

Rockets win 13th Region for first time in 30 years

Rockets are statebound after 61-59 win over Clay County

Triple As combine for 71 points, 24 rebounds in win over Corbin

It's been 30 years in the making and it's sweeter for all that as the Rockcastle Rockets boys basketball team downed three tough regional opponents to win the 13th region Saturday night and advance to state play for the first time since 1972.

After losing by four to Clay County in the 49th district finals, the Rockets wound up with the toughest draw in the 13th region. They faced a first round game with #1 in the region Bell County, a second round game against the Corbin Redhounds who had only been defeated by the Rockcastle basketball team in years. — Andrew

Hammond's 8th grade year at the middle school — and, finally, a rematch with Clay Co. in the finals.

After beating the Bell Co. Bobcats 65-56 in the opening game, the Rockets fought back from an 8 to 3 first quarter deficit to tie the score at 8 all on a steal by Andrew Hammond which resulted in a bucket by Aaron Cash enroute to his first quarter nine points. A last second shot by Jason Reynolds gave the Rockets a 22-21 first quarter lead.

The Redhounds took the lead to begin the second quarter but the Rockets came back with a 3 point

bucket by Cash, a basket by Hammond and a steal and a goal by Cash to put the Rockets up 31-25, a lead they would never relinquish and which they would build to 51-39 by halftime.

The third quarter saw the Rockets blitz the Redhounds, taking a 70 to 45 lead near the end of the third quarter. However, the Redhounds weren't done, outscoring the Rockets 15 to 5 and eventually cutting the lead to 11 at 88-75 before the Rockets came away with the 91-80 final.

Cash, who had scored 29 points against Bell County, equaled that performance with another 29 points against Corbin. Aaron Anderkin got 27 points. Hammond, who hit the boards hard for the Rockets, led in re-

bounds with 10 and had 15 points. Jason Reynolds, who had to leave the game in the second quarter with a head injury and didn't see any further action, got 7 points. Chris Settles had 6, Devin Taylor 4 and Austin Miller 3.

Cash and Anderkin also had 7 rebounds each and Cash was 8 for 12 from the free throw line. Overall the Rockets were 17 for 31 from the charity stripe while the Redhounds got 13 for 17, including 10 for 10 in the fourth quarter.

In the first game of the night, Clay mounted a comeback on Cawood, overcoming a 15 point fourth quarter deficit, to win by nine in overtime setting up the rematch with the Rockets.

Everyone anticipated a barn-burner and they weren't disap-

pointed as the Tigers and Rockets staged their usual down-to-the-wire game with the Rockets coming out on top 61-59.

Clay County's big senior Richard Walker, got the first two buckets of the game, and a total of eight in the first quarter. Hammond scored the first Rocket basket at the 5:13 mark and the Rockets went on to take a first quarter 17-13 lead.

Cash scored the first points of the second quarter. Devin Taylor and Anderkin added two threes each. Hammond and Reynolds each got a goal and Cash added another to put the Rockets up by ten, 29-19. But the Tigers mounted a furious rally, outscoring the Rockets 12-4 in the closing min-

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Congratulations Rockets on your 13th Region Championship!

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