

## Making History at LHS

Many people think that memorable experiences don't come until later in life; however, as a high school senior, I've lived through one of the most memorable experiences I could think of. Last year, as a junior, my basketball team and I accomplished something that no team had achieved ever at Lindsay High School. My team and I won the Central Section Valley Championship game, making us the champions of our division four league, along with hosting the first ever state game.

A lot of people were underestimating our potential to make it as far as we did, considering the year before we lost in the Valley Championship game to San Joaquin Memorial by eight points. Many said that we "choked under pressure" and that we couldn't handle being a part of such a big game and maybe that's true. Maybe that year wasn't "our" year to win, but, what we knew going into the next season that we were not going to let anything get in our way of taking the championship title. We started the season off strong, with a seven game winning streak, taking out teams that were in better divisions than us. Then we got to one of our biggest preseason games, against Redwood High School. We played strong until the buzzer went off; however, we came up short, losing by seven points and that sadly ended our winning streak. We then participated in a high division tournament and shockingly enough, we came out on top, taking first place. In that tournament, we beat many division two and three teams, which in the long run, would benefit us hugely.

Shortly after that tournament, we began our league games, where we would play Woodlake, Sierra Pacific, Corcoran, Granite Hills, and Strathmore. Throughout all of league, we had one goal in mind... that Valley Title. Our league record was 10 wins and no losses, meaning

we took undefeated league champions. By taking undefeated league champs, we were the first girls' basketball team to have ever taken that title and our team made history. After our league games finished, playoffs were up. We knew that the consequences in playoffs were so much more drastic rather than league games. With one loss in playoffs, we were done, out of playoffs and out of the running for the valley championship title.

The Saturday after, our last league game was the day we would find out what seeding we'd be given for playoffs. That day was so stressful, waiting for CIF to post the playoff brackets, and once they did, everything we had worked towards had paid off. We had been given the number one seed out of 16 seeds for division four. At that moment, we knew that we had deserved that seed more than anyone in the division four because we had worked the hardest to get there and there is no way we weren't going to let it slip away. Unfortunately, we weren't given a bye for the first round of playoffs, but we knew we were playing to achieve one goal. We knew we had to take each game one at a time and that is exactly what we did.

We started off our playoff season with playing the 16<sup>th</sup> seeded team, which was Coalinga. That game was a breeze and we were definitely ready for the next round. Although Coalinga was no match for us, Caruthers on the other hand was a little more competitive and rough towards us. We went into that game with the same goal in our minds though, that valley title. We beat them exceptionally well and next up was the semi-championship game, also known as the game that will take us to the Selland Arena to play for the championship.

For the semi-championship game we play our neighbor city Exeter. We had already played them once in preseason, so we knew what we were in store for; however, we knew that this game had such higher stakes than that one preseason game. Going into this game we were so

excited to have made it that far, but we all knew what had to be done, and that was win to make it to the next game. We went into the game very determined and ready to play our hearts out. The game ended and the outcome was definitely memorable. My team and I had, yet again, won the semi-championship game to lead us on our way to that valley title.

After the Exeter semi-championship game, our minds were still fully determined to get the valley championship title. We were up against Mendota, a team from up north and we knew they were a team that had some real potential. We watched film on them and practiced hard to ensure that we'd be ready for that day. As the week started to come to an end, the game was getting closer and closer and we were getting more and more excited and ready. We had no doubt in our mind that we were going to go into the game, giving it our all and not backing down, because it would have just be a repeat of the year before.

The game was on Saturday, March 2<sup>nd</sup>, and it had come. We were beyond ready for this day and nothing was going to bring us down. We started the game off very sluggish, which sadly had us down at the end of the first quarter. But after first quarter, we knew that we needed to pick up our game and get our heads back in the game and play the game we knew had to play our game. And from then on, that's exactly what we did. We did not back down. We did not play their game. We did not listen to the opponent's crowd "boo" us. We did what we knew how to do best, play our game. And the result was such an unforgettable feeling. We had just won the Central Section Division Four Valley Championship and it was definitely a memory that will live within us forever.

Not only did we take the championship game, but, we also hosted the first ever state game for girls' basketball. To have been part of the team that had achieved so many goals and

had made history was an amazing accomplishment that we all went through. I will never forget any part of that journey and will forever cherish the team I was a part of.

History was definitely made that year not only for Lindsay High School and the girls' basketball program, but for me as well. Looking back at that season, I just get the urge to smile uncontrollably because it was such an amazing journey and to have spent it with my teammates and coaches, it definitely added to the joyfulness. This was such an unforgettable and memorable experience for me because we really did make history for the basketball program, the high school and Lindsay as a whole. I will never forget the rush of excitement that filled my body during all of those games and not because we won a lot of them, but because I was playing the sport I love, with people I've been friends with forever and I get to make my parents and community proud. Playing for such an amazing school and city is just a bonus to playing with the friends I love. I will forever be sharing this experience with people and it will always hold a special place in my heart.