

Lions took on and beat all foes

Written by Jim Ecker

Saturday, 12 March 2011 21:24 - Last Updated Sunday, 13 March 2011 21:49

DES MOINES -- The Linn-Mar Lions won basketball games this season in Minneapolis and LaCrosse, Iowa City and Waterloo, Cedar Rapids and Marion, Waukee and ultimately Des Moines.

They won them all, and they won most of them convincingly. Twenty-six games and 26 victories, and they won them all by an average of 22 points per game.

Linn-Mar High School is the king of Class 4A basketball again this year. The coronation came Saturday night at Wells Fargo Arena, where the Lions beat Des Moines Hoover, 56-42, for the title.

The entire season belonged to Linn-Mar, which began the season as the No.1 team in the polls and ended the year with a glittery piece of hardware for its blossoming trophy case back home.

This makes four state titles for Linn-Mar and three in the past eight seasons, making the word "dynasty" an apt description for Coach Chris Robertson's program. Robertson was an assistant coach when the Lions captured the state crown in 2004, but he won his own title in 2007 and now has another.

This is the second time the Lions have finished with a perfect record on their road to the title. They finished 25-0 in 1983 and topped that mark this season at 26-0.

The Lions were not perfect in 2004 when they finished 24-3, nor perfect in 2007 when they went 24-1, but nobody is complaining, and nobody will return those trophies to sender.

Linn-Mar has compiled an 186-18 record the last eight years during its dynasty, a phenomenal display of excellence over an extended period of time. There has been a steady stream of outstanding players, and unlike some "dynasties" there's been a different collection of players for each title.

Lions took on and beat all foes

Written by Jim Ecker

Saturday, 12 March 2011 21:24 - Last Updated Sunday, 13 March 2011 21:49

The Lions who won the state title in 2004 were not the same team that won the title in 2007, and the guys who won the title in 2007 were not the team team that won the title Saturday. The Bohannon family has been a common denominator for each crown -- Jason in 2004, Zach in 2007 and Matt in 2011 -- but the continued success is more a testament to the overall program than to bloodlines.

Four of the starters from Saturday night's victory over Des Moines Hoover are seniors and will graduate, but Marcus Paige returns next season and other underclassmen are anxious for their turn in the spotlight for the 2011-12 campaign.

Linn-Mar High School will salute the 2011 state champions at a special assembly in the main gym Sunday at 2 p.m. The Lions will be the guys with the big trophy and the even bigger smiles.