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STATE

SPECIAL EDITION PRESENTED BY THE MCKENZIE BANNER TUESDAY, MARCH 12, 2024

BASKETBALL 2024

TSSAA GIRLS DIVISION I BLUECROSS BASKETBALL STATE CHAMPIONSHIP

West Tennessee Makes Strong Showing

Over the weekend, Middle Tennessee State University in Murfreesboro was the site of some amazing high school girls' basketball action. Nine of the 32 teams competing for gold were from West Tennessee. Greenfield and South Fulton represented West Tennessee in 1A, Gibson County, Huntingdon and Westview in 2A, South Gibson, Dyersburg and Jackson South Side in 3A, and Barlett in 4A.

By Saturday, the Murphy Center a.k.a. the Glass House had three West Tennessee teams, Gibson County, Dyersburg and Barlett 32 minutes away from being named #1. The Lady Pioneers of Gibson County and the Dyersburg Trojans brought the gold ball back across the Tennessee River.

From Carroll County and Weakley County, the Huntingdon Fillies and the Greenfield

Lady Yellowjackets could have played on Saturday if a few shots had fallen in their favor. The Fillies ran into a buzzsaw in the quarterfinals battling the eventual 2A State Champion Lady Pioneers of Gibson County and tournament MVP Micah Hart.

Greenfield picked up a strong 55-49 win on Thursday against North Greene. On Friday, the Lady Yellowjackets took the court losing 38-28 to Moore

County. Moore County went on to lose to Pickett County in the championship round.

Westview took on Loretto in the quarterfinals losing 54-49. Correcting a few missed shots, then the Lady Chargers may have played Gibson County on Saturday.

It was an exciting season of basketball and an even more exciting tournament. This area and West Tennessee were proud-

ly represented at the big dance.

Congratulations to the Gibson County Lady Pioneers along with Coach Mitch Wilkins and Dyersburg Lady Trojans along with the University School of Jackson (Division II) for bringing home the gold. To the Fillies, Lady Yellowjackets and Lady Chargers we are equally as proud of your accomplishments.

We can't wait to see what the 2024-25 season holds.

**Congratulations Fillies on a tremendous season!**



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TSSAA GIRLS QUARTERFINALS – DIVISION I CLASS 2A

# Fillies Knocked Out of Tourney by State Champs

BY JASON R. MARTIN  
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MURFREESBORO (March 7) — After five months of competitive basketball, the Huntingdon Fillies season came to an end in the quarterfinal round of the TSSAA State Championship for Class 2A. The Huntingdon Fillies (23-5) played their hearts out losing 58-49 against a tough Gibson County Lady Pioneers (30-1) team.

The game also set the stage as a family affair between the father, Gibson County's Mitch Wilkins, and son, Huntingdon's David Wilkins. This was the Lady Pioneers' sixth consecutive appearance in the tournament.

Looking at the numbers

for the Fillies, the leading scorers with 15 points apiece were Lilly Kee and Quinn Kelley. Delaney Byars had 11 points. Annabelle Singleton and Josey Stokes each had 4 assists.

For the Lady Pioneers, the leading score with 27 points was Micah Heart, a Miss Basketball Finalist and Class 1A Tournament MVP. The next closest on points was Maya Turner with 13.

Gibson County outbounded Huntingdon 38-30. Kee led the Fillies with 8 and Sania Reeves led the Lady Pioneers with 15.

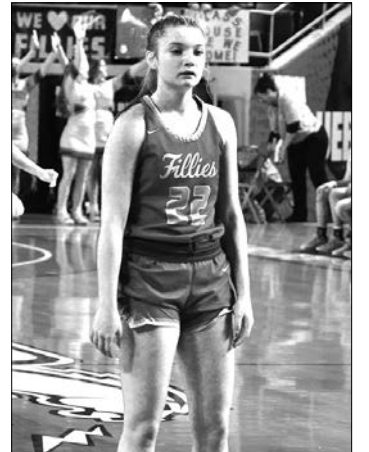
The Fillies had six steals in the game, Stokes led with three. Of the ten steals for the Lady Pioneers, Hart accounted for six.

In the first quarter of play, Kee put the first points on

the board with two free throws after being fouled by Reeves. Kelley followed up with a three-pointer putting the Fillies up 5-0. Hart then hit her first three of the day but Byard was right behind her with a layup as Huntingdon led Gibson County 7-3.

Kelley hit another three with an assist from Kelley. With 1:42 left in the first quarter, the Lady Pioneers tied things up at with a Reeves layout. Hart gave Gibson County its first lead but Huntingdon narrowed it down to one point with a Stoke free throw. In the final seconds, Kee was good with the layup at the Fillies finished the quarter leading 13-12.

See FILLIES on Page 6



Top, Delaney Byars drives into the paint against Gibson County. Above Left, Josey Stokes plants her feet looking to pass the ball. Above Right, Annabelle Singleton prepares to shoot a pair of free throws. Below Left, Gibson County's Sania Reeves pulls down the rebound. Below Right, Quinn Kelley shoots the three as Mitch Wilkins watches. Photos by Jason R. Martin/The Banner



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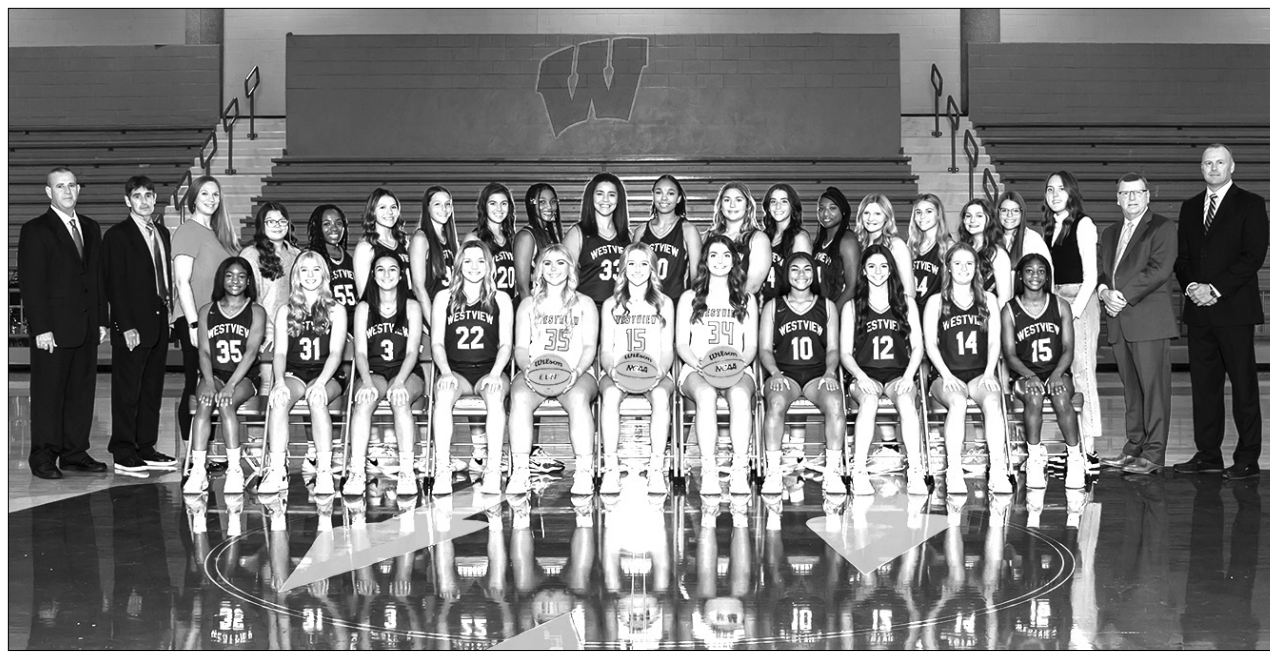
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TSSAA GIRLS QUARTERFINALS – DIVISION I CLASS 2A



Left, The Westview Lady Chargers team faced a tough opponent in the Lady Mustangs of Loretto High School in the TSSAA state tournament. Photo Courtesy The Weakley County Press. Above, McCall Sims dribbles between her legs trying to shake a Loretto defender. Below, Westview tries to regroup during a timeout. Bottom, Kylee Alexander preps to shoot a free throw. Photos by Jason R. Martin/The Banner

# Loretto Too Much for Westview

BY JASON R. MARTIN  
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MURFREESBORO (March 7) — In the fourth 2A game of the day, the Loretto Lady Mustangs (27-3) faced the Westview Lady Chargers (22-5). Loretto and Westview kept the game close with nine lead changes. At game's end, Westview lost 54-49 to Loretto who came in runner-up in the championship game against Gibson County.

The Lady Chargers shot 50% from the floor but were eight of 21 from behind the arc. They were three for four from the free-throw line. Loretto had a 55.9% field goal percentage while going six for 16 from three-point range. From the charity stripe, they hit 10 of 13 shots.

Westview had eight steals compared to Loretto while the Lady Mustangs had two blocks versus the one by the Lady Chargers.

McCall Sims led Westview with 20 points and two assists. Kylee Alexander and Halle Trevathan had 11 points each. Trevathan had four assists and three steals.

Ally Weathers led Loretto with 15 points, six assists, one block and two steals. Jenny Clifton picked up 12 points with one steal. Emily Cozart had 12 points with one assist.

In the first quarter, the Lady Chargers took a quick five-point lead off a Trevathan trey and layup by Alexis Evans. With 3:36 on the clock, the Lady Mustangs cut into the lead 10-11 off a Cozart three-pointer.

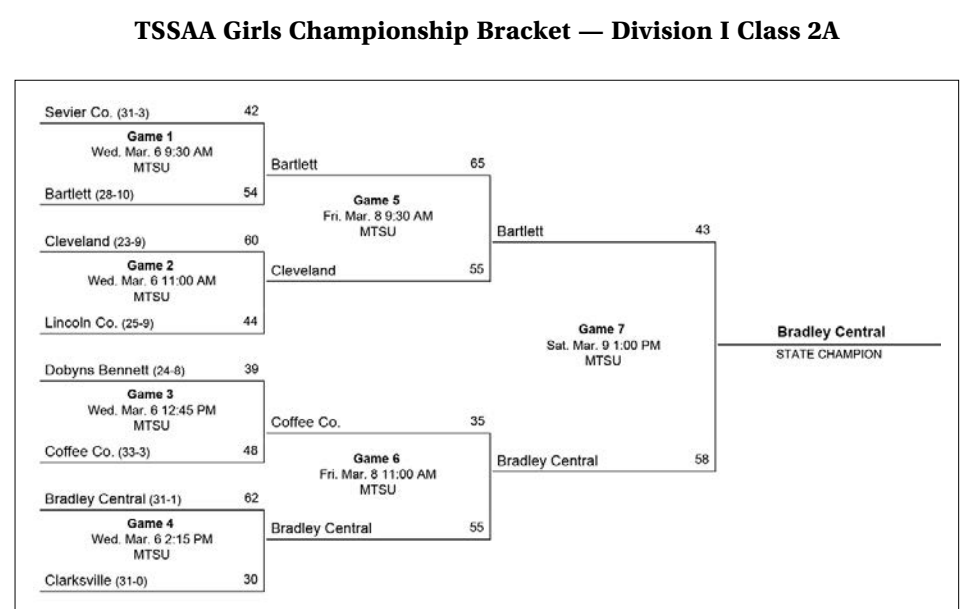
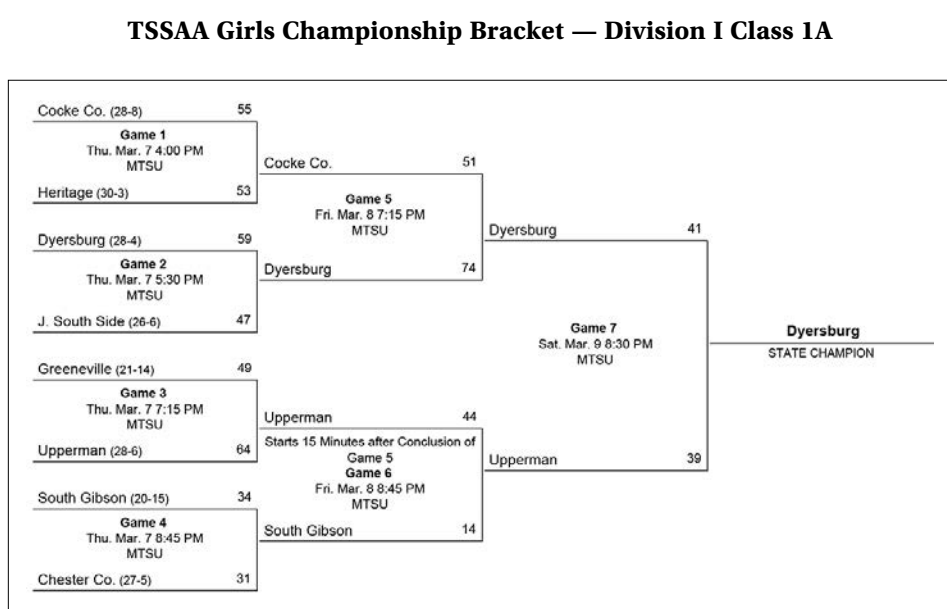
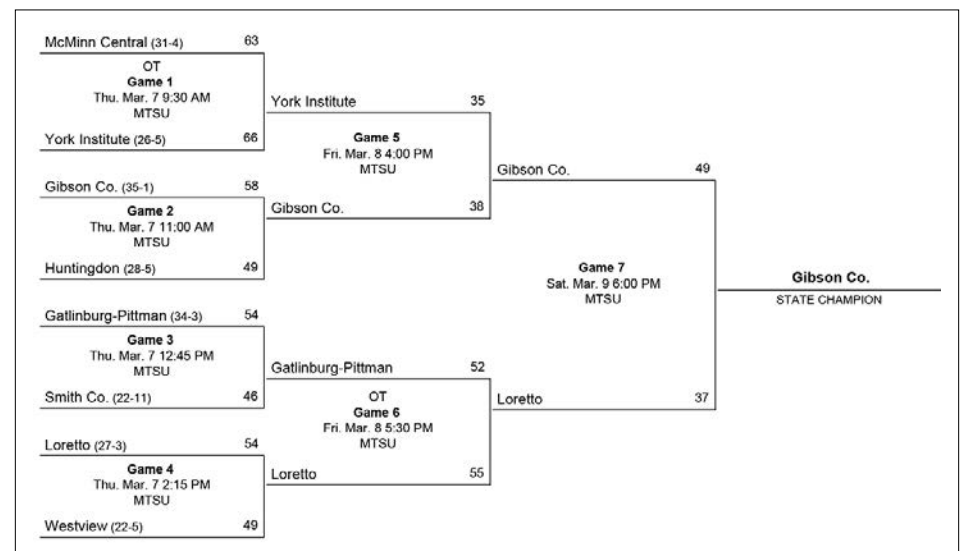
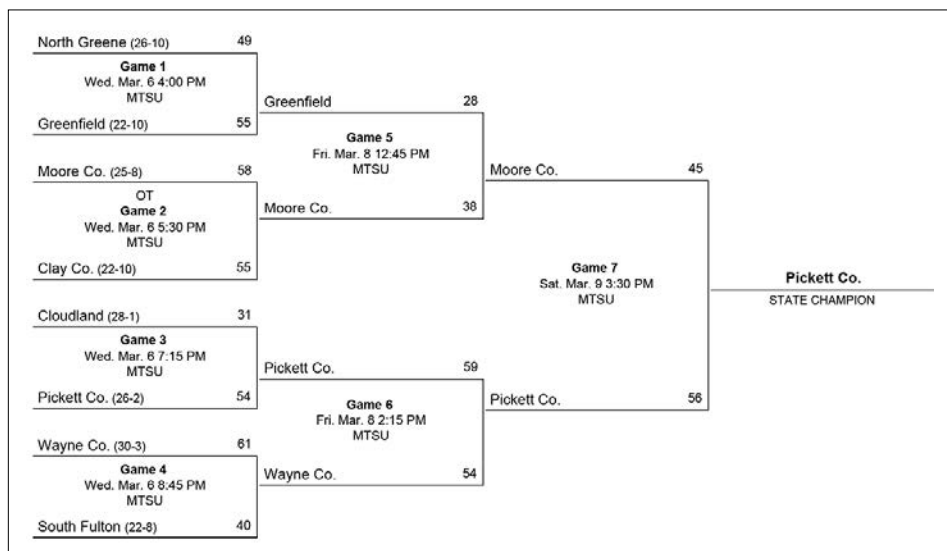
Sims responded with a three as Westview led by four. Loretto had a run with a three by Libby Sanders and a layup by Weather from within the paint. The Lady Mustangs were up one (15-14) with a 1:45 to play. Then with 9 seconds left in the first quarter, Westview took back the lead 16-14 with an Alexander layup.

The second quarter favored Loretto as they outscored Westview 13-6. The score remained neck-and-neck in the quarter as things were tied up at 21 with 3:44 to play in the half. At that point, the Lady Mustangs went on a seven-point run taking up over three minutes before the Lady Chargers picked up two points from the floor. At the half, Loretto led 28-23.

Westview had a solid third quarter out scoring

Loretto 15-10 in the set. There were three lead changes as the Lady Charger tied the score 31-31 at the 3:27 mark off an Alexander layup from inside the paint. With 35 seconds remaining in the third, Sims knocked down two free throws as Westview led 38-35. Loretto tied it up, 38-38, with 22 seconds on the clock with a Clifton three pointer.

The fourth quarter was do or die for both teams. The Lady Mustangs won the battle of the boards as they out scored and out shot percentage wise against Lady Chargers. Loretto went 75% from the floor scoring 16 points while Westview shot 63% for 11 points. The final score was Loretto 54 Westview 49.



**Congratulations Fillies!**  
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TSSAA GIRLS QUARTERFINALS – DIVISION I CLASS 1A

# Greenfield Lady Yellowjackets Advance to Semifinals in 'Boro

BY JASON R. MARTIN  
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MURFREESBORO (March 6) — The Lady Yellowjackets of Greenfield (22-10) picked up a big win Thursday evening as they knocked the North Greene (26-10) Lady Huskies out of the TSSAA Girls State Basketball Tournament. Greenfield took an early lead in the opening minutes and never lost their momentum winning 55-49 in the quarterfinal round.

The Lady Yellowjackets shot 53% in the game compared to the 47.6% by the Lady Huskies. Greenfield had seven steals in the game with only one block and 19 rebounds. North Greene had six steals with four blocks and 25 rebounds.

Anastyn Vujicic of Greenfield had the first points of the game at the 7:37 mark. The Lady Yellowjackets would go on to score leading the quarter 13-11 over the Lady Huskies. Rayanna Fisher knocked down a three pointer followed by a pair of foul shots by Brenley Little as Greenfield went up 9-6 with 2:43 left in the first quarter. Vujicic and Fisher had two field goals to close out the quarter.

The second quarter saw an increase in scoring but still favored Greenfield over North Greene. The Lady Yellowjackets were able to score 20 points to the 19 of the Lady Huskies. Haley Bailey of North Greene tied

the score 13-13 but Emma Alford put up two from within the paint and then followed it up with a free throw putting Greenfield back on top 16-13. At the 4:53 mark of the half, Fisher knocked down the trey breaking the 20-20 tie. The three pointer was the start of a nine point run by the Lady Yellowjackets.

Kaydence Marshall of North Greene posted a three putting a stop to the four-minute run. With 26 seconds remaining in the third quarter, hit a field goal putting Greenfield up 33-27. Then with 3 seconds on the clock Lady Husky Haley Bailey knocked down a three narrowing the lead 33-30.

The fourth quarter was Greenfield working to maintain their lead. It was over a minute before the Lady Yellowjackets added points to the scoreboard. Fisher scored in the paint putting their lead 46-40. North Greene tacked on four points working down near the baseline. Then at the 2:10 mark, Little scored on a layup putting Greenfield up 49-44.

The Lady Huskies tried to press but the Lady Yellowjackets were able to maintain control. With time ticking away, North Greene began following in hopes of capitalizing off of missed shots. Greenfield was 100% in the last two minutes from the line as the final score ended 55-49.



Above, The Greenfield Lady Yellowjackets picked up a big quarterfinal win against the North Greene Lady Huskies. Photo Courtesy The Weakley County Press. Below Left, the Greenfield Cheerleaders work to pump up the crowd. Below Center, Rayanna Fisher shoots from beyond the arc. Below Right, Brenley Little catches the pass and looks for her shot. Bottom Left, the Greenfield student section cheers for the Lady Yellowjackets. Bottom Right, Greenfield Head Coach Tori Liggett yells to inspire her team. Photo Courtesy Jeff Washburn/The Weakley Times.



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**TSSAA GIRLS SEMIFINALS – DIVISION I CLASS 1A**

# Sluggish Offense Stops Greenfield Advance in Tourney

**BY JASON R. MARTIN**  
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**MURFREESBORO** (March 8) — After posting 55 points in the quarterfinals, Greenfield's offense did not fare as well in the semifinals. The Lady Yellowjackets (23-11) drew a good Moore County (27-8) team in the second round. While neither team scored many points, Greenfield bowed out of the Division I Class 1A tournament losing 38-28.

The Lady Yellowjackets shot 30.8% from the floor while the Lady Raiders were 38.2%. Moore County had 26 rebounds in the game versus 14 by Greenfield. The Lady Yellowjackets had seven steals to the six of the Lady Raiders.

In the first quarter Greenfield had a 10-8 lead. Elle Graham of Moore County posted the first field goal of the game. Emma Alford tied the score 2-2 with two free throws at the 4:19 mark. A minute later, Rayanna Fisher came to the line as Greenfield took their first lead of the night at 4-2. Madison Dingler popped a three-pointer for the Lady Raiders retaking the lead at 5-4 with 2:50 left in the quarter.

Anastyn Vujicic replied with her own trey putting Greenfield up 7-5. Dingler was fouled from behind the arc and shot three from the stripe taking an 8-7 lead with 1:45 left in the first quarter favoring Moore County. Little then sank a three, finishing the quarter out at 10-8 Lady Yellowjackets.

Dingler quickly tied the score up 10-10 of layout by way of a steal by Katie Fletcher. Fisher hit another three as Greenfield was back on top 13-10 with

6:57 to play in the opening half. A Moore County turnover put Alford in scoring position to put the Lady Yellowjackets up 15-10. Elle Graham then went down county to cut the lead at 15-12 with 5:35 on the clock.

Greenfield stayed hot from downtown as Jayleigh Bowers came off the bench and nailed the trey. Anna Grace Abernathy hit a jumper taking the Lady Yellowjackets lead to six with 2:36 left to play in the second quarter. Moore County's Graham scored a layup in the final seconds narrowing the gap 20-16 in favor of Greenfield.

Moore County came out strong in the second half. Emma Sazonov instantly cut into the Greenfield lead hitting a three-pointer. Vujicic responded with a three of her own as the Lady Yellowjackets led 23-19. Then Graham posted a layup and Dingler hit the trey as the Lady Raiders took the lead 24-23 with 6:26 left in the third quarter.

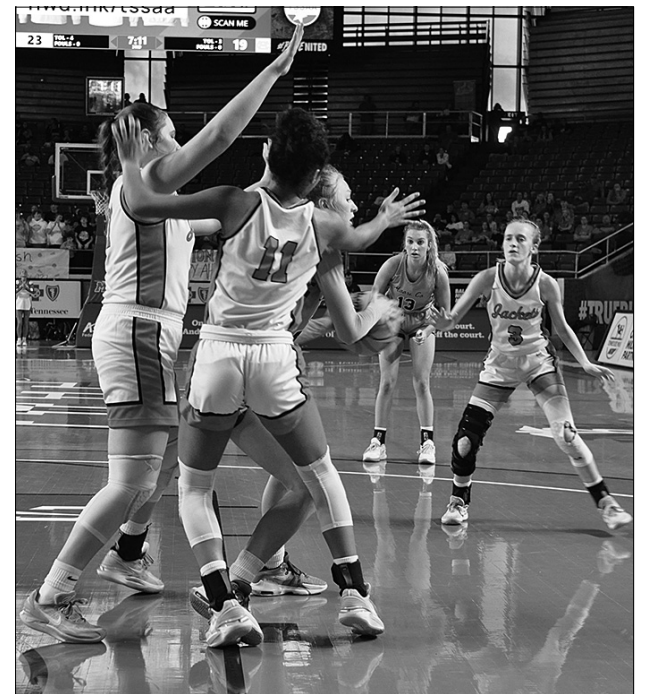
Graham and Dingler both added layups as Moore County's lead increased 28-23. After a series of missed shots and lost rebound by Greenfield, Moore County's Sazonov mailed in another three-pointer as the Lady Raiders lead increased 31-23 with 2:41 to play in the third.

Fisher would go to the charity strip for Greenfield scoring two points but Sazonov was later fouled and put one point up for Moore County. The quarter closed with Greenfield trailing Moore County 32-25.

The fourth quarter did go much better for Greenfield. In need of a hot streak or some luck,



**Above Left, Emma Alford looks to add a free throw to her stats. Above Right, Anna Grace Abernathy receives the inbound pass. Below Left, Greenfield's Anastyn Vujicic passes the ball over Moore County's Katie Fletcher. Below Right, #11 Rayanna Fisher and Anna Grace Abernathy work to block out a Moore County player. Bottom Right, #3 Benley Little works to keep the ball away from Katie Fletcher. Photos by Jason R. Martin/The Banner**



the Lady Yellowjackets found neither. They were able to hit only one shot in the quarter. Pushed to forcing the Lady Raiders to the foul line, the Lady Yellowjackets were able to make anything positive out of the rebounds. As

time clicked away, Greenfield lost 38-28 to Moore County.

The Lady Rebels went on to play Saturday, March 9 for the 1A Championship against Pickett County. Moore County lost 56-45.



## Congratulations Teams!

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# Fillies

...From Page 2

The second quarter did not favor Huntingdon as they were outscored 17-11. Hart regained the Lady Pioneer lead from the charity strip. Reeves added two points from the foul line but Kelley nailed a three tying the score 16-16.

With 4:14 to play in the half, Gibson County applied the pressure going up four following a Hart jumper. Huntingdon struggled to put points on the board going nearly a minute and a half without a successful bucket. With 1:51 left in the second quarter, the Singleton hit a trey for the Fillies cutting the Lady Pioneer lead 26-22. As the first half came to a close, Gibson County led 29-24.

The third quarter saw Huntingdon fighting with all their might to stay in the game. They were again out-

scored 12-8. From the floor, the Fillies went 3-9. Kee was able to hit a jump while Kelley knocked down a pair of three-pointers. Closing the quarter out, Hart hit a jumper putting Gibson County up 41-32.

Down nine points with the season on the line, the Fillies posted 17 points in the fourth quarter. Unfortunately for Huntingdon that matched that of the Lady Pioneers. Huntingdon went 5-10 from the floor while South Gibson was 3-10. Attempting to force turnovers and praying for missed foul shots, the Fillies brought the Lady Pioneers to the charity strip seven times in the quarter. Gibson County remained poised hitting 11 of the 14 shots.

While the Huntingdon Fillies went down, it was a hard-fought match between two solid teams. The Fillies have solid players returning for the 2024-25 along with the addition of a good batch of upcoming freshmen class.



1. The 2023-2024 Huntingdon Fillies claimed district and region championship as they punched their tickets to compete in the TSSAA Division I Class 2A State Basketball Tournament. 2. Senior Fillie Lilly Kee looks to work inside the paint against a host of Gibson County Lady Pioneers. 3. The Fillies were successful in getting their hands on jump at the first of the game. 4. The quarterfinal game was a family battle between father and son duo. (L to R): David Wilkins, head coach for Huntingdon, and Mitch Wilkins, head coach for Gibson County. 5. Huntingdon players and fans watch as the Fillies keep the game in reach against the Lady Pioneers. 6. The student section cheers for their favorite team. 7. Delaney Byars brings the ball down court. 8. Annabelle Singleton looks for an open Fillie to feed the pass. Photos by Kathy Bush/The Banner

