

THE CINCINNATI ENQUIRER

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Lendl takes Volvo title/C-3
 Nierlich wins 2nd gold/C-3
 Hoosiers grab 20th/C-4

SPORTS

UCLA upsets Louisville/C-4
 Mowry tops seniors/C-5
 Classified Ads/C-6

Withrow wraps up city title

Defense keys win against Woodward

BY D. ORLANDO LEDBETTER
 The Cincinnati Enquirer

The No. 1-ranked Withrow High boys basketball team dethroned two-time defending city champion Woodward by sticking to its motto: "Play as a team, win as a team."

Withrow, which took over the top spot in *The Enquirer* weekly coaches poll midway through the season, defeated No. 2-ranked Woodward, 64-56, Sunday before 7,245 fans at Riverfront Coliseum.

Woodward, the defending Division I state champion, sought to become the first school to win three consecutive city titles. The Bulldogs entered the game ranked No. 5 in the state by *The Associated Press*.

Withrow, ranked No. 3 in the state, should be honored with its third boys basketball city

championship when the coaches poll is released in Tuesday's editions. The Tigers captured back-to-back city titles in 1978 and 1979 under coach Mike Ferone.

"If you look at our statistics, no one is burning it up," Withrow's Karl Brown said after scoring 16 points in Sunday's victory. "It's a team effort."

The Tigers, 19-1, average 87 points a game and have scored more than 90 points in 12 games, but they beat the 16-4 Bulldogs with some tough defense.

Containing Woodward's D.J. Boston was a key. The Tigers held Boston, who averages 22.2 points per game, to seven points in the first half.

"Whatever defense we played, we just played it tight," said Withrow coach George Jackson. "We knew we had to shade D.J. He's a tremendous player. We didn't want him to kill us."

Brown, a 6-foot-6, 220-pounder, and teammate Darryl Wilson, 6-4, 200, surrounded Boston when he touched the ball.

"I think it was a team effort," Brown said,

"stopping him with everybody cutting him off, blocking a shot here or there. Everybody did a good job."

Wilson transferred to Withrow last season when his family move to Cincinnati from Huntsville, Ala. Until Sunday, he had never played in front of a big crowd.

"I was kind of nervous at the beginning," said Wilson. "But I got into the game and everything just fell in place."

Withrow point guard Steve Gentry scored 16 points. Wilson added 12, Damon Ridley 10.

Woodward's Boston finished with 19 points, teammate Orlando Berry 18.

"They just really intimidated us the entire game," said Woodward coach Larry Miller. "They were so mentally and emotionally ready for this game."

The Tigers stood by, seething, waiting to get a good shot at the Bulldogs who, because of their success the previous two seasons, were

(Please see WITHROW, Page C-5)

Boys tournament opens today, Page C-4.



Withrow's Karl Brown (24) and Steve Gentry (20) go for a loose rebound before a crowd of 7,245 at Riverfront Coliseum Sunday.

Monday, February 13.

Withrow

CONTINUED FROM PAGE C-1

invited to play in tournaments in Las Vegas and Raleigh, N.C. "They have always been a thorn in our sides," Brown said. "I knew we could beat them. When we look at teams, we try to play off their weaknesses and I think that's what we did to Woodward."

After leading only 14-12, the Tigers stepped up their fast break and held a 12-point at the half, 37-25. Wilson and Brown led the Tigers in the second quarter with eight and six points each.

Withrow entered the fourth quarter with a 52-40 lead. But Woodward made a run with about

six minutes to play and the Tigers ahead, 56-42. Woodward reeled off 11 unanswered points.

Berry, who led the charge with five points, cut the Tigers lead to three with 2:36 to play on a layup after a steal. That was as close as Woodward could get.

Withrow's Wilson stopped the Woodward run, scoring to make it 58-53, as the Tigers held on the rest of the way for the city championship.

WOODWARD (56) — Boston 7 5 19, Relford 1 2 4, Bostic 3 1 7, Berry 6 7 18, Jones 1 0 3, Dukes 1 0 2. Totals: 17 15 56.

WITHROW (64) — Brown 6 4 16, Wilson 5 2 12, Evans 3 2 6, Gentry 4 6 16, Ridley 4 2 10, Taylor 1 0 2. Totals: 23 16 64.

Three-point goals: Wo—Jones, Wi—Gentry 2. Records: Wi 19-1, Wo 16-4.