

**NATIONAL FEDERATION OF STATE
HIGH SCHOOL ASSOCIATIONS**



NEWS RELEASE

**Two Kentucky High Schools Selected as National Recipients of
NFHS National High School Spirit of Sport Award**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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INDIANAPOLIS, IN (February 27, 2013) — **Logan County High School**, which is located in Russellville, Kentucky, and **Magoffin County High School**, which is located in Salyersville, Kentucky, have been selected the 2013 national recipients of the “National High School Spirit of Sport Award” by the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS).

The “National High School Spirit of Sport Award” was created by the NFHS to recognize those individuals who exemplify the ideals of the spirit of sport that represent the core mission of education-based athletics.

Logan County High School, which is located in the western part of the state, and Magoffin County High School, located 281 miles to the east in the Appalachian Mountains, have not traditionally been common opponents or rivals in sports, nor have they generally had much in common.

That all changed forever on Friday, March 2, 2012, when an EF3 tornado spun up in the rural Appalachian valley between the mountains and descended upon the tiny town of Salyersville around 11:40 p.m. It touched down and began a 49-mile path of

destruction through four counties. In the process, scores of buildings, businesses and homes were destroyed. Both the middle school and the high school were rendered condemned following the storms.

That Friday was the night before the scheduled Kentucky High School Athletic Association (KHSAA) 15th Region girls basketball game between Magoffin County and Paintsville High School. After much discussion, the game was moved to Monday night, just two days before the start of the state tournament. Before a very small contingent of Magoffin County fans – many of whom now owning only the clothes on their backs – the Lady Hornets defeated Paintsville, 49–40. Magoffin County coach Scott Castle had become the inspirational leader of the team members as they fought back emotions to try to enjoy the regional win, proudly proclaiming “One team. One goal. One Promise. We are Magoffin.”

While that was in and of itself both very moving and inspirational, it merely set the stage for what was to follow.

Two days later at the KHSAA Sweet 16[®] girls state basketball tournament in Bowling Green, Magoffin County was pitted against Ashland Blazer High School from the 16th Region, a much larger school and its geographic neighbor located in an area that was also devastated by the tornado. Prior to the game, the two teams gathered at center court for a moment of silence and then celebrated survival. After trailing in the second half, Magoffin County came back to win, 63–59.

Logan County coach Scot McAlister was in the stands that night as he became inspired watching the undersized but feisty Magoffin County team upset Ashland Blazer. As a result, he decided to offer his facility to Magoffin County as a “home away from home” in which it could practice, seek refuge or just get away. When the Lady

Hornets arrived at Logan County, they were amazed to be greeted by 300 student-athletes who had organized a pep rally and a pizza party in their honor.

Giving up their own time and at their own expense, the Logan County students drove 30 miles from Russellville to Diddle Arena in Bowling Green, where they filled one of the end zones with students dressed in the Magoffin County school colors. Throughout the game, the Logan County contingent enthusiastically supported Magoffin County with voracious cheers and chants that they had practiced both at school and en route to the game. The emotion in the arena was electric.

Although Magoffin County lost that game to Lincoln County, Logan County's selfless involvement became the big story of the tournament. Since that game, the students from both schools have stayed in touch and forged lifetime friendships as individuals who might have otherwise never seen each other again.

Nine months later, the Magoffin students decided that they wanted to pay back the Logan County girls team by coming to its first home game. On December 1, busloads of Magoffin County students made the five-hour drive from Salyersville to Russellville. Only a few Logan County school administrators were aware of Magoffin County's impending arrival at their game. As they poured into the gym that night, it was very apparent the impact it had on McAlister, who was moved to tears. "When you do the right thing like we did in March, you really don't expect anything in return," he said. Although Logan County was not able to win that game, the players' and fans' hearts were enriched by the visit from their new friends. Using their own pre-rehearsed cheers, the Magoffin County students supported Logan County.

About the Award

In addition to the selection of Logan County High School and Magoffin County High School as the national award recipients, the NFHS National High School Spirit of Sport Award Selection Committee chose eight individuals for section awards. Following are the 2013 National High School Spirit of Sport section winners:

Section 1 – Kendra Cimaglia, cheerleader, Johnston (Rhode Island) High School

Section 2 – Russellville (Kentucky) Logan County High School and Salyersville (Kentucky) Magoffin County High School

Section 3 – David Goldstein, student-athlete, Miami (Florida) Ransom Everglades High School

Section 4 – Todd Hollis, teacher/coach, Elmwood (Illinois) High School

Section 5 – Justin Volkman, student-athlete, Chapman (Kansas) High School

Section 6 – Charlotte Brown, student-athlete, Emory (Texas) Rains High School

Section 7 – Carson Jones, student-athlete, Queen Creek (Arizona) High School

Section 8 – Kory Puderbaugh, student-athlete, Boise (Idaho) Centennial High School

Nominations for this award were generated through NFHS member state associations and reviewed by the NFHS National High School Spirit of Sport Award Selection Committee composed of state association staff members. While the national winner will be recognized June 24 at the NFHS Summer Meeting in Denver, Colorado, the section winners will be recognized within their respective states and will receive awards before the end of the current school year.

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[About the National Federation of State High School Associations \(NFHS\)](#)

The NFHS, based in Indianapolis, Indiana, is the national leadership organization for high school sports and fine arts activities. Since 1920, the NFHS has led the development of education-based interscholastic sports and fine arts activities that help students succeed in their lives. The NFHS sets direction for the future by building awareness and support, improving the participation experience, establishing consistent standards and Rules for competition, and helping those who oversee high school sports and activities. The NFHS writes playing rules for 17 sports for boys and girls at the high school level. Through its 50 member state associations and the District of Columbia, the NFHS reaches more than 19,000 high schools and 11 million participants in high school activity programs, including more than 7.6 million in high school sports. As the recognized national authority on interscholastic activity programs, the NFHS conducts national meetings; sanctions interstate events; produces publications for high school coaches, officials and athletic directors; sponsors professional organizations for high school coaches, officials, spirit coaches, speech and debate coaches and music adjudicators; serves as the national source for interscholastic coach training; and serves as a national information resource of interscholastic athletics and activities. For more information, visit the NFHS Web site at www.nfhs.org.

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