



Profile: Simon Kenton



Simon Kenton's 1981 state title gave Independence, Kentucky, something to rally around after a tragic start to the school year.

In early October, 1980, two natural gas explosions, 25 minutes apart, ripped through the school's basement, killing one student and injuring firemen and utility workers who had been called to the scene.

During the building's repair, students split time with Scott High School, attending classes there from 1:30 to 7:30 after the Scott students had gone home for the day. Basketball practice was difficult because the team had to practice wherever it could.

Simon Kenton had never gone to the Sweet Sixteen®. No one expected it to do so in 1981.

The team pulled off a miracle. Not only did it go to the state tournament, it also won the state title in front of 21,287 people—at the time, the largest crowd at a championship game—beating Mason County 70 to 63.



Simon Kenton's Troy McKinley, center, holds the state tournament MVP trophy and celebrates with teammates. (Photo courtesy of the Herald-Leader, KYphotoArchive.com.)

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