

Congratulations

Second-half domination keys Clinch's 63-43 win over Portal

By Len Robbins
Publisher

For the first time in nearly four decades, the Clinch County Panthers are basketball state champions.

Thursday in Macon, Terrence George's team soundly defeated Portal in the Class A, Division II state title game, 63-43, claiming the school's first boys state hoops title since 1989.

"They (Portal) were averaging over 60 points a game, and we did a good job defensively of limiting their effectiveness," said George, whose team finished the season with a record of 29-3 – the most wins in a season in school history. "And then on offense, we attacked, were aggressive going to the basket. That put us on the free throw line, and got some of their guys into foul trouble. Our guys just did a great job of implementing our game plan."

Sophomore Traviian Miller was named the game's MVP, pouring in 25 points, including a dunk exclamation point to end the game, and grabbing 12 rebounds. Junior Jakyri Posley had 15 points and 7 rebounds, while Kamarion Johnson had 10. Other Panther scoring in the championship match were: Shane Burns-5, Fred Causey-4, and Kyiis Mingo-4.

Clinch jumped out to an 8-4 lead early before Portal – also the Panthers – went on a run to take a 9-8 lead. At the end of the first period, the score was tied 12-12.

The two Panthers traded the lead back and forth until Clinch took a 25-24 lead on a three-point play by Miller with 1:49 left in the second quarter. Then, seconds before the first half expired, Miller hit a wide-open three-pointer from the corner to give Clinch a 28-24 halftime advantage.



Clinch's Kamarion Johnson dribbles up court, flanked by Kyiis Mingo (5) and Jakyri Posley (11) – Photo by Joy Sumner Photography.

Portal would never threaten again, as the Region 2-A Panthers dominated the second half. Clinch outscored Portal 16-6 in the third quarter, up 44-30 going into the fourth. Early in the third, Portal cut the Clinch lead to 10, 44-34, but the Red Panthers answered and led by as much as 20 midway through the final period, with Miller's slam ending the game with a 20-point difference.

The Panthers had free throw issues early in the game, but finished 13-of-21 (62 percent) for the game. They also had an advantage on the boards – 33-to-28. In the second half, Clinch had 22 rebounds to Portal's 13, which proved decisive.

"I'm proud of our players and how they played and improved all season," said George. "It's been a long time since we won a state championship, and I'm very happy for our school and kids."

This Panther team joins two other state champions – the 1987 and 1989 teams.



Clinch's Fred Causey goes up for two against Portal in the Macon Coliseum Thursday – Photo by Joy Sumner Photography.



Clinch's Jakyri Posley takes a shot against Portal in the Class A, DII state title game Thursday in Macon – Photo by Joy Sumner Photography.



CLINCH COUNTY PANTHERS

CLASS A, DIVISION II

STATE CHAMPIONS

12/15 @ Scintilla Charter	W 85 - 56
12/16 vs Berrien	W 60 - 31
12/18 vs Echols County	W 88 - 39
12/19 @ Mitchell County	W 55 - 47
12/20 @ Berrien	W 68 - 47
1/2 vs Irwin County	W 91 - 54
1/3 vs Atkinson County	W 48 - 46
1/5 @ Breittley County	W 53 - 48
1/6 @ Coffee	L 51 - 69
1/9 vs Brooks County	W 60 - 30
1/10 @ Charlton County	W 55 - 53
1/13 @ Turner County	L 46 - 63
1/16 @ Lanier County	W 89 - 51
1/20 @ Irwin County	W 72 - 44
1/23 @ Atkinson County	W 46 - 45
1/24 vs Coffee	W 61 - 47
1/36 @ Pierce County	W 56 - 54
1/27 @ Brooks County	W 54 - 52
1/30 vs Cretvilan County	W 66 - 53
2/9 vs Scintilla Charter	W 85 - 58
2/1 @ Pierce County	W 86 - 29
2/20 @ Ftinnon County	W 65 - 69
2/18 vs Erenven County	W 62 - 53
2/5 @ Wheeler County	W 60 - 49
3/6 vs ChatterRoohee (Count)	W 53 - 44
3/12 @ Portal	W 63 - 43

2026 SEASON RECORD: 29 - 3



2026 STATE CHAMPIONS

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PLAYER OF THE WEEK

The Clinch Memorial Hospital Pharmacy Basketball Player of the Year is sophomore Traviian Miller. Traviian had 25 points and 12 rebounds in the championship game, and was named the game's MVP.



Traviian Miller



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