

# Cougars Claim Region 5B Title, State Berth



**Viborg-Hurley players celebrate after their Region 5B girls' basketball championship victory over Freeman on Thursday at the Summit Center in Yankton.**

**BY EMILY NIEBRUGGE**  
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For a group of girls who have never won a region championship as a consolidated team, Viborg-Hurley went home feeling accomplished Thursday night after their win against the Freeman Flyers.

"We're elated," said head Viborg-Hurley head coach Bill Hansen following the win. "These girls have put in a lot of work, especially over the summer, and it takes dedication to get this far."

District 10B champions Viborg-Hurley claimed a 56-33 win Thursday night at the Summit Activities Center over District 9B champions Freeman, sending the Cougars to the

state tournament.

"The Viborg girls have been playing together since we were in fourth grade, and so have the Hurley girls," said senior forward Angie Lee. "But since the consolidation we've all been playing together since eighth grade, and I truly believe we're a family who came together for this."

Viborg-Hurley jumped to an early 8-4 lead by the end of the first quarter, only allowing Freeman to come within four points the entire first half. The Cougars closed out the first half ahead 16-10.

Abby Hora led with six points at the half, with Lee adding another four points. Freeman's Cailey Roth and Erika Sage each scored three

points for the Flyers in the first half.

"We've had a team motto the whole year, 'one team, one dream,'" said Hansen, who has faced his own personal setbacks before reaching this milestone as the Cougars' head coach. "We have a lot of team leaders — even in the younger girls — and they believe in each other."

A 24-8 run put the Cougars ahead of the Flyers 40-18 by the end of the third quarter.

While the Flyers managed to score 15 points in the fourth quarter, Viborg-Hurley closed out the game 56-33.

Abby Hora recorded 25 points and seven rebounds for

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## Wynot Girls Roll Past Hampton

*EDITOR'S NOTE: Due to the late completion of this game, a full version of this story is online at [www.yankton.net](http://www.yankton.net).*

**BY JEREMY HOECK**  
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LINCOLN, Neb. — Another trip to the capital city, another convincing win on the state's biggest stage for Wynot.

And step one toward a fifth consecutive championship.

Spurred by 21 points from sophomore Cortney Arkfeld, the Blue Devils beat Hampton 66-48 in Class D2 first round action Thursday night at the Nebraska State Girls' Basketball Tournament in Lincoln.

Wynot (21-5), the No. 2 seed in its class, advances to today's (Friday) 3:45 p.m. championship game against third-seeded Sandhills-Thedford.

The biggest advantage for the Blue Devils in the first round? Defensive pressure. Or, put another way, a similar story.

The biggest drama of the first half came when Hampton got within 15-13 at the five minute mark of the second quarter.

Eight straight points by the Blue Devils — and an aggressive defense — enabled them to eventually take a 30-17 cushion into halftime.

Wynot then ballooned that lead to 54-32 after three quarters.

Senior Jenna Heine added 13 points for the Blue Devils, while junior Danielle Wieseler scored 11 and sophomore Carissa Kuchta had nine.

Hampton ends its season at 20-5 after making its first state tournament appearance since 1990.

Wynot, meanwhile, is one more win away from its sixth straight championship game — it lost in the 2010 final before winning the next four.

*You can follow Jeremy Hoeck on Twitter at [twitter.com/jhoeck](https://twitter.com/jhoeck). Discuss this story at [www.yankton.net](http://www.yankton.net).*

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# Crofton Coasts In Opener



**Crofton's Quinn Wragge, left, uses the left hand to score a basket in Thursday's Class C2 first round game against Ponca at the Nebraska State Girls' Basketball Tournament in Lincoln.**

## Wragge Scores 20 First-Half Points As Lady Warriors Beat Ponca 58-27

**BY JEREMY HOECK**  
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LINCOLN, Neb. — As the Crofton Lady Warriors ran off the court for the half-time break, Quinn Wragge had already scored 20 points.

In contrast, Ponca had 12 points.

It was that kind of afternoon for Crofton, which rolled past the Indians 58-27 in Thursday's Class C2 first round matchup at the Nebraska State Girls' Basketball Tournament in Lincoln.

Wragge, the 6-foot senior wing, didn't score in the second half — reserves finished out the final 10+ minutes of action — but had already asserted her will.

"She can guard any spot on the floor and she can score in so many ways," said head coach Aaron Losing, whose Lady Warriors (27-0) ran their winning streak to 51 games.

"The pace she plays at with the length she has, she is a difficult matchup for teams."

The same was true for her teammates.

Crofton used its defensive pressure to force 17 steals to beat Ponca (18-7) for the third time this season.

"With what they do, they do it about as perfect as you could do it," Ponca coach Brady Starkweather said.

The Lady Warriors jumped out to a 14-2 lead to start the game before the Indians were able to make a brief push.

"The atmosphere is crazy," Wragge said. "We were a little nervous and jacked up, but then you get in the feel of things."

"And that's what happened."

There was a brief moment when Ponca was able to string baskets together and look like it might hang with Crofton.

With just over two minutes to go in the first quarter, the Lady Warriors had a 14-8 lead.

But from that point through the next 13 minutes of action, Crofton reeled off a 41-6 run to pull ahead 55-14 midway through the third quarter.

That narrow window for the Indians closed rather quickly.

"We could see there were openings, but we were just one second too late, or just missed it," Starkweather said.

Allison Arens recorded 14 points, five rebounds, five assists and four steals in the win. Lauren Steffen and Breanna Allen both added five points, while Kelsey Sanger posted four points, four rebounds and six assists.

Ponca, which will graduate just two seniors, got 12 points from Kianna Krampfer, and five points apiece from Hannah Albrecht and Abigail VanDyke.

By the time that 41-6 run for Crofton was over, reserves were out on the floor for the Lady Warriors and the clock was running because of the big margin.

"Our kids continued to play extremely hard through the first 16 minutes, and that wears on teams," Losing said.

Crofton's bid for a fourth consecutive state title continues into Friday's 7 p.m. semifinal game against either Yutan or Guardian Angels Central Catholic.

"It's reassuring, knowing you're staying here Friday and Saturday, which is a great feeling," Wragge said.

"It's just one step at a time, that's what we're doing."

*You can follow Jeremy Hoeck on Twitter at [twitter.com/jhoeck](https://twitter.com/jhoeck). Discuss this story at [www.yankton.net](http://www.yankton.net).*

## Warriors End Gazelles' Season

**BY ROB NIELSEN**  
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SIoux FALLS — The fifth seeded Yankton Gazelles have no more games before them this season. The Sioux Falls Washington Warriors confirmed this with a 61-44 win over the Gazelles in Thursday night's District 2AA tournament.

First year head coach Trey Krier had a short summary of the game.

"The difference in the game tonight was they shot the ball well and we shot the ball terribly," Krier said.

It was the Warriors' game from the very outset of the game. By halftime the Warriors were enjoying a 30-18 lead.

Krier said it was just hard getting the ball to fall in the basket Thursday.

"We weren't able to put the ball in the basket," he said. "We got some really good looks and our girls kept pulling the trigger on those really good looks and the ball just didn't find a way into the bucket and sometimes that's the way it rolls."

At the end of three, the score was 46-25 in favor of the Warriors.

Krier said despite the loss, he was happy with the competition the Gazelles provided.

"Overall, very happy and proud, in particular, of the way our girls competed through the whole game," he said. "It's re-



**Yankton sophomore Lindsey Hale sets up a shot against the Sioux Falls Washington Warriors in the third place game of the District 2AA Tournament on Thursday night. Hale led the Gazelles in scoring with 14. The Warriors won 61-44.**

ally hard to continue to fight when you're down 20 points, and our girls did that for 32 minutes tonight."

Senior Andi Sprakel said overall, her feelings were better about the season.

"I'd say it was a lot better than last year because we only

had three wins last year and we improved to eight this year," Sprakel said. "We stepped up our game a lot and just knocked down some shots and played a lot better defense this year."

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## Patriots Power Past Bucks

**BY ROB NIELSEN**  
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SIoux FALLS — The Yankton Bucks And Sioux Falls Lincoln Patriots only played one game Thursday night in the opening round of the Class AA District 1 playoffs, but it would be hard to tell this comparing the two halves.

The first half started off evenly enough with both teams finishing the first quarter tied at 12.

Bucks head coach Chris Haynes said he was happy with how the Bucks opened up the game.

"I thought we did a great job the first half of executing and doing the things that we wanted to do," Haynes said. "Especially on offense, we got a couple paint touches, couple post touches and made some open shots. Defensively, we did a good job of eliminating their inside game and rebounding."

At one point, the Bucks opened up a 20-15 lead in the second quarter, but the Patriots finished off on a 12-4 run.

The Patriots closed out the half with a slim 27-24 lead.

As even as the first half was, the second half turned into a rout in the third quarter with the Patriots outscoring the Bucks 26-6 in the quarter.

Haynes credited Lincoln's depth with turning the tide of the game.

"Lincoln has a lot of



**Evan Greenway of the Yankton Bucks slams down a basket against the Sioux Falls Lincoln Patriots Thursday night in the District 2AA basketball opener. Greenway had two dunks and six points in the 71-39 loss.**

weapons," he said. "They showed why they're one of the top one or two teams in the state and really went on a big run. The game kind of got away from us in the third quarter."

The fourth quarter provided no relief for the Bucks ei-

ther as the Patriots once again outscored the Bucks 18-7. Lincoln ultimately prevailed 71-39 over the Bucks.

The Bucks now return to

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