

## Clinton Lady Arrow Kingpins named State Champions again

By Danny C. Davis

For the second year in a row, the Clinton Arrow Lady Kingpins have captured the MHSAA Class 6A State Championship. The Lady Arrow Kingpins also won the title in 2007, 2008 and 2018. Clinton boys also bowled in the state championship meet and finished fourth in Class 6A.

Charlie Melton has been the head coach for the boys' and girls' teams since the program's beginning some thirteen years ago. He has helped make Clinton a mainstay of bowling for Mississippi High School Activities Association finals. Clinton teams have advanced to the championship series every year since the program began.

For the Lady Kingpins, the setup was identical to their championship title in 2018. The Clinton girls faced two very good teams from the Mississippi Gulf Coast 6A Region in D'Iberville and Hancock County. And, like last year, the Lady Kingpins beat D'Iberville in the semi final match and advanced to the championship, entitled "Baker's Match," against Hancock County. And the Lady Kingpins brought home yet another Class 6A trophy from defeating Hancock. Clinton bowled 812 points in three championship matches.

All the regional and final matches were held at Metro 24 Bowling Center in Jackson. That worked out to Clinton's advantage, since the bowling alley surface is wood just like In-

dian Lanes in Clinton, where the team practices and has home matches.

Bowling for the Lady Kingpins in the finals were juniors Leticia Grimmett, Sarah Rusling, Paige Wigant and Alana Roberts, along with senior Amber Clark. Grimmett was the state tournament top scoring bowler and has already been named to the MHSAA All Star Bowling team.

"I am so proud of our entire team this year," said Melton, who was assisted by volunteer parents Tim Brown and Calvin Peters.

"The state All Star team is not complete yet, but we had five girls on it last year and expect to have five named to the team again this year."

"Our girls started out slow early in the season, but they worked so hard to get back to State and wanted it so bad. They got better as the season went along."

"Our boys worked hard too, but we had a lot of young players this year; and I think they got a little nervous in the state match. But they are going to get better. I expect them to do real well next year. They are only losing one player, Christian Davis."



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"The girls are going to be very strong again next year. Four of our five girls that bowled in the finals were juniors, so we are going to be a senior girls team next year, and we are really looking forward to it."

Both teams played well during the regular season, according to Melton. Clinton competed in the Class 6A central district with Brandon, Pearl and Warren Central. And both teams were young this year, especially the boys, with only one senior and two juniors, and the rest of the team consisting of eighth, ninth

and tenth graders. The girls also had only one senior, but had four juniors, and the remainder eighth, ninth or tenth graders.

According to Melton, bowling is such a great sport for students that may not play other sports.

"A lot of these kids do not play another sport, and it is great for them to learn teamwork and have a chance to be part of a championship. Bowling is a life-long sport that these kids have learned how to do it well, and they can bowl for life."

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