

# Black & Gold

## Tuscola honors girl's basketball team

**By Daniel L. Chamness**  
Sophia Kremitzki has made it a clean sweep. Not only did the Lady Warrior star earn numerous honors from Tuscola High School at the recent Warrior Girls Basketball Banquet, the Central Illinois Conference as well as the Illinois Basketball Coaches Association found her deserving as well. From the IBCA, the senior was named to the all-state team, earning third team recognition in Class 1A. In the 31 Tuscola games, Kremitzki scored 374 points, an average of 12.1 points per game. She would score her points by hitting 123 field goals and 92 free throws. Of her field goals, 36 were from beyond the arc. Kremitzki led the Lady Warriors in rebounds (189), rebounds per game (6.1), assists (91) and blocked shots (41). On Monday night, the Central Illinois Conference selected her to the first team. She would finish her senior season

as the Tuscola Most Valuable Player, the Rebounding Award and the Free Throw Award. "Any award means a great deal, but the MVP honor is probably the best," said Kremitzki. "Being recognized in that way, by a vote of the coaches and my teammates means so much. It recognizes me as a great leader. It is one of the best awards I could have ever received. I was extremely pleased to get all the honors." Kremitzki was not the only one to be recognized outside the walls of TCHS. Ella Boyer, a junior guard, earned IBCA Special Mention. She led the Warriors in scoring, scoring a total of 391 points, an average of 12.6 points per game. She would score the majority of her points from beyond the arc, hitting 72 treys. She also hit 43 field goals and 89 free throws. She also had 90 steals, 75 rebounds and 74 assists. Boyer was named to the CIC's second team as well. Taylor Musgrave earned the

Warrior All-Defensive Award as well as honorable mention all conference. Musgrave, a senior guard, had a team-leading 102 steals to go along with her 114 points, 66 rebounds, 50 assists and 18 blocked shots. She hit 39-of-96 from two point range. She would sink 10 treys and six free throws. "I think the league coaches recognized the success of our season by awarding us three spots," said Tim Kohlbecker, Tuscola's head coach. "I am extremely happy for both Sophia and Ella. Taylor's defensive work was rewarded. I have always emphasized defense and will never understand why basketball does not have an all-defensive squad. It is rare to hear coaches talk about defense during award nominations, but pleased the recognized Taylor." The other award distributed went to Maddie Stahler as the senior earned the Warrior Spirit Award. She would score



**PROUD AWARD WINNING BASKETBALL SENIORS, from left to right: Taylor Musgrave (Warrior Defensive Award), Sophia Kremitzki (Most Valuable Player, Rebounding Award & Free Throw Award) and Maddie Stahler (Warrior Spirit Award). Submitted Photo.**

96 points and pull down 93 rebounds. She had 41 assists, 40 steals and 14 blocked shots. "I have always believed that being a good teammate does not have to mean scoring the most points," said Stahler. "I

have always strived to pick up my teammates and push them to play the best they can. I am extremely honored I earned this honor." Stahler, Kremitzki and Musgrave are all slated to graduate.

The three helped Tuscola post a 23-8 overall record. They were the CIC Tournament Champs and the IHSA Class 1A Meridian Regional Champions. They posted a 6-1 mark in the CIC.

## Tuscola wins Section opener 51-48

**By Daniel L. Chamness**  
To earn the right to play in the Illinois High School Association Class 1A Sectional Final, the Warriors had a daunting task: get by the Effingham St. Anthony Bulldogs. Not only beat the Bulldogs, who had posted over 20 wins during the 2021-2022 season, but defeat them on their home floor, the Enlow Center, with their season on the line. The Warriors managed to accomplish just that, dispatching the Bulldogs 51-48 in a raucous battle in front of a packed crowd. The Warriors needed every minute, make that every second, to eliminate St. Anthony. In the final seconds of the game, Warrior star Jalen Quinn, who finished with 33 points, was turned into a spectator as he had fouled out. But, before the future NCAA Division I Loyola University Rambler took a seat in the front row, he made sure his team had the lead. In what be-

came a theme of the game, he made an old fashioned three pointer with 1:56 to play to cut the Bulldog advantage to just one, 48-47. He would give them the lead for good with only 40 ticks left on the clock. The 6-foot-3 senior guard would sink two free throws. In 2:10 of play between 2:51 and :40, he would bucket all five opportunities. "We went small at one point and played faster, smaller guards," said Tuscola head coach Justin Bozarth. "We had them scouted and it paid off at the end. Jalen really came through tonight. Driving to the basket, using his spin moves and drawing the fouls." That simply gave the Warriors a one-point lead, 49-48, with plenty of time left for the Bulldogs to score and win the game, or get fouled and send it into overtime. Neither happened. With only :18.5 to play, the senior would hit one-of-two charity tosses to give them a 50-48 lead. While Quinn baked the

cake the entire game, Colton Musgrave put the icing on. The junior would nail the second of two free throw chances right inside the five second mark and the Bulldogs would be forced to go for a three pointer to at least tie the game and send it into overtime. "I knew when I went to the line, I needed at least one of those," said Musgrave. "I think went small tonight, it played to our advantage. I think we were a little faster and more athletic than they were. It allowed us to use our natural tools on the basketball floor." "They made some defensive plays around the court, necessary for them to get the ball in Quinn's hands," said Cody Rincker, St. Anthony's head coach. "It was those late turnovers and his ability to spread us out and get to the basket. This was a great atmosphere all year. Very proud of the fans and the support we get from them." As they entered the fourth

quarter, the crowd, seemingly evenly split between Tuscola and St. Anthony supporters watched as the Bulldogs were seemingly creeping away with the lead, be it ever so slowly. Heading into the final four minutes of the game, the Bulldogs held an eight point lead, 48-40, thanks to the scoring of Craig Croy, who started the scoring for the Dogs at the 6:43 mark, but also Adam Rudibaugh as well. But, the after the first four minutes of the final eight minutes, the Bulldog scoring simply exited stage left. Rudibaugh and Croy would finish with four points each in the final stanza, but the Tuscola defense, now pressuring the St. Anthony offense beyond 3/4 court, was forcing the Bulldogs to make much longer passes. The result: the Bulldogs would be held to their lowest quarter point total of the game. Meanwhile, the only thing that would be heard in the Enlow Center in Effingham was

the dribbling of the basketball and the the roar/groans of the crowd as Quinn pulled them closer and closer to victory. With 3:13 to play, Quinn drained a layup as he dashed down the middle of the floor with the basketball and hit the layup eyeing the clock and showing a sense of urgency. "That was a greatly played game by both teams," said Rincker, who finished 21-13. "We had the momentum for sure, but they used their trapping defense to pressure us and then Jalen (Quinn) is a player than can change the momentum of a game in an instant. He gets to the basket well. We forced them to play without him at times. We forced them into some turnovers." After that, it was all charity stripe action besides the bucket scored during the old-fashioned three pointer at 1:56. Rincker called timeout between the throws at the :40 mark, but Quinn would bucket the second one as well.

"We have had an opportunity to play without my brother in the lineup a little bit this year," said Jordan Quinn. "I think it shows us how bright our future can be. The defenses are always focusing on him. We have to be prepared to make the shots. The energy tonight in this gym was phenomenal." The final four minutes of the game does not negate the first 28 minutes of the contest. The Dogs had the Warriors on the run, in foul trouble and on the ropes. After Tuscola scored the first five points of the game, the St. Anthony quickly answered and tied the score up. Quinn would be in double figures by the quarter's completion, scoring 10 of the Tuscola 13 points. The only field goal not scored by him was an early trey hit by sophomore guard Josiah Hortin. But, the Bulldogs showed they were more than capable of keeping pace. And they used 6-foot-4 senior Kyle Stewart to accomplish it. While Stewart

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