



The Lyle-Pacelli girls basketball team poses for a team photo after claiming the Minnesota Class A title Saturday afternoon in Target Center. Eric Johnson/photodesk@austindailyherald.com

Heartbreak to Celebration: LP girls lock up first ever state title



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MINNEAPOLIS – The Lyle-Pacelli girls basketball team shook off three years of frustration and heartbreak when they finally got over the hump to win its first Minnesota Class A Girls State Basketball title in program history in Target Center Saturday. The Athletics took home the hardware after they beat Sleepy Eye 57-33.



<https://www.austindailyherald.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/LPvsSleepyEyeGBBSTATETITLE-54.jpg>

Lyle-Pacelli head coach Justin Morris raises his fists to the crowd after LP wrapped up the Class A title against Sleepy Eye Saturday afternoon in Target Center. Eric Johnson/photodesk@austindailyherald.com

LP (32-1 overall) had its season end to the eventual state champ in 2015, 2016 and 2017 before finally breaking through this season. It is the first girls basketball title in Pacelli High School history and the first ever team state title for Lyle High School.

“We have been through so much heartbreak as a program. We’ve been so close,” said LP head coach Justin Morris. “We always joked that if you beat us you’re going to win state. This year we decided we weren’t going to let that happen and we were going to believe in us no matter what happened.”

It was likely the last season at the helm for Morris at LP as he has moved to Omaha, Nebraska to be with his fiance. He stuck with LP for one more year this season to chase the title that his team brought home on Saturday.

LP senior Brooke Walter has been running the point guard position for Morris, her cousin, since she was a seventh-grader. Walter was on the court when LP let a lead slip away against Ada-Borup in the 2015 state semifinals, she was part of the LP team that blew a 17-point lead to Goodhue in the 2016 Section 1A West title game and she saw her season end to Goodhue again in 2017.

“It’s crazy to think about. I’m just super proud of this team,” said Walter, who had six points, four rebounds and three assists Saturday. “We’ve always been a close family, but this team is so unselfish and we care so much about each other. This team is so mentally strong. We’ve had a couple of heartbreaks in Rochester, but we got it done now. It kind of makes up for it.”



<https://www.austindailyherald.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/LPvsSleepyEyeGBBSTATETITLE-69.jpg>

The Lyle-Pacelli girls basketball team huddles together following their win in the Class A title game at the Minnesota Class A Girls State Basketball Tournament in Target Center Saturday. Eric Johnson/photodesk@austindailyherald.com

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