Panthers!!!!!!!!!

Q&A with Coach Terrence George

By Len Robbins
Publisher

After Thursday's 63-43 win over Portal in the Class A, Division II state championship game, The News spoke to CCHS boys basketball coach Terrence George about the game and the championship season.

Question: What was your strategy coming in against Portal?

George: We identified that they had one player (David Thomas) that was their main scorer. They look to get him the ball and then dish it out to other guys to shoot for the outside. So we decided to defend him with Kamarion Johnson, and force him into difficult shots, and basically make them beat us with long shots from the other guys. They weren't making them, so that worked out well. We also tried to go at their bigger guys and get them into foul trouble. We felt we matched up well with them in terms of height.

Q: When did you think this team had a chance at a state championship?

A: There really are two parts to that answer. First was when we started practicing, the first week. We were doing a drill, and I looked at (assistant) David (Carroll) and said "This could be scary." The way we were running up and down the floor, I felt could be hard for other teams to handle. Then, later on in the season, after we lost to Coffee the first time, we beat them at home. After that game, I told the team, "Hey, this is how could you could be. If you play like that, we can take it to the end."

Q: After 21 years in coaching, how does it feel to win a state championship?

A: When they say a weight has been lifted, that's real. It's a relief to have this opportunity and to pull it out. I've coached a lot of very good teams that probably could have won championships, but it just wasn't our time for one reason or another. I feel like this was our time."

Q: Your team only had one senior (Fred Causey), but they didn't play like a young team in the playoffs. How key was that to winning the state championship?

A: The only two times we played like a young, inexperienced team was at Coffee and at Turner. We played very unsure of ourselves. But we kept plugging away and learned from those experiences. These guys have played together for a while and know their roles. We have something posted in the locker room that says "Know your role and do your job." It was evident who our scorers were and who are role players and rebounders were. And they've played together enough to know their roles and accept them and play well together. Fred was a prime example of that. He knows his role is to come in and rebound and play great defense.

Q: How excited were your players to win a state title?

A: They were ecstatic and excited. We've been trying to enjoy the moment. We'll enjoy this as long as we can. But they are already talking about winning another one next season. So, soon, we'll get to work, and start plans for the next season.

Photos by Joy Sumner Photography

2025-2026 GHSA Class A Division II Boys State Basketball Championship

In the first three rounds, the higher seeded team will host. In the Quarterfinals, if both teams are the same seed, a "universal" GHSA coin flip will determine the host school. In the Semifinal and Final rounds, when playing at a neutral site, the team on the TOP of the bracket will be designated as the home team and will wear white jerseys.

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