

# Cats fulfill preseason potential with record-setting performance

Whitehouse head boys basketball coach Wally Dawkins predicted prior to the season opener with Athens on Feb. 17 that the 2006-2007 Wildcat Basketball team could be "special." Prediction affirmative!

This year's team first made the news by helping Dawkins record his 500th win in the home opener against Athens, 70-44.

Following a 79-71 loss to Tyler Lee in the Burger King Classic, the Wildcats reeled off 14 straight wins.

The Wildcats became the first team from WHS to win the Lindale Hoop Heaven Tournament this year by downing Lufkin, 76-63. The Lindale Tourney was loaded with AAAAA teams as witnessed by the Cats defeating Irving Nimitz, Bossier City, La., Shreveport Southwood, and the Panthers from Lufkin.

After capturing the Abilene Lions Club Tourney, WHS advanced to the finals of the TJC Tourney before suffering only their second - and last - loss to Lindale, 49-48, in OT.

Whitehouse has again reeled off 14 more consecutive wins, going undefeated in District 12-AAAA. It is the first time since the 2001-2002 season that a Whitehouse team has gone undefeated through the district schedule.

The Wildcats have now also reeled off 19 straight winning seasons and have a home win streak in Wildcat Arena of 24 straight.

This year's team has re-



Photo/Jim Jackson

The Wildcats begin their 2006-07 playoff bid Friday in Wills Point, facing either The Colony or Richardson Pearce. Tip off is scheduled for 8 p.m.

corded 31 wins, the most ever by a Whitehouse boys basketball team since becoming a class AAAA school in 1985-86.

WHS is ranked 18th in the state in class AAAA by the Texas Association of Basketball Coaches.

Dawkins is now asked almost daily if this is his best team ever in his 18 years as the Wildcats head coach.

"I don't know if they are the best team I have had here," Dawkins replies. "They are the most talented group of kids I have coached, there is more depth, and they are certainly bigger, but whether or not they are the best remains unknown."

"I think that is usually determined by the postseason. Our 01-02 team won 28 games and beat several class 5A schools as did the 96-97 squad. Last year's team as well as 00-01 won 28 games also. By winning 31 they have set themselves apart as the winningest team we've had since the early '80s."

"But I think for this team to be the best team, we have to advance past the area finals which has been our stumbling block. This is certainly a group of some of the finest young men ever assembled to wear Whitehouse basketball uniforms, and there have been many of those also."

The Wildcats now have a chance to set another mark Friday as they travel to Wills Point High School to take on the winner of Wednesday's The Colony vs. Richardson Pearce game.



NATALIE HOLCOMB

## Holcomb claims 2 bronze medals, Wilkens finishes 6th at state meet

Senior Natalie Holcomb capped her swimming career at Whitehouse High School with two bronze medals in the 200 and 500 freestyle events. It was Holcomb's fourth straight trip to the 4A state swimming and diving championships.

Teammate Brittany Wilkens, junior, claimed sixth in the 100 breaststroke, improving on her 10th place finish last year.

The top three finishers in the 200 freestyle were Allison Arnold, Dallas Highland Park 1:51.74; Jenny Claydon, Friendswood 1:54.67; and Holcomb, 1:55.22.

Holcomb's time was slower than her best-ever 1:55.03 mark set at the regional meet in Nacogdoches.

Her time of 5:05.36 in the 500, however, surpassed her previous fastest swim of 5:05.67, also set at regionals.

The top two placements in the 500 went to Allison Arnold, Dallas Highland Park 4:56.58, and Kyra Jones, Katy Seven Lakes 5:04.36.

The top three finishers in the 100 breaststroke were Caroline Maxvill, Richardson Pearce 1:05.36; Stephanie Martin, Dallas Wilson 1:05.70; and Morgan McCleery, Celina 1:06.12.

Wilkens' time of 1:09.38 was also a personal best, improving on her regional mark of 1:09.97.

Both girls will now turn their attention to track, including the 800-meter run for Wilkens and the mile and two-mile events for Holcomb.

## Lady Cats drop second-round playoff game

The Whitehouse Lady Cats stormed into the state playoffs last Tuesday against Texas High fresh off of a nine-game winning streak in the district race. They were able to claim second place in district as they headed into their first round playoff game.

Following a 57-54 bi-district win, the girls faced off against Frisco in Terrell last Friday.

Even closer than their first-round game, the Lady Cats bowed out of the playoffs, losing a heart-breaker, 45-43.

After three periods, the Lady Cats found themselves down 36-29, but with their backs against the wall, they fought back in the fourth quarter only to come up just short.

Sophomore Alicia Cordova and senior Brittani Toole provided most of the scoring punch on the night with 15 and 10 points, respectively, followed by junior Kayla Mason with 8.

"I have no regrets about this season and with these young ladies," said Coach Willie Hill. "They fought their hearts out all year long and especially tonight and have made believers of themselves along the way."

"The future of Lady Cat basketball looks bright, and we appreciate all of the support of the community," added Coach Hill.

The Lady Cats finish the season with a 22-11 season record and will lose just three seniors.

## Whitehouse JV undefeated; wins district title

Not to be overlooked by the Wildcat varsity's success this year, but the Whitehouse JV has made its own noise by wrapping up an undefeated district season claiming the district crown by defeating Marshall and Nacogdoches last week.

The week started off with a trip to Marshall where a 16-4 run in the third quarter would be the difference in a 51-34 win for the 'Cats.

Brady Attaway led the way with 12 points on the night followed by Tanner Fedell and Justin Keller with 8 points each, and Blake Anglin with 7 points.

The season ended at home last Friday as the Wildcats wasted little time jumping out to a 23-11 lead over Nacogdoches at the half on the way to a 46-30 victory.

The scoring trio of Attaway, Fedell and Keller again led the way as Attaway poured in 15 points followed by Fedell and Keller with 8 each.

"These guys were a great group to work with," said Coach Jason Shuck.

"With their talent and the ability to shoot the ball so well, I just tried to stay out of their way most of the time," said Coach Shuck when addressing team players and parents after the Nacogdoches' game.

Coach Dawkins also praised the efforts of the JV and added that with nine seniors graduating from this year's varsity the contribution of several JV players will be needed in the 2007-2008 season.

With the victories last week, the JV ended its season with a record of 24-2 and 14-0 in district 12-4A.

See next week's paper for a JV team photo.



Photo/Jim Jackson

Lindsey Pritchard navigates traffic to make a pass to Elissa Parker. The Lady Cats play Athens in Wildcat Stadium Friday at 7 p.m.

## Girls rout Mavs, Dogs

Whitehouse hosted Marshall Tuesday night. The girls came out firing with Julie Woolverton and Candace Campsey each scoring two goals and Kelly Hill, Elissa Parker, Elise Dollahite, Heather Lofties and Lindsey Pritchard adding one each for a 9-0 rout, with all the scoring in the first half.

Melissa Camp completed her ninth district shut-out with help from Heather Lofties who played in the goal the second half.

### Lady Cats 11, Lady Bulldogs 0

The scoring started early in the game with Lindsey Pritchard hitting the net with an assist from Heather Lofties at 36:44. The next two goals were also scored by Pritchard with assists from Elissa Parker and Candace Campsey. Heather Lofties scored with an assist from Jasmine Azghani. Elissa Parker scored with an assist from Kelly Hill. Julie Woolverton ended the first half with an assist from Hill, making the score 6-0.

Second-half shooting continued with Brittany Millican scoring on a breakaway at the 36:54 mark. Other goals followed by Jordan Jackson and Giselle Bryce, with assists by Campsey and Hill, and the final score by Christina Heinrich.

The Lady Cats record for the season is 11-2 with a district showing of 6-0.

## Boys outshoot Mavericks, 3-0

The Wildcats knew that Tuesday's game with the Marshall Mavericks was going to be a tough match, and the 2-1 game proved to be just that as both teams took 13 shots on goal. The Cats scored five minutes into the game as a Howard Rodriguez shot deflected off the Maverick keeper to Eric O'Neill who put it in for the 1-0 lead.

The Mavericks were able to tie the game in the second half on a free kick 23 yards out from the goal. The game became a defensive stand still until 16 minutes remaining in the game when Rodriguez was fouled in the box and Caleb Jacque was able to put it in for what proved to be the game-winning goal. Justin Parker recorded 12 saves in the game.

### JV records shutout

The junior varsity Cats were able to move the ball on the Mavericks as they outshot them 15 to 6. The Cats scored the first goal just 12 minutes into the game when Taylor

Burns passed the ball up to Marco Hernandez, who found Colton Strother at the top of the box. Strother was able to freeze the keeper and found Daniel Peek open on the left side. Peek slammed it in for the 1-0 lead.

The Cats picked up the pace in the second half as Peek was able to send the ball cross field to Hernandez whose speed was too much for the Maverick defense as he blew past them and sent a rocket into the corner for the 2-0 lead.

The Cats were able to take total control of the game using the whole field and making good runs down the sides. With 17:38 remaining in the game, Strother took the ball to the top of the box and passed off to Tanner Hays who shot over the top of the Maverick keeper for the 3-0 final score. Travis Lowthorp recorded his eighth shutout of the season.

— Reported by Mark Hays