



# 2021 Basketball State Championships

## Half-Court Buzzer Beater Wins Volcano Vista the 5A Girls Basketball Title

Arguably one of the greatest shots in the 100-year history of the NMAA State Basketball Tournament, Volcano Vista's Natalia Chavez nailed a half-court shot at the buzzer in overtime to give the Hawks (13-0) at 52-49 win over the Hobbs Eagles (12-1) in the 5A Girls State title game. Chavez had a game-high 21 points, helping the Hawks win their fourth state title and the first since 2014.



The Eagles maintained the lead thru the first two quarters of play, heading into the locker room with a 25-22 advantage. In the first half, neither team held more than a five-point lead with three lead changes. Volcano Vista came out of the locker room in the third quarter swinging and outscored Hobbs 16-9, leading 38-34. At one point, the Hawks had a 13-point lead in the third but the Eagles were able to cut it to four going into the fourth quarter.

With just under two minutes to play in the game, Volcano Vista held a 44-40 advantage but two quick turnovers by the Hawks allowed Hobbs to tie the game at 44 all, sending the game into overtime. The two team traded baskets over the five minute overtime period and it looked as if a second overtime was on the horizon. With 3.8 seconds left on the clock, the Hawks inbounded the ball to Chavez. She took the ball to the middle of the court and launched a half-court shot that rattled in at the buzzer to give the Hawks the win.

"If I'm being honest, I wasn't aware of the clock, I didn't even know how much time was left," said Chavez after the game. "Once I got the ball in and saw them back up, I just took the chance and just threw it up hoping it was going to go in."

Hobbs was led by Wisdom Anthony and Elisa Turrubiates each with 16 points, while the Hawks Jaelyn Bates added 11 points.

## Gallup Earns Sixth Girls State Basketball Championship

The Gallup Bengals (14-0) captured the schools sixth girls' state basketball title in the 2021 4A Girls Basketball State Championship game with a 63-51 win over the Espanola Valley Sundevils (13-2). This was the first blue trophy for Gallup since 2011.

The Bengals had four players in double figures, led by Hailey Long with 14 points and outrebounded the Sundevils 39 to 21. Espanola Valley was led by Anita Deaguero with 18 points, shooting 6-of-12 from behind the 3-point arch.



Gallup jumped out to an early 11-0 lead over the Sundevils and held a 20-12 advantage after the first quarter. The Bengals continued to apply pressure on defensive and hot shooting from the field, gave Gallup a 37-23 lead at the half.

Espanola Valley mounded a small comeback in the third quarter, cutting the lead to seven points after three quarters at 43-36, but the Bengals were too much for the Sundevils on this day, shooting 61 percent from the floor in the fourth quarter and capturing the blue trophy with a 63-51 victory.

## Navajo Prep Earns Second Straight 3A Girls Blue Trophy

The Navajo Prep Eagles (14-0) earned back-to-back blue trophies with a 63-47 victory over the Robertson Cardinals (10-5) in the 2021 3A Girls Basketball State Championship game. This was the seventh girls' basketball title for the Eagles in school history and the third under head coach Rainy Crisp.

The Eagles were led by TionTia Woods with 23 points, as Navajo Prep shot 36 percent from the floor and made 10-of-13 from the free throw line. Robertson was led by Jayden Jennkins with 23 points.



Smothering defense by the Eagles and 38 points in the paint made it an easy day on the court for Navajo Prep, who led by as much as 22 points late in the third quarter. In fact, Navajo Prep never trailed in the game and was only outscored in the fourth quarter by the Cardinals. Points off



turnovers (27) and fast break points (30) were major factors in the Eagles' victory, as Navajo Prep dominated on both ends on the court.

The Eagles' Aiona Johnson (13) and Hailey Martin (12) each scored in double-digits for the Navajo Prep to help them capture the schools' seventh girls' state basketball title. "We weren't sure if we were even going to have our season," said Navajo Prep head coach Rainey Crisp. "These girls came in ready to play."

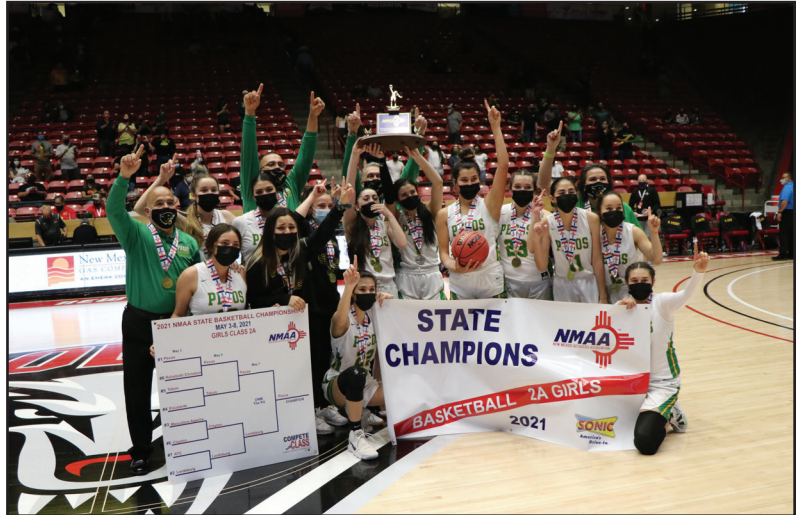
### **Pecos Lifts Blue Trophy following 2A Girls Basketball Championship Game**

The Pecos Panthers (14-0) beat the Lordsburg Mavericks (12-2) in the 2021 Girls' 2A Basketball State Championship, 61-55, in might have been one of the most competitive games of the tournament. The game featured seven lead changes and nine times in which the game was tied, as Pecos captured their second girls' title in school history and the second in the last three years.

The Panthers' Trinity Herrera scored 25 points, followed by Alexis Gonzales and Mistidawn Roybal each with 11. The Mavericks were led by their outstanding post player, Madison Miller, who recorded a game-high 29 points and 18 rebounds.

The game was a back and forth battle all fourth quarters as neither team held more than an eight point lead at any point in the game. The Mavericks shot 56 percent from the field and held Pecos to just 28 percent shooting, but Lordsburg's 50 turnover allowed Pecos to stay in the game.

The score was tied at 53-53 with just under 2 minutes to play in the game. The difference was Pecos' free throw shooting, as the Panthers made 5-of-6 from the line in the final two minutes, allowing them to hoist the blue trophy with a 61-55 victory.



## Roy/Mosquero Captures 1A Girls Basketball Blue Trophy

The Roy/Mosquero Lady Blues (15-0) hoisted the blue trophy for the first time since 1998, with a 44-38 victory over the Melrose Buffaloes (12-2). This was the fourth state title in girls' basketball for Roy/Mosquero.

Riley Clavel led Roy/Mosquero with 19 points on 5-of-17 shooting from the field, while teammate Tanna Crisp added 14 points and 14 rebounds. Melrose's Hailey Martin recorded a double-double with 16 points and 13 rebounds.



The Lady Blues held a 19-11 lead after two quarters of play but the Buffaloes stormed back in the third, outscoring Roy/Mosquero 17-7 and had a 28-26 lead going into the fourth quarter. In the fourth, however, it was all Roy/Mosquero, as the Lay Blues outscored Melrose 18 to 10. The buffaloes were just 6-of-27 from behind the three-point line in the game, as Roy/Mosquero held Melrose to just 21 percent shooting from the floor.

The Lady Blues' run and gun offense led to 14 fast break points in the game to just two for Melrose, as Roy/Mosquero also capitalized on points off turnovers with 10. Clutch free throw shooting down the stretch help Roy/Mosquero lift the blue trophy, going 7-of-8 over in the final minutes of play.

## Magdalena Standout Calls His Shot

Following their 2020 loss in the state final, Magdalena standout Joren Mirabal said at his post-game press conference, "We'll be back next year." He was right. The Magdalena Steers not only returned to the Pit floor, they beat Melrose in the Class 1A Final 56-43 to lift the blue trophy.

"As soon as we lost that game last year, I took a picture of the red trophy and put it on my screen saver on my phone," Mirabal said. "I can't tell you how excited I am to go into that locker room and change that screen saver."

This game was decided in the second and third quarters. After a back-and-forth first eight minutes against Melrose, the two teams were tied 11-11. Magdalena closed out the first half on an 8-0 run to take the



lead at the break. The Steers opened up their 8-point lead even larger in the third quarter, outscoring Melrose 17-7 heading into the fourth. Melrose put together a 10-0 run in the fourth quarter to get within ten points with about 2-and-a-half minutes to play, but couldn't get any closer. Magdalena capped off their perfect 15-0 season with a 13-point victory. Mirabal led the winners with a team-high 22-points. Kael Stephens added 13 points in the win.

Melrose (13-1) was led by Tate Sorgen who had a game-high 26 points and 14 rebounds. He was their only player in double figures and one of just four Melrose players to score.

### **Rehoboth Christian Wins 1st State Title Since 1977**

"When we took over, we said we wanted to get back here," said Rehoboth Christian head coach Kevin Zwiers. "It's taken a lot longer than maybe we would have thought, but we're here."

Here is on top of the high school basketball mountain.

Rehoboth Christian beat Jal 55-50 in the Class 2A Championship, giving the Lynx their first basketball title since 1977. Rehoboth (15-0) hadn't played in the final since 1983.



Jal (14-1) jumped out to an early 16-8 lead in the first quarter and was up by as many as 14 points before halftime. The Lynx cut their deficit to eight heading to the locker room. Rehoboth put together a 10-0 run late in the third quarter, cutting Jal's lead to four heading into the final quarter. In the fourth, the game was tied five times and there were three lead changes. The game was tied at 50-all with 1:17 remaining following a three pointer by Jal's Jacob Lujan, but Rehoboth scored the final five points in the last minute. Rehoboth was a decisive 6-9 shooting from the field in the fourth quarter where they outscored the Panthers 20-11, ending their undefeated season with a 5-point victory in the finals.

Top-seeded Rehoboth had three players in double figures, led by Jake Zylstra with 23 points. Talon West added 14 points and Mato Chapman scored 12. Josh Cervantes was Jal's lone double-digit scorer with 18 points.



## Hot Springs Wins 2nd Title In Three Years

In the closest boys final of the 2021 State Basketball Championships, the Hot Springs Tigers (14-1) lifted the blue trophy for the second time in three years after beating Sandia Prep 45-43 in the Class 3A Final.

In a game that included 13-lead changes, the championship was decided in the final minute. With less than 30 seconds remaining on the clock, Hot Springs' Ruben Garcia hit one of two foul shots to put the Tigers up 42-40. Sandia Prep's Jaxon Feit followed it up with a three-pointer with

7.7 seconds to go, giving the Sundevils the temporary lead. On their final possession, Hot Springs senior Verrels Lukman drove to the basket and was met by Sandia Prep's Austin Epstein. Lukman and was awarded two foul shots and went to the free throw line with 4.3 seconds left and put the Tigers on top for good.

Lukman led the Hot Springs with 14-points. Aljon Pinili added 11 points for the winners. Sandia Prep ended the season with an 11-2 record, falling short in the state final for the second year in a row. Sam Henderson led the Sundevils with a game-high 21 points.



## Del Norte Wins 1st State Title In School History

The Del Norte Knights claimed their first-ever boys basketball state championship, beating Artesia 52-41 in the 2021 Class 4A title game.

After giving up the first four points of the game, the Knights went on a 7-0 run and never trailed the rest of the way. The Bulldogs made just one first-half field goal after the opening 90 seconds, going through an 11-minute drought. Del Norte built up a 25-19 lead at the break. The Knights started to pull away in the third quarter building up a 34-23 advantage. Artesia cut the lead to four points near the end of the quarter, but Judah Casaus' three pointer as the buzzer sounded put Del Norte back on top by seven heading into the fourth. The Knights were up by as many as 13 points in the final minutes and finished the game winning by 11.



"It's just a relief, and there's been so much buildup trying to get to this point," said Del Norte head

coach Jeron McIntosh. “Year after year, we’ve gotten close and the kids could feel it, too. They could tell it was our year from the beginning.”

Sophomore guard Shane Douma-Sanchez scored a game-high 23 points for the Knights (12-1), including 3-6 shooting from three-point range. His teammate Judah Casaus added 15 points. Nick Sanchez led Artesia with a team-high 21 points, including a perfect 14-14 from the free throw line. It was Artesia’s first appearance in the title game since 2009.

## **Cleveland Claims 1st State Title In Program History**

The Cleveland Storm kept knocking on the door, knocking on the door, trying to get their first blue trophy in boys basketball. In 2021, the championship door was finally opened. The top-seeded Storm (14-1) beat Las Cruces 55-49 in the Class 5A final to win their first boys basketball championship in school history.

“The chance to be the first team to do it is something spectacular,” said Cleveland senior Tre Watson.



It was Cleveland’s third state finals appearance since 2015, but it wasn’t until 2021 that the Storm won it all. Taking down the defending state champs wasn’t an easy task. The Bulldawgs built up a six-point lead in the opening minutes, but Cleveland closed out the quarter on an 8-0 run to take a 12-10 first quarter lead. The two teams were knotted up a 12-all, 16-all, and 20-20, until Cleveland put together an 11-2 run late in the second quarter. The third quarter provided more of the same competitiveness. William Benjamin put Las Cruces on top 38-35 with just over two minutes left in the third. The Storm would re-take the lead, closing out the quarter with Watson scoring four of their final six points in the quarter as the Storm took a 41-38 cushion into the fourth. Cleveland was up by as many as 7-points in the fourth and held on for a six-point win to lift the blue trophy for the very first time.

Watson and Nathan Hasberry both finish with 17 points for Cleveland. Benjamin had a game-high 21 points for Las Cruces. Isaiah Carr put up 17 points, 14 rebounds and 8 blocked shots for the Bulldawgs who finished the season with a 14-1 record.