

**Chron** <http://www.chron.com/sports/highschool/article/Dickinson-secures-district-title-with-win-over-6828023.php>

## Dickinson secures district title with win over Clear Creek

Corey Roepken Updated 10:39 pm, Friday, February 12, 2016



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Dickinson's bench celebrates in the final seconds of the team's 52-46 win over Clear Creek on Friday, Feb. 12, 2016, in Dickinson. Dickinson won the game and district championship 52-46.

Dickinson faculty stood along the sideline near the student section hoping to deter the kids from storming the court.

The teachers and coaches pleaded with the students to stay in the bleachers. One with a microphone repeatedly told the fans to meet their favorite players in the lobby after the game.

When the final buzzer sounded, and the Gators had defeated visiting Clear Creek, 52-46, those teachers forming that wall didn't stand a chance.

At least 50 kids made it to the court and celebrated with the victorious Gators, who sprayed water on coach Jason Wilson. One kid even sprinted toward the basket and grabbed the rim he was so excited.

This wasn't just any celebration. The Gators were celebrating the first outright district championship in school history.

"This is unbelievable," Wilson said. "Now we're getting Dickinson basketball back to where it should be."

Dickinson (28-6, 11-2) shared a district title in 2005 but never had won one for itself. That changed Friday when the Gators got the best of a tight game down the stretch.

Clear Creek (21-10, 9-4) led by as many as nine points early in the third quarter before Damon Williams got hot. He made four of his six 3-pointers in that quarter, including three in the first 2 minutes, 30 seconds. Williams scored a game-high 22 points.

"Any time you give up four threes in a quarter it's going to be hard to win a game," said Bryan, whose team shared last year's district title. "We had some momentary lapses. In the first half we did a good job. That one little stretch when he got hot was the difference."

The Wildcats got within one point on Xavier Ferrell's corner 3-pointer with one minute left in the game. They never scored again, and Dickinson made free throws.

What makes Dickinson's district title more impressive is the turnaround it has made. The Gators had not had a winning season since 2007. In fact, they had averaged fewer than six victories over the last five seasons.

Not only that, but this season's team is full of underclassmen. Myles Rankin, who made five free throws in the closing moments, is the only senior who plays significant minutes. Williams and Jarian

Spells (16 points) are juniors. The majority of the rest of the team is sophomores.

Early in district play, Wilson recognized the tall task ahead of Dickinson. Not winning a district title was not going to be a disappointment, but at the same time, Wilson asked, 'Why not us?'

"It was confidence early in the season," Wilson said. "Once you start piling up those wins and they believe in the system, the sky is the limit."

The Gators will play one more game at Clear Springs before taking the No. 1 seed into the playoffs. Clear Creek plays host to Clear Lake in Tuesday's regular season finale.

*Corey Roepken is a freelance writer.*

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