



# 4A

## *Down the Stretch*

It was a year ago that Warren Central came into January with a very mundane 8-5 record, in fact they found themselves at 10-7 on January 20<sup>th</sup>. From that point they would reel off nine straight victories to win the State Championship. A couple take aways would be to never under estimate any MIC team, due to the night in/night out schedule they endure and second any team that comes out of the grinder known as Sectional 10 becomes a favorite. The same can be said about this year as we enter January the MIC features no less than six teams in the Top 20 (no other conference has more than 3 (Hoosier Crossroads)) and Sectional 10 once again has three top ten squads as of now.

**Hamilton Southeastern** are currently in the #1 spot at 16-1, with their lone loss coming at the hands of Kentucky's #1. The Royals biggest win coming right before the break against North Central in a #1v2 matchup on the road. They will have several big games in January which includes two conference contest and three games against MIC teams including a matchup with Warren Central. The Royals are led by Junior All-Star candidate Sydney Parrish (21.6 PPG) and a tri of skilled and experienced seniors in Hamilton, Irvin and Jackson. The Royals will need to shake an 11 year sectional championship drought to come out of the North.

**Homestead**, our preseason #1, that recently fell from that spot after a couple late December losses to North Central and Northwestern. The Spartans are experienced and talented, including several holdovers from their last State Champion squad. Homestead will have a SAC tourney rematch with FW South, travel to face MIC power LN and make a return trip to Indy to face Heritage Christian. The Spartans are led by three experienced seniors in Gealy, Starks, Swing, and a freshman sensation leading them in scoring and rebounding in 6'3 A.Patterson (13.2 PPG/8.3).

A young #3 **Crown Point** squad, who was thought to be a year away, have already arrived with a perfect 16-0 record coming into January. While the Bulldogs do not have any 4A top 10 squads on their schedule, they have smothered their opponents by an average of nearly 30 points per contest. The state's 5<sup>th</sup> highest scoring team is led by freshman star guard Jessica Carrothers (22.3 PPG), senior E.Vandeel and junior A.Stoddard. Also in the North with an unblemished record is #5 **Penn** at 15-0. The Kingmen will play Elkhart Central, SBSJ and Fort Wayne South in January which have a 36-12 combined record. Penn is another young deep team making noise behind junior sharp shooter R.Pate (12.7 PPG, shooting 53% from three on 113 attempts) and a pair of talented sophomores T.Clinton (15.7 PPG) and J.Smith (10.3 PPG).

There are clear favorites in most of the northern sectionals, sectional 4 being an exception, which will also be the case in sectional 7 if Maddie Nolan is able to return and be productive for the state runner-up **Zionsville** Eagles. Otherwise, that sectional could be much more interesting.

As indicated previously, the South favorite will most likely emerge for sectional 10, which boost three top ten teams in Warren Central, North Central and Lawrence North. The defending State Champs **Warren Central** are 11-1 and our #2 coming into January. They faced one of the state's top schedules in the first half, three of those without Miss Basketball candidate Shaila Beller (11PPG/7.5 APG). That schedule doesn't let up any in the final month as they will play four ranked teams including #1 HSE and a conference tilt in the final game against #6 North Central. **North Central** 14-3, seems to play a ranked team every week and that will not change going down the stretch, which includes four more ranked opponents including 3A #1 Northwestern. The Panthers are led by Miss Basketball candidate Rikki Harris and senior S.Brockington, who is coming back off injury, has been increasing minutes since her early December return. #7 **Lawrence North** is 14-3, with all three of those losses to the above mentioned sectional opponents in North Central twice and Warren Central. The schedule doesn't get easier as the Wildcats will play four more ranked opponents in January which includes #5 Homestead and #1 HSE. LN is led by Junior All-Star candidates K.Young and K.Davidson.

Outside of Sectional 10, Bedford North Lawrence, Brownsburg and Center Grove have performed at a high level through December and have high expectations come tourney time. #8 **BNL** 14-3 have made it to the regional round seven straight years and have been a force for some time. The Stars will most likely have to beat Jeffersonville for a third time to win its sectional and you know what they say about a third matchup. The Stars are led by Miss Basketball candidate Jorie Allen (21.3PPG/8.5RPG). #9 **Brownsburg** 12-2 has been steady, beating those they should and their two loses coming against squads ranked higher in HSE & BNL. The Bulldogs are balanced, tested and will face a January schedule that will challenge and prepare them. #10 **Center Grove** 14-2, have only lost to Warren Central and Brownsburg and have showed they can pull out the close game. They have four MIC games remaining in January. Their guard play and ability to shoot it make them extra dangerous in any given game.

Incredible amount of high level, high stake games in January as we come down the stretch in 4A. Teams will attempt to win conference titles, make statements, and iron out the final wrinkles, while trying to stay healthy as we close out the regular season and prepare for the sectional draws in 3 short weeks.

#### **4A Scoring leaders (as reported by Maxpreps 12.31)**

Lilly Hatton	North Harrison	24.5 PPG
Hannah Farrell	Greenfield Central	23.7 PPG
Jessica Carrothers	Crown Point	22.3 PPG
Sydney Parrish	Hamilton Southeastern	21.6 PPG
Tyra Ford	Anderson	21.6 PPG

#### **4A Rebounding leaders (as reported by Maxpreps 12.31)**

Lilly Hatton	North Harrison	10.7 RPG
Rachel Loobie	Franklin Central	10.3 RPG
Cymphani Carey	Hammond Carey	10.3 RPG
Destiny Jackson	FW Northrop	10.0 RPG
Ryin Ott	LaPorte	9.9 RPG

**4A Assist leaders (as reported by Maxpreps 12.31)**

Saila Beeler	Warren Central	7.5 APG
Ali Saunders	North Harrison	6.5 APG
Elle Deardorff	Logansport	5.2 APG
Brooke Shelton	Avon	4.8 APG
Brilan McCory	East Central	4.4 APG

