

Basketball History of the Southern Illinois Jr. High School Athletic Association

***In the late 1920's a number of Southern Illinois School administrators gathered to discuss the enhancement of athletics at the junior high school level. The group met and formulated the Southern Illinois Jr. High School Athletic Association. The association became sport active in 1927. The first Executive Director of the SIJHSAA was W.G. Cisne (Carbondale) and five directors have followed him. Owen McClure (DuQuoin), Frank Hayse (Benton), Mike Sortal (Herrin), Jim Burnes (Dix), and Greg Hale (Pinckneyville)**

***The first known championship was in 1927 with Herrin defeating Centralia 32-13. Troy Hawkins was the winning coach. The game ball from this championship game is displayed at Herrin Jr. High School.**

***The first recorded championship in Boys Basketball was in 1928 and was held at DuQuoin and was won by Benton over Mt.Vernon 12-11. Elmer Dillon was the winning coach.**

***In 1936, Herrin (SIJHSAA State Basketball Champion) played Bloomington Normal (IESA State Basketball Champion) at Herrin after the season had concluded. That is the only time the two associations champions have ever done so. Herrin won the game 22-18. Troy Hawkins was the winning coach. JAMES NAISMITH, the inventor of the game of basketball handed out the trophy (Game Ball). This ball is still displayed at Herrin Jr. High School with James Naismith's autograph on the ball.**

***In 1955, Mt.Vernon competed in both the IESA and SIJHSAA Boys Basketball State Series. They became the only school to win the Boys Basketball State Championship of each association in the same year.**

***The SIJHSAA played a one-class boys basketball state series through 1974. By 1975 the association had grown to a point to expand to Class L (Largest 32 schools entered), Class M (Next largest 32 schools entered), and Class S (Remaining schools entered).**

**-Class L: West Frankfort defeated Murphysboro 39-34
(Tim Weaver the winning coach)**

**-Class M: Nashville defeated Norris City 63-50
(Roger Hobbs the winning coach)**

**-Class S: Merriam defeated Coulterville 65-36.
(Charles Cushman the winning coach)**

This system is still used for the SIJHSAA Boys Basketball State Series today.

***In 1979 the SIJHSAA recognized Girls Basketball as a sport and started a two class girls basketball state series. (Class L and Class S).**

-Class L Champion: (Unknown)

-Class S Champion: Merriam

***By 1999 the interest in girls basketball had skyrocketed. Thus, the SIJHSAA added a third class of girls basketball. (Class M) This addition, mirrored the boys basketball state series system and is used present day.**

***The SIJHSAA Boys and Girls State Basketball Tournaments are held yearly at Rend Lake College, Ina, IL.**