

Sun March 16, 2008

Williams leads Texas team to 2nd straight title



THESA Riders' Whitney Williams holds up the championship trophy at the National Christian Homeschool Championship game on Saturday at the Sawyer Center. Go to NewsOK.com for a slideshow from the championship game. **by SARAH PHIPPS, THE OKLAHOMAN**

National Christian Homeschool

Basketball Championships

Girls 6A (18-U)

THESA 74, KC METRO 62

KC Metro ...1614725 — 62

THESA ...14162717 — 72

KC Metro — Taber Spani 39, Tanis Spani 13, Mackenzie Gripe 6, Mabry Lane 4.

THESA — Whitney Williams 39, Anna Parish 17, Hope Martinez 6, Cally Williams 6, Shaylon Martinez 4, Steph Synder 2.

Boys

HCYA 71, LANDMARK 64

Landmark ...2091322 — 64

HCYA ...18231218 — 71

Landmark — Milen Kostov 23, Peter Jackson 15, Eric Head 9, Micah Simms 9, Kevin Baumgartner 8.

HCYA — J.C. Sanders 30, Jesse Sanders 20, Evan Zieschang 12, Hunter Holbrook 9.

By Ryan Aber
Staff Writer

When their daughter Whitney was in seventh grade, Gary and [Patty Williams](#) already knew they had a pretty good basketball player on their hands.

The Fort Worth, Texas, couple thought, though, that to give her the best chance to play basketball in college, they'd have to give up homeschooling her.

"All of the parents whose older kids Whitney had played with in the summer told us we'd have to put her in a private school in order to get noticed," [Gary Williams](#) said Saturday after his daughter's THESA Riders beat K.C. Metro 74-62 to win the 6A 18-under National Christian Homeschool Basketball Championships at [Southern Nazarene's Sawyer Center](#).

It wasn't an ideal situation for the couple, who wanted all of their children to be homeschooled. It was one they were willing to accept, though.

Until they came to Oklahoma City for the homeschool championships six years ago.

"Our exposure to homeschool sports was not very impressive at first," [Gary Williams](#) said. "It wasn't until we got here for the first time and saw the level of play that we went, 'Wow, we want to be a part of that.' "

And it's paid off for [Williams](#), as she received looks from many Division I programs before signing with Iowa State.

Although the level of homeschool basketball is good, [Williams](#) recognizes how important her summers playing for AAU Team Texas have been.

"It's been vital," she said. "That's where I got noticed."

But her homeschool education also has its advantages.

She usually does a short running routine shortly after she gets up each day and before beginning her school work.

When she finishes school around 2 p.m., she'll work out again on her own before doing a bit more school work and then practicing with her team around 6:30 p.m.

"I love homeschooling," [Williams](#) said. "Just because when I'm done with a subject I can move on to the next one.

"I like being able to set my own pace."

She drew plenty of attention Saturday, scoring 39 points — 18 in the third quarter — turning what had been a tie game at halftime into a comfortable THESA win.

"I'm pretty speechless," [Whitney Williams](#) said, wiping away tears, after helping her team win its second consecutive title. "It's a good way to go out."

The Riders might've been going for three consecutive titles had the team not been ravaged by the flu going into the 2006 title game.

Basketball isn't everything in [Williams'](#) life.

She's also a musician, learning to play piano from her grandmother and self-teaching herself on the guitar.

And she's taking college algebra and world literature classes at nearby Texas-Arlington to get a head start on college.

It's been Whitney's first experience in a traditional classroom environment.

"I've been doing pretty well with it," she said. "I'm glad I started doing it before I leave home."

There is some concern in the [Williams](#) family about her going all the way to Ames, Iowa, for college. She was also recruited by nearby [Texas Christian](#).

"I'm very nervous about it," [Williams](#) said. "But I'm also excited at the same time.

"It's just another stage of my life and another stage in basketball."