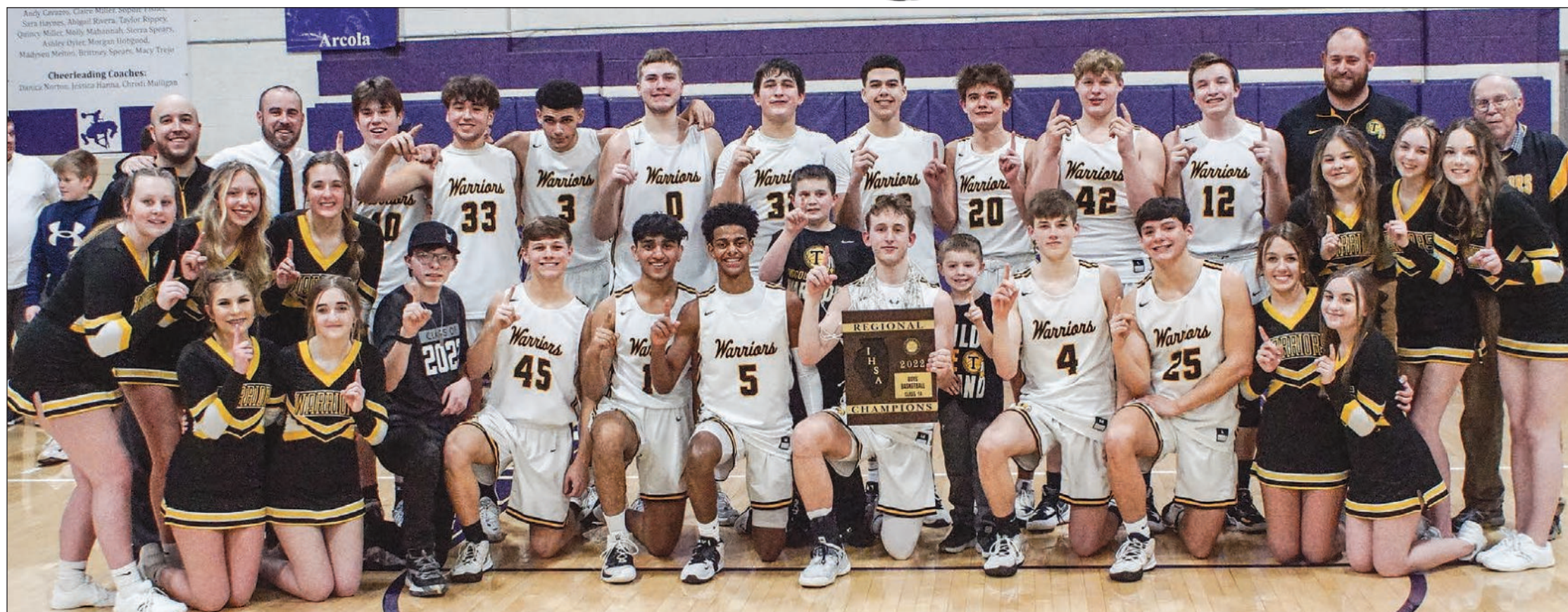


Black & Gold



CELEBRATION TIME: Tuscola senior James Parsley, who held the Central Illinois Conference Tournament Trophy as well, holds the Illinois High School Association Class 1A Regional Championship Plaque won by the Tuscola Warriors as they downed the Arcola Purple Riders. The state-ranked Warriors now move onto the Effingham St. Anthony Sectional, where they will play against the St. Anthony Bulldogs in the first round of the sectional tonight. *Photo by Daniel L. Chamness.*

Quinn leads Tuscola to Class 1A regional title

By Mike Monahan

ARCOLA –Tuscola fans stayed around on the floor of Nancy Stiff Gymnasium Friday. There was a great reason for that as the Warriors won the Class 1A boys' basketball regional title with a 56-33 triumph over Arcola, a team it beat 44-28 on Dec. 21 also at Arcola.

Loyola University Chicago recruit, Jalen Quinn, a 6-3 senior, scored 32 points, including the first 10 points of the game and the defense held Arcola to 3-14 (214) shooting from the three-point line as Tuscola improved to 27-6 and winners of six straight games.

"It (winning the regional) feels really good," said Tuscola coach Justin Bozarth. "It is a testament to the kids and how hard they work. They put themselves in position to play in this atmosphere and in games like this because of how hard they invest in perfecting and just a commitment of getting better for our program. I am thrilled for the kids because their work ethic pays off."

It was the first regional title for Tuscola since the seniors were freshmen in the 2018-19 season when they won a Class 2A regional title beating Unity 51-44 at Heritage.

The only other Class 1A regional title was 2007-08 when the Warriors beat Chrisman 63-61 at Chrisman.

Overall it was the 18th in this history of the program and the first regional title was in 1938.

"The end of the first half was big," said Bozarth, who is in his fifth year with a 93-46 record prior to the Warriors at Effingham St. Anthony sectional semifinal game, which was Tuesday. "It was a very low scoring game, which played right into Arcola's hands. They did a great job in the first quarter of grinding out possessions and being patient and getting what they wanted. It forced us to guard for a long time and it is tiring to guard for a long time. Late in the second quarter we went on a run and kind of sped them up. We got a couple of easy transition layups out of that and that was kind of the difference."

The 27 wins in a season is the best since the 2000-2001 team went 27-4 in 2000-01.

Arcola never led in the game that was tied four times, all in the first 9:27.

"I felt like the middle of the second quarter we were in a really good spot and they had a little 8-0 burst that we could not quite bounce back from,"



HAVEN HATFIELD LOOKS around the court and decides what to do with the ball. Providing defense for Arcola is Michael Myers. Hatfield, a Tuscola senior, helped his team win and move on to the St. Anthony Sectional in Effingham. Provided both Tuscola and Macon Meridian win their first round games, the two teams could meet for a third time for the sectional championship. *Photo by Daniel L. Chamness.*

said Arcola coach Greg Gisinger. "We kind of hung around there, but then they did the same thing in the last part of the third quarter where they had a ltburts. You know we just could not come up with loose balls or could or not quite make the shot to kind of keep us in it.

Hats off to them, they are very, very good," said Gisinger of Tuscola. "They are very well coached, have big kids and they have a lot of them. They have shooters. I think they have a good chance of making a run to the final four."

A scary moment occurred for Tuscola fans when with 4:27 left in the third quarter Jalen Quinn went in for a layup and went down on the court, where he was for a few minutes.

"I was just going in for the layup and it was a physical play and I came down on my hand wrong," said Quinn. "At first it kind of just shocked my hand. I kind of lost feeling in it. I thought I broke my hand at first. I just waited a couple of minutes and my feeling came back and I was ready to go. It is going to be sore for a couple of days, but I will be good."

Bozarth didn't know it could have been that serious jokingly saying, "I think he was taking his own media time-out."

With Quinn out it didn't matter as Tuscola went on a 7-0 run after the Purple Riders had battled to within seven.

"That kind of sealed the game when Jalen went out," said Bozarth. "I think it relaxed some of the other guys because it forced them to be playmakers and scorers at this point the whole group settled down. Jordan (Quinn, Jalen's brother, who is a 6-2 sophomore) made a couple of baskets one on an offensive rebound and one where Josiah Hortin made a great kick out pass to Jordan for a three-pointer. Colton Musgrave had a basket."

Tanner Thomas, a freshman for Arcola, ended the run with a basket for a 37-25 game late in the third. It was also when Quinn returned.

Tuscola went on an 8-0 run with all points by Jalen Quinn for a 45-25 advantage with 4:34 remaining in the game starting with a three-pointer to end the third quarter.

The Tuscola defense held Arcola to just 35 field goal attempts.

"To start the game we were not as sharp in our man-to-man as we wanted to be," said Bozarth. "So, we kind of tried to change the pace a little bit just to get our guys refocused and they finally settled in a little bit and guarded much bet-

ter in the second half and rebounded much better also. It is tough with a kid like Beau Edwards with his motor. I told him after the game he is one of my favorite players not from Tuscola because of how hard he plays in every sport he does. We had trouble controlling him early (scored nine of the first 12 points for the Purple Riders, who finished 17-11) As the game wore on we had different guys guarding him and we just tried to wear him down over the course of time."

Jalen Quinn was 14-of-24 (.583) from the field, including 4-of-8 from beyond the three-point line with a team-high seven rebounds.

"He is a special player," said Bozarth. "He lives for games like this with high stakes. Obviously he is the focal point of what we do and he is a lot of the focal point of what everyone else is trying to do. He just does a terrific job of staying composed and of course it helps that he made a couple of shots to start the game and it settled us into the game. He kind of controls the pace.

When you have a guy like that at times you just let him go. As coaches we laugh sometimes because we just stay out of the way."

Arcola was led by Edwards with 16 points.

As for his brother making some big baskets and being able to play with him in the regional title Jalen Quinn said, "It was a big part of the game when I was out. My brother has worked so hard for that moment. I have seen it right in my eyes. It is something (winning a regional together) we have grown up and wanted to do our whole lives. We finally get here in this big position and win a regional championship together and it means the world to me and I am super proud of him"

Neither team had a lot of turnovers with eight by Arcola and five by Tuscola, including none in the second half.

"I remember being in middle school I would come to Tuscola games and see us not being very good, but you could tell the kids were working at it and wanted to be better," said

Jalen Quinn. "When I got here as a freshman all I wanted to do was be better and learn from the upperclassmen. I feel like I learned a lot from them and now I am trying to pass it down to the younger kids. We always talk about building the brand at Tuscola and I feel like that has been our motto the last four years. Build the brand and get better each and every day and I feel like we have done that."

Arcola	10	5	10	8-33
Tuscola	12	12	16	16-56

TUSCOLA: Preston Brown 2-0-4, Jalen Quinn 14-0-32, Josiah Horton 2-4-8, Colton Musgrave 2-0-4, Jordan Quinn 2-0-5, Easton Cunningham 0-0-0, James Parsley 0-0-0, Dylan Homann 0-0-0, Rajan Patel 0-0-0, Jackson Barrett 0-0-0, Jordan Schez 0-0-0, Haven Hatfield 0-0-0, Thomas Brown 0-0-0, Chris Boyd 1-0-2, Totals 23-5-56

ARCOLA: Alex Kuhns 2-1-5, Beau Edwards 7-1-16, Austin Kutz 0-0-0, Tanner Thomas 2-0-4, Mitchel Myers 2-0-5, Ryan Lindstrom 0-0-0, Aldo Garcia 0-0-0, Tyson Lewis 0-0-0, Jackson Miller 1-0-3, Brandon Shonkwiler 0-0-0, Totals 14-2-33

3-point goals: Tuscola 5-13 (.385) Jalen Quinn 4, Jordan Quinn 1, Arcola 3-14 (.214) Edwards 1, Thomas 1, Myers 1. Free throws: Tuscola 5-8 .625, Arcola 2-4 .500. Rebounds: Tuscola 25 (Jalen Quinn 7), Arcola 19 (Edwards, Thomas 4). Turnovers: Tuscola 5, Arcola 8. Shooting percentages: Tuscola 23-40 (.575), Arcola 14-35 (.400).

1st Saturday in March



March 5th Reception 2 to 5

Show Dates
March 5th through 28th

Downtown Tuscola 100 N. Main
217-722-2187

MICHAEL DELANEY



Michael's watercolor creations consist of landscapes, cityscapes and portraits. His landscapes and cityscapes are comprised of rural areas, farms, barns and buildings. His commission portraits include the special people in the lives of his collectors.






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