

# SEASON

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such great effort was special! I'm proud of all of them.

"Clay Akins, Trey Person, Lucas and Salmons all made some winning plays for us tonight," he added. "They were ultimately the difference in the game. With the amount of attention they showed Evan and Eli it was nice to see the shine. Thought Evan and Eli did great late. Dictating pace and finishing when needed.

"We looked like the team I think we can be," Pietrowski continued. "Pumped to be headed back to the region. Time to focus in on Whitley and see if we can figure out a way to give them a game Friday night."

The last time Corbin missed out on playing in the 13th Region Tournament was 2004. The Redhounds possess the longest current streak with North Laurel's current streak of 11 ranking second. Clay County (1978-2017) holds the record,

reaching the 13th Region Tournament 40 consecutive seasons.

"Really proud of these seniors," Davis said. "They have worked extremely hard and been great leaders and role models for our program. Proud of how hard our guys played and worked, just had some things not go our way and out of our control. Unfortunately, that has been the thing all year in these games."

On Tuesday, Corbin managed to build a 13-8 lead in the first quarter, and a 28-15 edge at halftime. The Redhounds entered the fourth quarter with a 40-31 advantage.

Trey Person came up huge for Corbin, scoring 20 points while Clay Akins had 12 points, Evan Ellis scored 11 points, and Eli Pietrowski finished with nine points.

Garrison Brown and Kaden Taylor led the Cardinals with eight points apiece.

The win improved Corbin to 14-13 while South Laurel (14-15) finishes with a losing record for the first time since the 2012-13 season.



**Kaden Taylor takes a shot during South Laurel's 50th District Tournament game against Corbin. The Cardinals finished the season with a 14-15 overall record. | PHOTO BY DARRIN SPENCER**

# NORTH

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first six years when we were laying the foundation brick by brick. There were long nights, tough losses, growing pains, and lessons that shaped the culture we now get to celebrate. That journey makes this ninth straight title even more meaningful."

North Laurel used a balanced offensive attack and relentless pressure to pull away, shooting 41.3 percent (26-of-63, including 8-of-23 from 3-point range while forcing 15 turnovers and controlling the paint.

Mariella Claybrook led the Lady Jaguars with 15 points and 13 rebounds while Haley Combs added 15 points, seven steals, and five assists. Bella Mahan came up clutch, scoring 14 points while knocking down four 3-pointers. Eighth grader Laylee Phillips chipped in 11 points while pulling down five rebounds, and two steals.

"These girls earned every bit of this championship," Mahan said. "They bought into the standard over the last few weeks. They embraced the work. They trusted each other. This wasn't about one performance or

one player, this was a complete team win. Every single player stepped up when her moment came. That's what championship basketball looks like.

"We work year-round for this time of year," he added. "The early mornings, the extra reps, the conditioning, the accountability and it's all designed for nights like this. We push them hard because adversity is guaranteed in championship moments."

The Lady Jaguars took control in the second and third quarters, outscoring Clay County 44-18 across those two periods to build a commanding lead.

North Laurel finished with a 36-19 advantage on the glass and scored 30 points in the paint, showcasing its physicality on both ends of the floor.

"Nine straight is special," Mahan said. "But what makes it even more special is the standard of excellence, the unity in the locker room,

and the pride these young women carry in representing our program and community. I couldn't be prouder of their fight, their resilience, and their commitment to something bigger than themselves. We now get to really test that as we go for our next Region Championship this coming week."

Clay County was led by Madison Pendland with 13 points while Harper Rice recorded a double-double with 12 points and 13 rebounds. The Lady Tigers struggled offensively, shooting 27.9 percent from the floor (12-of-43), including an 0-for-8 effort from 3-points from 3-point range.

# SOUTH

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10, Aubrey Bundy nine, Shelby Smith seven and Skeeter Mabe six. Lady Cards play Friday night at 6 p.m. Go Cards."

The Lady Cardinals jumped out early, building an 18-9 lead after the first quarter and never looked back.

South Laurel matched that 18-point output again in the second period to take a 36-20 advantage into halftime.

Any hopes of a Clay County rally were erased in the third quarter.

South Laurel delivered its most dominant stretch of the night, outscoring the Lady Tigers 25-5 in the period to push the margin to 61-25 entering the fourth.

The Lady Cardinals' defensive pressure forced turnovers

and limited Clay County to just five points in the frame.

McKenzie Fannin led the way for South Laurel with 17 points while Maci Messer added 14 points. Callie Jones chipped in 10 points and Aubrey Bundy contributed nine points.

South Laurel finished 26-of-64 from the field and knocked

down seven three-pointers. The Lady Cardinals also controlled the glass, outrebounding Clay County 36-15.

Clay County was led by Harper Rice with 13 points. Carly Fultz added seven for the Lady Tigers, who were held to just 13 made field goals and shot 39 percent for the game.

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