

# COUGARS

FROM PAGE B1

three-point range (5-of-12). Eight players scored, and four Cougars shot a perfect percentage from the field in the contest.

Jaelin Groves finished with 12 points, going 4-for-8 from the field and a perfect 4-for-4 at the free-throw line. Braxton Floyd added 12 points, knocking down four three-pointers on 4-of-5 shooting from beyond the arc. Reid Gatton and Will Gatton each scored 10 points on perfect 5-for-5 shooting inside the arc. Layden Bozarth contributed nine points, while Brooks Lynam added eight. Luke Coleman scored six points and Camden Baird and Gavin Mauzy each chipped in four.

The Cougars assisted, shared the ball and controlled the glass, finishing with 26 rebounds. The fast start allowed the seniors to play freely and set the tone for a night that celebrated their contributions to the program.

## TWO TIGHT BATTLES

Friday's matchup at Union County proved to be a much different test. The series between the two programs has been evenly matched since 2012, and this meeting was no exception. The Cougars and Braves traded runs throughout

the night before Union County secured a 64-61 win in the closing moments.

Saturday's contest against Christian Fellowship brought another high-level opponent to Calhoun. Christian Fellowship entered with a 17-8 record out of the First Region, and the game lived up to expectations. Once again, the margin never stretched far in either direction. McLean County executed late to secure a 62-59 win in another three-point decision.

The back-to-back close finishes showcased the poise of a veteran group that has been part of numerous pressure situations over the past four seasons.

## SENIOR LEADERSHIP DEFINES ERA

This senior class has been central to one of the most successful stretches in program history.

Layden Bozarth has appeared in 25 games this season and has averaged 14 points per contest while knocking down roughly one three-pointer per game. A physical, aggressive guard, Bozarth has the ability to score in bunches and defend with intensity. There have been multiple moments over the past two seasons where he has taken control of a game offensively, and his competitive edge has helped define the team's

identity.

Camden Baird, also a 25-game contributor this year, averages just over 12 points per game and consistently stretches the floor from beyond the arc. Calm under pressure, Baird has delivered steady leadership throughout the season. His ability to make timely plays and manage key possessions has been instrumental in close victories.

Jaelin Groves has served as the Cougars' interior anchor. Appearing in all 25 games, Groves averages 10.6 points per game while leading the team in rebounding at more than six boards per contest. He is the team's most efficient scorer, shooting 59% from the field, and leads the Cougars at the free-throw line at 83.6%. Though slightly undersized for a traditional post, Groves compensates with athleticism and toughness. In several games this season, he has led the team in scoring simply by attacking the rim and earning trips to the line.

Braxton Floyd rounds out the senior core on the floor. Appearing in 25 games and averaging six points per game, Floyd's impact extends well

beyond scoring. His ability to penetrate defenses, create for teammates and defend on the perimeter has often shifted momentum in tight contests. Many of the Cougars' biggest late-game stops or key possessions this season have involved Floyd's decision-making and defensive presence.

Carlo Bertolini, an exchange student, has embraced his first season of basketball in the United States. Appearing in 13 games, Bertolini scored his first varsity basket earlier this season against Cloverport and will earn a letter for his contributions. His enthusiasm and energy have made him a valued

teammate, often seen encouraging players and supporting the team from the bench and in huddles.

Together, this group has embraced the culture of winning that has taken root at McLean County High School. Seven straight winning seasons represent a significant shift in expectations, and this senior class has been at the center of that evolution.

## LOOKING AHEAD

McLean County returns to action Tuesday at Butler County before hosting South Warren on Thursday in the final regular-season game prior to the district

tournament, which begins Tuesday, Feb. 24 at home against Muhlenberg County.

With postseason play approaching, the Cougars now turn their attention to the district tournament with the goal of earning another trip to the regional tournament. This senior class has experienced postseason success before and understands what it takes to compete in March.



## PUBLIC NOTICE

The following Estate has been probated in the McLean District Court:  
ESTATE OF: PHILLIP BROOKS KIRTLEY, deceased

Doris Faye Kirtley  
82 Tram Road  
Island, KY 42350 appointed  
Executor/Executrix

A.V. Conway II  
P.O. Box 25  
Hartford, KY 42347 Attorney

Persons having claims against said estate should present same, verified according to law, to the personal representative no later than six (6) months from date of appointment.

Taylor Skaggs, Clerk  
McLean District/Circuit Courts



Notice is given that the Final Settlement in the Estate of Howard Kent Gossett is set for hearing confirmation on **March 31, 2026**, at 10:00 a.m. in the McLean District Court. Objections and exceptions shall be filed in the office of the Circuit Court Clerk on or before said date.

Taylor Skaggs, Clerk  
McLean Circuit/District Courts

The City of Island is accepting applications for a

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- High school diploma or GED
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- Ability to work weekends and holidays as needed

Individuals interested in applying may pick up an application at Island City Hall, Monday through Friday, 7 a.m. - 3 p.m.

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McLEAN COUNTY NEWS

## CLASSIFIED DEADLINE

**MONDAY 3:00 P.M.**  
Contact Customer Service at  
**270-273-3287** or  
[csr@mcleannews.com](mailto:csr@mcleannews.com)  
**Monday-Friday 7AM-3PM**  
Holidays advance deadlines 24 hours.



The McLean County Public Schools Local Planning Committee will meet on Thursday, February 26, 2026, at 5:30 PM in the boardroom of the McLean County Board of Education Central Office, located at 410 Highway 136 East, Calhoun, KY 42327. The purpose of this meeting is to discuss the possible extension of the current District Facilities Plan (DFP). The district may request a waiver from the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) if fewer than eight (8) years have passed since the development of the current DFP and there has been no significant change in enrollment or facility needs. The current District Facilities Plan, district financial information, district demographics, and the current physical condition of district facilities will be presented and reviewed. This meeting is open to the public.

## PUBLIC NOTICE

Pursuant to 405 KAR 8:010, Section 16(5), the following is a summary of permitting decisions made by the Department for Natural Resources, Division of Mine Permits with respect to applications to conduct surface coal mining and reclamation operations in McLean County.

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