

Seadogs Capture Big Trophy Again

The Beaufort Seadogs, who thrive on greatness and who win state championships like they had a monopoly on them, proved that five players are better than one Saturday night in the finals of the state Class 1-A tournament at Durham as they scored a 62-59 win over Jay Martin and the Boonville Black Knights.

The highly-touted Martin proved to be all that rave notices had said he was, as he threw in 11 field goals and 14 free throws against a stout Seadog defense. But even this spectacular one-man show wasn't enough to wrest the state championship trophy from the firm grip of the Beaufort Seadogs, featuring the balanced and lethal attack of Hassell and Co.

For Beaufort, the tremendous victory gave the Seadogs an unprecedented third straight state championship and extended their winning streak to an amazing 76 consecutive games to make them the winningest high school basketball team in North Carolina history.

Although the Seadogs led throughout most of the game, Martin and the Black Knights made a determined effort to overhaul the state champs in the closing minutes of the game. With only 40 seconds remaining to be played, Martin stepped to the free throw line and sank his 13th and 14th free throws to pull the Black Knights within one point of Beaufort at 60-59.

But the Seadogs weren't finished yet. The green-clad warriors brought the ball down court and Pud Hassell pumped in one of his patented left-handed jump shots that hit nothing but the bottom of the net to give Beaufort a 62-59 margin with three seconds showing on the clock. With their third straight state championship only three seconds away, the Seadogs went into a full-court press that kept Boonville from even completing the third pass inbounds before time ran out.

For Beaufort the win was a tremendous uphill struggle as they lined up for the opening tipoff with one starter

hobbling on a badly sprained ankle and another just up from an all-day siege of strep throat. David Jones, who sprained his right ankle on Friday night against Red Oak was limping noticeably when he took the floor against the Black Knights and Ray Hassell had just gotten out of bed minutes earlier after being treated all day for a strep throat which struck Friday night. Ray was given antibiotics all day Saturday to combat the infection.

But if any bug was bothering Ray Saturday night, the Boonville players will tell you it must have been a basketball bug, as the junior play-making wizard turned in a performance that wrought havoc to the Knight's hopes of pulling off the big one.

It was Ray who, time after time, took the ball away from the Boonville eagles and drove the length of the court for layups that kept the Seadogs out in front of their Knight foes. Ray led all scorers for the state champs as he hit on a variety of shots to record 25 big points.

The game opened with Boonville jumping off to a 4-0 lead before Beaufort could score from the floor. Parris Croom, who sank four of five field goal attempts for Beaufort in the first ten minutes of play, hit a jump shot from the side of the court to put the first two points on the scoreboard for the McQuaidmen. Before they could score again though, Boonville had taken a 7-2 edge on a field goal by Rondal Cassteyas and a free throw by Martin.

The end of the first quarter found the score knotted at 14-14 but in the second stanza Ray and Pud Hassell went to work for the Big Green to sparkplug a drive that sent the Easterners out front by five, 35-30. Ray hit four field goals in the period and Pud connected on three field goals and a free throw.

In the third quarter, the Seadogs opened up the largest lead of the night by either team when a field goal by Ray

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Two-Pointer by Hill



Beaufort's Alton Hill goes high in the air behind W. Perry of Midway to score a field goal against the Raiders in the championship game of the district playoffs last Saturday in Kenansville. Waiting for a possible rebound is Ray Hassell, No. 15.