

By Nate Adkins

Orrville injected ice in the veins—Lima Central Catholic stood the test of time.

Port Clinton brought its perfect record—Dayton-Dunbar wasn't phased.

Newark Catholic tested the limits—Dayton-Jefferson kept on standing.

Cincinnati Moeller took the odds—Massillon Jackson finished the dance.

On a day when champions were crowned and nets were cut, on a stage where bright lights defined the difference between sweat and tears, a clear distinction was made between champions and those merely playing along. With a multitude of characters on display at the Jerome Schottenstein Center on March 27, my trip to press row of the four Ohio boys basketball state championship games yielded a glimpse into life in basketball's finest hour.

I quickly learned that the stage that is less formally known as "The Schott" doesn't only serve as a genuine test of heart and strength; for it is in these fine moments that the players, coaches and fans show us who they really are.

Less than an hour after Lima Central Catholic ended its current coaching regime's 32-year search for a state championship, head coach Bob Seggerson made the abrupt announcement of his retirement after a 517-win career. This, of course, followed Orrville head coach Sly Slaughter's final remark of his team, "The only way they know how to play is hard."

As participants in the "Be a Sports Journalist" Program, we witnessed a plethora of happenings on that fine day for basketball. We saw the shooters in Newark Catholic and the runners in Dayton-Dunbar. We saw the circus stuntmen in Massillon Jackson and

the rough-and-tough scrappers in Orrville. Personalities, genetics, sportsmanship—all shining as bright through on-court action and post-game press conferences as the state championship spotlight itself.

A simple word can describe the happenings at the Schottenstein Center that day: memorable. Every player or coach at the high school level dreams of capping off a campaign with that long-awaited trophy. For a select number on March 27, that dream grew to fruition. And for a select number, that day was something they'll remember forever.

For what it's worth, I won't forget it either.