

Community Sports



Villa Grove sports wrapup

By Tony Hooker High School Boys Basketball

Cage Hawks
The Blue Devils used a balanced scoring attack to defeat Heritage 65-55 on Jan. 24. Robert Fancher led the way with 21 points, Brady Clodfelder added 14, Layne Rund chipped in 13 and Peyton Smith helped out with 10. Smith did yeoman's work on the glass, hauling down 7 rebounds to lead the team. Lukas Shadwick contributed 4 assists and Fancher added 3 to power the Villa Grove attack. Fancher, Rund and Clodfelder each pilfered 4 steals to lead the way defensively.

Thrown by Riders
Arcola's blistering hot shooting doomed VGHS in a 57-42 win on Jan. 27. The Riders hit 9 of 18 from 3 point land, while Villa Grove made only 4 of 20. Brady Clodfelder totaled 14 points and Layne Rund added 13 for the Blue and Gold. Clodfelder led the team, who were out-rebounded by 10 boards, with 6 rebounds, including 3 off the offensive glass, and also pilfered a team-high 3 steals. Robert Fancher dished out 4 assists to fuel the attack.

Remembered by Titans
Another glacially cold night from deep doomed Villa Grove in a 62-50 loss to Tri-County on Jan. 28. The Blue Devils hit just 4 of 17 from behind the 3-point arc and compounded their problems by hitting only 4 of 9 free throws in the game. Layne Rund had 22 points and Lukas Shadwick added

10 for VGHS. Rund handed out 6 assists and Brady Clodfelder yanked down 7 boards to lead the team.

Jr high boys' basketball

7th graders take home regional crown
Topple Riders

A balanced scoring attack led to a 37-17 win over Arcola in the semifinal game of the Salt Fork 7-2A regional tournament. Gavin Taylor poured in 13 points and Max Wilson added 12 for VGJH. Tucker McGarigle chipped in 6 in the win.

Weather Storm, win title
The Devils outscored the host school, Salt Fork, 7-2 in the final stanza to capture a 22-20 win and take home the 7-2A regional crown for the second time in the last 4 years. Tucker McGarigle led the way with 8 points, Max Wilson added 6, Gavin Taylor chipped in 5 and Nolan Shadwick got on the scorecard with a first-quarter 3-pointer for Villa Grove, who advanced to the Jan. 30 Sectional title game vs. Ridgeview.

Junior high Girls' Volleyball

7th graders split pair of matches

Villa Grove dropped a hard fought 2-1 match to ALAH on Jan. 23, and then swept Arcola on Jan. 24 to improve their record to 7-3.

8th graders duplicate feat, split pair

The Blue Devils dropped a straight-set match to ALAH on Jan. 23 and then defeated Arcola 201 on the 24th. VGJH stands at 3-6 on the season.



VILLA GROVE 7TH GRADE boy's basketball team shows off their regional title after beating Ridgeview. Submitted photo.

Villa Grove Jr. High claims regional title

By Tony Hooker

For the second time in four years, the Villa Grove Junior High 7th grade boys basketball team has claimed a regional crown. I recently caught up with Coach Heath Wilson to learn more about his squad.

What's been the key to your tournament run?

I'd say you would have to look at our defense. The last couple of games, our defense has been unstoppable, really. The last few games, our opponents have had 4 points, at half-time, 8 points at half time, and 11 points at half time so that's really been our key. They say that defense wins championships, and that's really what's been the key to our regional

championship.

Are you pressing? Running a half-court zone, or man-to-man?

We call it gold, but it's just a nice 1-3-1. We don't press a lot, but we will if we need to change the tempo.

Who are the key contributors?

It seems like everyone brings something different to the table. Our starting five is pretty solid. Wes Woller, he's a small guy, but he plays some good defense. Tucker McGarigle is tough, Gavin Taylor is the top of our 1-3-1. Nolan Shadwick and Max Wilson inside. He's (Max) one of our toughest guys inside.

Offensively, Wilson and Taylor are our leading scorers.

Any revenge stories along the way? Did you get somebody who beat you earlier?

Not really. We've played some good, tough games. Arcola played us to a 3-point game in the regular season and we drew them in the regional semifinals. It was a close first quarter and then our boys just woke up and pulled away by 20. I don't know if there's any revenge stories, but these kids are going to be playing these teams for the next 5 years and they have to keep building on that momentum and the tradition of saying that we want to be the top dog in the conference.

What can you tell me about your opponent?

Colfax Ridgeview! <laughs>

Coaching high school football, they've seemed to have our number. Back in 2019, this year's junior class won a regional as 7th graders and drew Lexington in the sectional and we had a 20-point lead at half time and we ended up losing in overtime. Hopefully, we can get a little bit of revenge. They co-op with Ridgeview in high school, so maybe we can get them. They've kind of had my number as a coach, so hopefully, this is the class that can change that momentum to Villa Grove's side. I do know they've got a couple of big guys, so we're going to get ready and see what we can do against them.

Villa Grove Boy's Varsity Basketball Schedule	
Matches in bold are home games	
02/03/2023 Friday 6 p.m. vs. Blue Ridge	
02/07/2023 Tuesday 6 p.m. at LSA	
02/10/2023 Friday 6 p.m. at Argenta-Oreana	
02/14/2023 Tuesday 6 p.m. vs. Okaw Valley	
02/16/2023 Thursday 6 p.m. vs. CGB - Senior Night	

Villa Grove Girls Jr. Varsity Basketball Schedule	
Matches in bold are home games	
Games are at 6 pm unless indicated:	
Thurs. 2/2 @ Argenta-Oreana	
**Mon 2/6 vs OV	
**Still waiting for confirmation this game will be played.	

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BLUE DEVILS' ROBERT FANCHER (3) jumps up for a shot against the Arcola Purple Riders in the Jan. 26 game at the Lincoln Prairie Conference boys basketball tournament hosted by Argenta Oreana. Villa Grove lost 57-42. Photo by Stephanie Wierman.



BLUE DEVILS' EMMA BUESING (3) looks to pass the ball in the Jan. 25 game against Blue Ridge. Villa Grove lost 23-31. Photo by Dominik Stallings.

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