**

#### **North Daviess 49, Borden 37 -**

The game started off well enough for Borden, when Chris Beam scored on a three at 7:36.

North Daviess' Kendall Wittmer answered with a trey of his own, knotting the game at 3-3.

Borden then hit a pair of free throws seconds later, but Dubois answered again with a basket to tie it at 5-5 at the 4:37 mark. The Braves lost a chance to go ahead when they were whistled for a travel seconds later.

Logan Wagler briefly gave the Cougars a lead at 7-5 when he connected at 4:03, but Lee Kirchgessner gave the Braves the lead back when he hit a three at 3:17.

The Cougars then went on a 7-0 run (all supplied by the offensive prowess of Thomas Nugent), and ran to a 14-8 lead over Borden.

Borden's Drake Potts scored the last two points for the Braves in the 1st quarter with a pair of free throws (44.1 seconds), and scored the first two points of the 2nd quarter, when he connected at 7:24. Borden tied it up at 14-14 when Chris Beam hit a jumper, and that forced a 30 second time out by North Daviess (5:57).

North Daviess then went on another run, this time a 6-0 spree, thanks to four points from Nugent, and two from Jacob Miller. Trailing 20-14, Borden went on a run of its own, outscoring the Cougars 7-2 over the next two or so minutes to get within 22-21. Potts scored a pair of points, and Michael Chester scored five (with three coming from a three pointer) in the stretch.

The spree by Borden was enough to scare North Daviess into calling a 30 second time out with 24.3 seconds in the first half. The Cougars then scored a basket with three seconds left in the half, to run the score to 24-21 over Borden.

The tempo was slower than Borden would normally have preferred in the first half, but they forced the issue in the beginning of the second half.

Chance Clark scored two baskets for Borden (with the Cougars' Nugent scoring in between the two Clark baskets) at the start of the second half, and Potts added a basket right after to give Borden a 27-26 lead.

It proved to be the last lead the Braves would enjoy in the game, as they were outscored 6-0, until getting the ball for a final chance at a basket in the 3rd quarter with 5.3 seconds left. They were whistled for a traveling call with 3.5 seconds in the 3rd.

Down 32-27 heading into the 4th quarter, Nugent gave the Cougars a seven point advantage, and Borden called a 60 second time out with 6:03 left in the game.

Clark scored three baskets in the final period to help keep his Braves in contention, but the Cougars hit on 13 of 14 free throws to keep the game out of reach of Borden. North Daviess hit 16 of 17 from the line, with 6 of 7 for Borden.

In addition, Potts fouled out of the game with 44.1 seconds left.

In noting that his team was held to 37 points, Borden Coach Doc Nash said, "They did a heck of a job on us defensively. We couldn't turn them over and we couldn't speed them up (referring to the Cougars' ball handlers)."

Nash had hoped that his squad would have been more effective against the shooting of

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North Daviess, however.

“Through the tournament, we got the other team to shoot the shots we wanted. They’re a very good passing team. We forced quite a few turnovers through the year, tonight we didn’t,” said Nash.

Nash wished that he had done a few things differently, especially on the offensive side.

“A little more deliberately,” he explained.

With six of the 12 roster players graduating this spring, Nash will have several big shoes to fill.

“I’ve got a great group of kids,” said Nash. “They’ve got a high bar to reach (in the future). I think they’ve turned our community into expecting to win. This group’s going to be hard to top.”

### **First Round**

#### **Borden 74, Northeast Dubois 61 -**

The Jeeps scored first, but Borden made up the brief opening deficit by canning a pair of three point goals to run ahead 6-2.

Dubois managed to tie it up at 6-6 quickly enough, though. Dalton Wagoner gave the Braves a 9-6 lead when he dropped in a three, but Dubois and Borden dueled until the two teams were tied up at 11-11 with 4:03 left in the 1st.

Dubois scored on a deuce seconds later, but it was to be the last lead the Jeeps would enjoy in the contest.

Borden outscored Dubois 10-0 over a stretch of a minute and 50 seconds, and took a 22-13 lead. Three different Braves scored in the run, with Drake Potts scoring two baskets.

Dubois was forced to call a 30 second time out with 2:01 left, and climbed back into contention soon after, scoring the last four points of the opening period, getting within 22-17.

Potts missed a pair of charity tosses for the Braves with 3:14 in the first half, and missed the front end of a bonus free throw, but more than made up the difference when he hit a pair of baskets to push the Borden lead to ten at 32-22. After the trading of baskets the rest of the 2nd quarter, Dubois hit a three with 3.9 in the half, and climbed to within 34-28 at the half.

Borden wasted no time in jumping out to a 16 point lead in the early stages of the second half, after outscoring the Jeeps 10-0.

Chris Beam scored five tallies and Dalton Wagoner scored four in the run.

Josh Gordon gave the Jeeps a brief reprieve with a basket, but the Braves outscored Dubois 10-9 to keep the margin nearly the same. Borden went into the 4th quarter ahead 54-39.

Dubois tried to keep it close and mount a comeback in the 4th quarter, with Dexter Rover, Colin Heeke, and Matt Eisenhut all garnering three point shots. Eisenhut had a pair of treys.

Unlike the final game, Borden hit a ton of free throws in the game (22 of 30), to 6 of 12 free throw shooting for Northeast Dubois.

“They (Dubois) looked a little out of their element; I don’t know if it was us or not,” said Borden Coach doc Nash.

Borden never slowed the tempo in the game, and when they were far ahead, they were looking for good shots then, as well.

“We don’t want to slow down,” explained Nash. “That’s us.”

“I tell my kids if you can’t get excited playing in front of 4,500 fans, you don’t need to be playing the game of basketball.” Join St. Mary of the Knobs to celebrate St. Patrick's Day in style! Their 4th Annual Reverse Raffle is set for Friday, March 13 at 7:30 p.m. Only 100 tickets sold in increments of \$100, \$50, and \$25. Total cash prizes of \$5,500 – even losers have a second chance to win!