

GCHS Archery competes at region

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STAFF WRITER

The Green County High School Boys' and Girls' Archery teams competed in the KH-SAA Region 3 Championships Saturday, March 21 at John Hardin High School in Elizabethtown.

In boys/coed regional competition, Central Hardin High School won the title, scoring 1,970 points. Bethlehem High placed second with 1,959. Green County High School was seventh with 1,921.

Dimitri Compton, of Central Hardin, was the individual winner, shooting a 297.

Green County Dragon results: Hunter Pierce 284, Brody Price 280, Drew Judd 278, Brayden Rayburn 274, Daniel Manning 272, Caleb Rayburn 267, Remington Ray 266, Gavin Rayburn 261, Dakota Milby 253, Eli Thompson 252, Ben Lord 229, and Kayden Stearman 218.

"The Green County Boys Archery team shot well at the KH-SAA regional tourna-

ment. The boys had a good year," said Coach Chris Penick.

In girls regional competition, Taylor County High School won the title, scoring 1,903 points. North Hardin High placed second with 1,889. Green County High School was seventh with 1,821.

Iszy Anderson, of Elizabethtown, was the individual winner, shooting a 283.

Green County Lady Dragon results: Maddie Underwood 281, Akela Davis 276, Kylie Turcotte 275, Kari

Warren 259, Isabelle Rouse 257, Jozlyn Coldsmith 246, Samantha Wilhoit 227, Audrey Arnett 220, Danielle Milby 216, Aubrey Smith 202, and Nevaeh Sexton 195.

Medalist Maddie Underwood's fourth place finish at region qualified her for the KHSAA State Archery Tournament.

"The Green County Girls Archery team shot well at the KH-SAA regional tournament. We had a good year," said Coach Chris Penick.



Photo submitted

Medalist Maddie Underwood qualified to compete in the KHSAA State Archery Tournament scheduled for Tuesday, April 21 at the Central Bank Center in Lexington.

Eighth grader Pierre Rondo making his name known



Vaught's Views
Larry Vaught

Eighth-grader Pierre Rondo made his state tournament debut last week for North Oldham. He's in his second season on North Oldham's varsity team and averaged 14 points and 3.4 assists per game while shooting 38 percent from 3-point range.

His father is former UK player and NBA star Rajon Rondo, who won NBA championships in 2008 with Boston and 2020 with the Los Angeles Lakers. He played two years at UK for coach Tubby

Smith and was the 21st overall pick in the 2006 NBA Draft. He led the league in assists three times and steals once. His 32 regular season triple-doubles rank 16th in NBA history.

"He's an eighth-grader, but he's actually one of our leaders," North Oldham coach David Levitch said. "He's so good on the court, but he's vocal as well. He's way beyond his years."

Lyon County coach Ryan Perry's son, Travis, played for him in the eighth grade and went on to become the state's all-time leading high school scorer. He just completed his sophomore season at Mississippi after playing at UK for one year.

"I think he is really good," the Lyon coach said about Rondo after losing to North Oldham. "Obviously he gets a lot of attention from other teams just like we (Travis) did, but he seems to handle it very well. He plays more mature than his years. He has a good presence on the court. He does not really panic."

Rondo went 4-for-6 from 3-point range against Lyon to finish with 25 points. He also had seven assists and four rebounds in 30 1/2 minutes of play.

"He is very shifty, a willing passer and has a high basketball IQ. That kid is going to be really good and has a chance to be really, really good. He's not as quick as dad yet but he might be. He is a handful to handle now. He knows how to play and obviously has been well coached from an early age. He's just a very impressive player."

Levitch calls Rondo a "natural point guard" who has worked to im-



North Oldham eighth-grader Pierre Rondo has rare skills for a 14-year-old player and could develop into an elite player. (Les Nicholson Photo)

prove his 3-point shot and is now almost a 40 percent shooter from 3.

"If you need him to score 24 points in a game, he can do it," Levitch said. "If you need him to have nine assists in a game, he can do it. When you watch him against teams that press us, he never gets sped up. It just comes so easy to him."

Bardstown High School coach James "Boo" Brewer, a former Louisville player, watched Rondo play at the state tournament.

"I see a young man that has a bright, bright future. I know that's a big statement, but the way that he's playing, the way that he's talking to his teammates, he is special," Brewer said. "He's a great teammate, but he's a great leader. He also plays with so much voice, and plays with so much confidence. He's fun to watch."

Rondo was double teamed almost every time he had the ball in a state quarterfinal win over Butler but still finished with 14 points on only seven shots along with five assists and two rebounds.

"He's a more physical kid than what I thought. As a coach, you look at his long arms and you know he's got big hands (because his father did)," Brewer said. "He's gonna grow some more, but his poise and the way that he runs the team and sees the floor really is fun to watch."

"He's an eighth grader, so hopefully we can keep him here (in Kentucky) another four years (and not a prep school), but I don't see him staying here for four years just because he's phenomenal and is going to have a lot of opportunities to play

a lot of places if that's what he wants to do."

In a 53-45 semifinal loss to George Rogers Clark Rondo had 22 points on 8-for-16 shooting with five 3-pointers, three assists and two rebounds.

Madison Central beat North Oldham midway of the season and limited Rondo to one field goal and six points. However, Madison Central coach Allen Feldhaus said Rondo looked like a totally different player in the state tourney than he did in early January.

"He has such a good feel for the game and will only get better. He still struggles with bigger, stronger people on him but he is shooting it really well," Feldhaus said. "His upside is incredible. His poise is so good. He is going to be a great, great player. It's already hard to stay in front of him and it's only going to get tougher and tougher."

Rondo's father was hard to contain, too, but was never the type of 3-point shooter his son already seems to be. The elder Rondo was also never the talker his 14-year-old son already is based on his state tournament interactions and what his coach said.

"I would say I don't really have his personality," Rondo said about his dad. "He's chill, doesn't really talk a lot, doesn't show a lot of emotion. I feel like I'm the opposite, I'd probably say I get it from my mom."

Levitch verified that his young player was a talker. "He never stops talking. Ever, at any point of the day. The only person you hear on the bus is his voice," the North Oldham coach said.



Jamarrion Harkless came home to UK in hopes of being a dominant run stopper this season. (UK Athletics Photo)



Kentucky players appreciated the way point guard Jaland Lowe helped them even after he was injured and could not play. (Vicky Graff Photo)

Defensive lineman Jamarrion Harkless was a consensus three-star prospect coming out of Frederick Douglass and a top 100 defensive lineman nationally. However, he turned down chances to play for Kentucky and Louisville to play at Purdue where he played in 22 games in three years with 12 starts last season when he had 13 tackles, 2.5 tackles for loss and four quarterback hurries.

Now the 6-foot-3, 345-pound Harkless is back in Lexington after transferring to UK in the offseason.

"One of the main reasons I came back was for family. I missed them," Harkless said. "I just wanted to be closer (to home)."

He said a lot of schools reached out to him once he entered the transfer portal but "proximity to home" was important and Kentucky and Louisville were the only schools he really considered. He said he was close to Vince Marrow, UK's former recruiting coordinator who

is now at Louisville, but basically had a "whole different mindset" in high school.

"I wanted to go out and explore other places. Most every OV (official visit I took) was four plus hours (from Lexington)," he said. "I picked Purdue because of the relationship with the staff but I visited Auburn, Ole Miss. I was just trying to get as far away as possible."

Kentucky coach Will Stein, defensive coordinator Jay Bateman and line coach Anwar Stewart had a strong selling point for Harkless to get him back home.

"They looked over my film and saw how good of a run stopper I could be. They said I could be one of the best in the nation and if you come here the scheme you get will give you a chance to get one on ones and dominate the line of scrimmage and that sold me," the junior defensive lineman said. "Obviously coach Stewart is a great guy and the guys he got to leave (for the NFL) built like me, no other coach is really doing that."

Even though they have been injured and not played since early January, both point guard Jaland Lowe and center Jayden Quaintance have been on the bench supporting teammates during games and at practice offering whatever advice they can.

Lowe and Quaintance obviously would have liked to have played in the NCAA Tournament — Kam Williams did return from an injury to play in both the SEC and NCAA Tournaments — and teammates appreciated their support. Williams called Lowe a "player-coach" who helps everyone on the team.

"I'd definitely say an experience that I wish that they had the opportunity to have. It's definitely once in a lifetime," sophomore Kam Williams said after playing in his first NCAA game in St. Louis. "So definitely them sharing with us how important it is to keep dancing definitely makes us play a lot harder, and we also want to play for our BBN fans and our families and everyone has motivation. But we had extra motivation because we have two players that are not allowed to play right now."

Sophomore guard Collin Chandler said both players "had to find roles" after being injured.

"They've found a role that impacts winning, from being on the bench and supporting us that way. I think they help us win games and they're here to experience that," Chandler said in St. Louis. "They're experiencing it with us, and their contributions, although the media or fans might not understand what they bring to our team, it's definitely felt."

Freshman Malachi Moreno said Lowe is almost always the first person to speak whenever UK had a timeout.

"That goes to show even though he can't play he's here to help us win. Just having those two around, it's almost like having more coaches, they help see the floor a lot, especially J Lowe. He sees a lot on the floor that everybody else doesn't see," Moreno said. "JQ is always talking to us on the bench and letting us know what he sees and we were able to apply that in real time."