



The Lyle-Pacelli girls basketball team is applauded by the fans as they near wrapping up the Class A state title at the Minnesota Class A Girls State Basketball Tournament in Target Center. Eric Johnson/photodesk@austindailyherald.com

# Our opinion: LP girls bring schools, communities together



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Congratulations are in order.

The Lyle-Pacelli girls basketball team on Saturday claimed its first-ever state title, defeating Sleepy Eye, 57-33 in the Minnesota Class A Girls State Basketball Tournament in Minneapolis' Target Center.

It was the first girls state title in Pacelli's history and the first state title ever for the school of Lyle.

The run for this particular title wasn't just a year-long march, but the culmination of several years of dedication by the girls and their coaches who have been through their fair share of setbacks and disappointments.



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

The girls from both communities deserve every adoration you give them. Some were on the team in 2015 that saw a late lead slip away to Ada-Borup in the state semifinals. They were on the team in 2016 that saw Goodhue erase a 17-point lead in the Section 1A West title game and a year later in 2017 were again ousted by Goodhue in the same game.

On Saturday head coach Justin Morris said, "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."

While winning a state title at any level is an impressive and lauded accomplishment for small schools such as Lyle and Pacelli, these wins can mean much, much more.

Girls basketball, as well as all sports played by small schools are often times a rallying point for the community itself. A common interest as families come together under one roof or on one playing field to cheer on those student-athletes they have come to love and cherish.



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Getting to this point is rarely easy. Often during the three-day state tournament LP had to overcome a number of hurdles, but in the end the girls, who had become more a family than a team, pushed forward and came out the victors on the other side.

And throughout that entire time they did so with the grace a community expects. They respected each other, they respected their coaches and they respected the other team.

LP's championship is something to be celebrated but so are the communities they represent.

So from the staff of the Austin Daily Herald we want to wish a well deserved congratulations to this year's Class A state champions — a wonderful group of young ladies and coaches who did their communities and school proud.



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