

## With 20 wins in last 21 games, Bossier High is on a roll

Written by Jerry Byrd

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Coach Jeremiah Williams' Bossier High Bearkats carry a 10-game winning streak into Tuesday night's District 1-3A game with Green Oaks at the Bossier gym.

Green Oaks (12-10) is the only 1-3A team other than the 22-3 Bearkats that has won more than 10 games this season. Both teams are unbeaten in district play.

After a 3-2 start, the Bearkats have won 20 of their last 21 games. The only loss during that streak was to Class 5A Ouachita, 43-42, in Airline's Doc Edwards tournament. Ouachita, ranked No. 2 in Class 5A by the sports writers, has won two of three games with Bossier High this season.

Bossier High is the only Caddo-Bossier team with a top five ranking in any class in the latest sports writers' poll. Huntington (17-3) is ranked No. 6 in Class

In other Tuesday night games, Airline goes to Haughton and Parkway visits Southwood in District 1-5A, Benton goes to Fair Park in District 1-4A and Haynesville travels to Plain Dealing in District 1-A.

Shreveport teams are setting the early pace in District 1-5A and District 1-4A. Huntington is 5-1 in 1-4A. Captain Shreve is the only 1-5A team with no losses in district play.

Williams' Bearkats have more than 30 wins in each of their last four seasons. With only four games remaining in regular-season play, they would have to make a deep run into the Class 3A state playoffs to break the 30-win barrier again this season.

Bossier High won its first state basketball championship in 1960, when a Bearkat team coached by John McConathy set a Caddo-Bossier record that still stands with a 41-4 record. No other local team has matched that win total.

Cecil Upshaw and Dennis Kile were All-Staters on that Bearkat team, which beat DeLaSalle (New Orleans) 39-35 in the Class 3A (then the top class) championship game. DeLaSalle, coached by Johnny Altobello, came up short in its bid for a record fourth straight state title.

That was the last season in which championship games were played in home gyms of one of the competing schools. The Louisiana High School Athletic Association started the Top Twenty state tournament (which is now the Top 28 state tournament) in the 1960-61 season.

The first local high school basketball team to win a state championship was Shreveport High, which was the predecessor to Byrd and all other Shreveport public high schools, in 1914.

Jim Cavett, who went on to college stardom at LSU, was the captain of that team, which opened its championship season with a 107-10 victory over Marshall, TX., High in which three players did all the scoring for Shreveport High. Reggie Hargrove had 47 points, Edward Crawford 38 and Cavett 22.

Shreveport didn't produce another state basketball champion until 1940, when Byrd High snapped Jena's 40-game winning streak in the championship game of the State Rally at Baton Rouge.

Shreveport High scored a 22-10 victory over Baton Rouge High in the first round of the 1914 State Rally. In the second round, Shreveport beat Clinton, 34-23.

The championship game matched Shreveport High against Warren Easton (New Orleans), which had won two state titles in a row. The Shreveporters came from behind in the second half to score a 23-10 victory over Warren Easton.

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