

Edmonson News

# SPORTS

## 1976 State Champs

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GIMLET MANAGING EDITOR

In 1976 the Sweet Sixteen had been going strong for 59 years. This game gave all high schools in the state a level playing field to reach the State Championship. The Kentucky High School Boys' Basketball State Tournament began in 1918 and for fourteen years there were 18 regions that made up the tournament. Since 1932 there have only been 16 regions thus the term "Sweet Sixteen" was coined. Kentucky is one of only two states (Delaware is the other) that still play a state tournament without a class system that divides large and small schools into separate tournaments. Delaware will change this next season to the class system and that leaves Kentucky holding ground to allow all schools a chance at the title of State Champions.

Going into the 1976 season there was strong talk of changing Kentucky to a classification system which would rule out one team being the best. The classification would place big schools together and smaller schools together. Then came the game to end that, Edmonson County vs. Christian County. Each county was considered small population and small schools, at the time and both teams were considered Cinderella teams and were well matched. This game was not only important to Edmonson County but to all of Kentucky.

These two small power houses, and especially Edmonson County, stopped the consideration of classification system basketball. It restore the chance that even a small school could win the big game. It wasn't just a title—it was the turning point that protected a tradition

and inspired future underdog teams. Edmonson County sold out all their state tournament tickets in a half hour. Those who could not attend the game spent the night around the TV or radio listening to the game being called. It was played at Freedom Hall to a packed house.

It also brought its own controversy and unbelievable back stories. Both coaches were new to their schools that year and ended up at the Big Show. Coach Bo Davenport had been fired the previous season from his coaching job, but the very next day Edmonson plucked him like a ripe berry on the vine. Davenport had been to the Sweet Sixteen in every tournament since 1939, but had not won. At the time Davenport had a record of 439 wins to 379 losses over his 26 year career.

Davenport took on being coach at relatively unknown school and along with his rather large team, of mostly 6 foot plus football players, made Kentucky High School basketball history. Edmonson did not win their District Championship that year but lost to Glasgow. Edmonson had won 27 games that year during the season which put them in the playoffs.

The previous night in the semi-finals Edmonson faced Shelby County. This game brought a final buzzer controversy. There was some confusion on the amount of time left on the clock, due to a Shelby player being fouled and no one was sure if there was time on the clock or it was out of time. The rule book says the game is over when the buzzer sounds, there was a literal 2 seconds at

the most. If there had been the two seconds given back on the clock Shelby would have been able to take a shot. The call stood that time was up at the buzzer with no extra seconds to be played and, as the saying goes the Edmonson Wildcats made it in by the skin of their teeth.

The starting lineup for the Wildcats was Chester Bethel, Kevin Clemmons, Phil Rich, Mark Hennion, and Aaron Goad.

Coach Bo Davenport referred to #35-Phil Rich as the mountain, due to his size and height.

**Here is a recap of the game and if you want to see it for yourself you can view it on YouTube.**

Edmonson County made the first scores of the night with # 51 Aaron Goad scoring two points. Early on in the game Christian County had moved the score to -10 Christian to 4 Edmonson. Edmonson really racked up the fouls during the first quarter, with 4 team fouls and several personal fouls. The first quarter ended with a score of Edmonson-18, Christian-17.

During the second quarter the ball changed back and forth. Both teams were determined to move ahead of the other. The second quarter ended with Edmonson at 35 to Christians 31 at half time, making this a close call game.

In the third quarter both teams came out to play hard. #35 Phil Rich made several rebounds and hit several baskets to help Edmonson pull ahead. #32 Mark Hennion and #40 Kevin Clemmons caught rebounds and with passes to all the players they kept



▲ PHOTO | SUBMITTED  
**1976 State Champions.**

**THE KENTUCKY**

*High School Athlete*

EDMONSON COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL BASKETBALL TEAM  
K.H.S.A.A. CHAMPION — 1976

(Left to Right) Front Row: Kevin Hayes, Timmy Ashley, Kevin Clemmons, Chester Bethel, Ricky Houchin, Keith Pottinger, A. P. Miller. Second Row: Mgr. Larry Starnes, Prin. Johnie Vincent, Coach Bowman Davenport, Ricky Davis, Arron Goad, Phil Rich, Mark Wardlow, Jeff Doyle, Mark Herrison, Asst. Coach Charlie Hopkins, Mgr. Tommy Ritter.

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the ball moving fast enough that Christian County could not keep up. #11 Chester Bethel was a quick mover on the court helping to keep Christian off balance. The third quarter saw Christian start to fall. Ending the quarter at Edmonson-57 to Christian- 39.

The final quarter was all high excitement as both teams battled it out for the championship. # 40 Kevin Clemmons a 10th grader showed that talent will come through, no matter that he was one of the youngest players on the court. The Wildcats played as a team and that made

all the difference. No one player was the superstar. They played where and how they needed to in order to secure the win. The Wildcats brought home the trophy with a win of 74 to 52.

**~Bo Davenport-  
"I love high school basketball, it's the most American thing there is."**

*Editors notes\*\*\* due to being sick this year I had missed the Glory Road celebration of the 1976 Champions. Bill Canty encouraged me to at least write a something in the paper about the Champions since this was the 50 year celebration.*

*Encouraged by words from Bill I took the idea and ran with it.*

*Even though it happened 50 years ago it was such an important part of KY High School Basketball that I felt it deserved a more fitting tribute than just a small thing in the paper. Thank You Bill Canty for the encouragement and*

*I hope that everyone who reads this can either relive or live for the first time what the Cinderella team accomplished for the whole state but mostly for our little county.*

*- Lynn Bledsoe, Gimlet Editor.*

## 2026-2027 Kentucky Fishing and Hunting Licenses Available

Special to The Edmonson News

FRANKFORT, Ky. (Feb. 27, 2026) — The 2026-2027 Kentucky license year for fishing, hunting, boating and more begins on Sunday, March 1, 2026. Outdoor enthusiasts are able to purchase all the licenses, tags and permits they need to enjoy Kentucky's outdoors through the end of February 2027.

Licenses and permits are sold online through the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resource's License Sales portal and the My Profile app, both searchable on the department's website at fw.ky.gov. Licenses and permits also are sold at agent locations across the state. A list of license agent locations by county is available on the department's website.

The 2026-2027 license and permit fees will remain the same as the current license year ending Saturday, Feb. 28, 2026. License and permit fees for the 2025-2026 license year were increased slightly across the board in January 2026 following a new, inflation-based pricing system measured on the Consumer Price Index (CPI), the national measure of inflation calculated by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. The

Federal Duck Stamp and application fees were exempt from CPI adjustments.

In Kentucky, a license covers basic hunting or fishing for many species, whereas additional state permits are required when pursuing specific species, such as fishing for trout or hunting for migratory birds, deer, wild turkey or black bear. Sportsmen's-type licenses include multiple species permits as well as basic hunting and fishing privileges.

For newcomers to all the great outdoor opportunities that Kentucky has to offer, a reduced-cost sportsman's license is now available for resident first-time buyers. Only individuals who have not purchased an annual Kentucky hunting or fishing license – or a combination license that includes an annual license - since 1996 are eligible. The \$37 license includes a resident hunting and fishing license, spring turkey permit, fall turkey permit, trout permit, state migratory bird and waterfowl permit and statewide deer permit.

Kentucky Fish and Wildlife provides a number of resources to assist avid outdoor enthusiasts and newcomers alike with information on waterbodies, public lands, fishing and hunting educa-

tion and all the regulations to help anglers and hunters make the most of their time outdoors via its website and the hunting and fishing guides it produces annually. This includes the new Fishing and Boating Guide available online and in print.

Another great resource is the Fish Boat KY app. Available free from the Apple App Store and Google Play, the app helps anglers find waterbodies, boat ramps and other water access from the palm of their hand. Users can also search by species of fish, store copies of their licenses, and much more using the smartphone app.

The department receives its primary funding through revenue raised by the sale of hunting and fishing licenses and permits, as well as federal excise taxes generated by the sale of recreational firearms and ammunition, archery gear and fishing equipment.

For questions, the public may refer to the Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Licenses webpage or type "Licenses" into the search bar on the agency website (fw.ky.gov), or contact the Kentucky Fish and Wildlife Information Center at 800-858-1549 or at info.edmonson@ky.gov, weekdays 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. (Eastern), except holidays.