

Jersey says goodbye to seniors after successful season, has strong crew back next year

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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JERSEYVILLE - The **Jersey High School boys basketball team** closed its season with a 16-15 record last week in the Triad Class 3A Regional and **Coach Stote Reeder** viewed the season as “a success.”

Zac Ridenhour, the star of this year's team, closed his career with the Panthers with 31 points, a tie for his career high against Highland. His brother, Jake, only a junior, will return in 2016-2017.

Zac Ridenhour had one of the best seasons throughout the course of the school's program this year, scoring 603 points, the most since 1974 and third most in JCHS history. Jersey lost to Highland 70-61 in the semifinals of the Triad Regional last week.

"Zac did it all with eyes from opponents on him," Reeder said of his 603-point season. "He scored in double figures in 34 straight games dating back to Feb. 27 of last year, which happened to be Senior Night, so he didn't start. He really worked hard to get where he's at and I hope I can watch him play somewhere next year."



Senior center Drake Kanallakan was also a standout this year and the Panthers felt his absence when he missed seven games.

"Drake was challenged to become a better rebounder and defender," Reeder said. "He accepted the challenge and improved his offensive game as well. If he was not going to move on and play college baseball next year, he would be playing basketball at least at a

Division III level next year. Drake showed the young kids how to come to practice and make it matter every day. The seniors took the torch from last year's guys and hopefully the underclassmen group this year will do the same next year."

Colin Hamm and Alex Goldacker are seniors who didn't see a significant amount of action, but embraced their roles on the team, Reeder said.

"Colin and Alex took the scout team stuff to heart and knew every day they were making the guys in front of them better," Reeder said. "I can't say enough about the commitment and sacrifice those two guys gave us. **Jake Witt** was a pest defensively as always and was the guy that always got guys in the right spots. His communication skills were a key to our successful team."

Six-foot-three sophomore Lucas Ross returns next season and will offer the Panthers height, strength and athleticism underneath the basket. He saw more and more varsity playing time as the season progressed and showed great promise.

Junior guard **Herkert** returns next season, along with 6-2 sophomore forward **Blake Wittman**. Herkert also helped keep players motivated during practices and games during this season, Reeder said.

Freshman guard **Kurt Hall** and 6-2 freshman forward **A.J. Shaw** also are back next year.



