



March 9, 2021

By Dennis Garcia

SportsTone.net

The high school football season is underway and that means another high school basketball season has come to an end.

What?

Anyway, it's been that kind of year. While in normal years, high school football gives way to basketball, 2020 and 2021 have meant a great deal of changes, including a football season that began six months later than usual.

With another basketball season in the record books, there are some definite accomplishments achieved by Randolph County teams that need to be applauded.

The Wheatmore High School girls varsity basketball team advanced to the Sweet 16 of the NCHSAA state 2-A playoffs for the first time. Congratulations to Coach Pete Kilcullen and the Warriors.

For the Providence Grove boys, Jonathan Foust was named the conference player of the year in a league loaded with individual talent.

The Randleman boys and girls teams enjoyed stellar seasons with both teams earning Piedmont Athletic Conference regular season championships.

Then the RHS boys gave perennial power Kinston all it could handle in the first round of the playoffs while the RHS girls team, which will have everyone returning, advanced to the Elite 8 once again. Congratulations to boys coach Daniel Mitchell and girls coach Brandon Varner. And congratulations to sophomore Gracyn Hall, who was named the league's player of the year.

The Trinity boys, under the veteran leadership of Coach Tim Kelly, fought their way into the state 2-A playoffs.

The Asheboro High School boys recorded a big win over Eastern Guilford. League or non league, a win over Eastern Guilford is a great achievement.

Both Uwharrie Charter Academy teams had strong seasons in the Yadkin Valley Conference and the Southwestern Randolph boys had an impressive win over Southern Alamance after losing quite convincingly to the Patriots in the season opener.

The SWR girls finished with a winning record and the Cougars return all but one player next season.

A number of county players were honored by the North Carolina Basketball Coaches Association as they earned all-District honors. Randleman's Nate Cassady was a first-team selection in District 8, while Asheboro's Noah Watkins and Providence Grove's Jonathan Foust were second-team selections

On the girls side, Asheboro's Diamond McDowell, Providence Grove's Malea Garrison and Randleman's Gracyn Hall were named to the All-District First team.

Trinity's Autumn Gentry and Asheboro's Tanaesha Ellison were named to the All-District 8 Second Team and Southwestern Randolph's Alexis Maness was named to the Third Team.

There were other great moments and achievements as well, none more impressive than the Asheboro High School girls advancing to the state 3-A championship game against Carson.

The Blue Comets may not have claimed the championship, but Don Corey and his team, led by the senior play of Diamond McDowell, Tanaesha Ellison, Janiya Jackson and Ashton Maness, provided fans with plenty of memories that will be cherished for a long, long time.

Speaking of state championships, all eight state championship contests were played in Randolph County as Providence Grove High School and Wheatmore High School hosted four title games each this past weekend.

A big congratulations to the administrations at both these schools and for Randolph County School System Superintendent Dr. Stephen Gainey, for his work in getting the championship games to Randolph County.

With Covid-19 restrictions and protocols, this season was certainly one unlike any other.

Still, the teams in Randolph County made it a very special season. One that gave fans plenty to cheer about and plenty to remember.