



# Bago Boys Student Viewer's Guide



**“They know they did something special.”**

--Jeff Berridge, Head Coach

Winnebago Indians

2015 Class C1 State Basketball Champions

## Meet the Bago Boys

In March, 2015, the Winnebago Indians Boys Class C1 basketball team had the chance to win the first state basketball championship for their high school in 75 years. They had known each other and played basketball with each other their whole lives. In their district, some said they had talent, but they didn't have the drive to win. Their town, Winnebago, was in the process of renewing itself after many years of poverty. Each team member had been playing since he was big enough to bounce a ball.

They were encouraged by their own parents and by the parents of their teammates. They felt a family bond with each other. As a high school team, they knew how to share the ball and keep the pressure on the opponent. Every game, every team member was constantly on the run, playing the super-fast style some call Rez Ball. At the same time some of their players were faced with family illness and loss, their community was having a crisis in tribal leadership. For the boys and for the town, basketball was a relief from many types of tension. The team won game after game, gaining their district title. When they walked onto the court in Lincoln to play their first game in the state tournament, they saw practically the whole town in the stands cheering them on. They knew there were people out there expecting the best of them, while others wondered if they really belonged there. They were given the chance to prove themselves and to disprove stereotypes. What they did next took physical skill and mental focus, and won them a place in history.

*“They made us all proud.”*



### Bago Boys Backstory

- Prior to 2015, the last time a team from Winnebago won a state championship was in 1940, when Winnebago played in Class B, and defeated Minatare by a single point, 23-22.
- Their 2015 run was only the second time the Winnebago Indians had qualified for the state tournament.
- The team had not played the top teams in their class during the regular season, causing some to question whether the Indians were up to the challenge.
- The Winnebago Indians came into the tournament ranked fifth in Boys Class C1.

“Rez Ball came through.”

### What is Rez ball?

Rez ball can refer to the game of basketball or to a very fast basketball. Short for reservation basketball, this style of play running. Players shoot and hustle as fast as they can, to opponents.



style of playing calls for constant pressure

### Read more about it

[http://journalstar.com/sports/high-school/basketball/boys/state-hoops-2015/boys-c--state-basketball-winnebago-caps-amazing-run-with/article\\_26536341-da1e-5418-94b4-547b4e71b1c9.html](http://journalstar.com/sports/high-school/basketball/boys/state-hoops-2015/boys-c--state-basketball-winnebago-caps-amazing-run-with/article_26536341-da1e-5418-94b4-547b4e71b1c9.html)

[http://www.omaha.com/neprepzone/basketball/class-c--winnebago-wins-first-title-in-years-by/article\\_478713ec-5e32-5db9-877c-8f3b6871c7f9.html](http://www.omaha.com/neprepzone/basketball/class-c--winnebago-wins-first-title-in-years-by/article_478713ec-5e32-5db9-877c-8f3b6871c7f9.html)

[http://www.omaha.com/neprepzone/basketball/chatelain-winnebago-shines-on-big-stage/article\\_3424a078-7b44-57ba-b772-ofa462ab1da4.html](http://www.omaha.com/neprepzone/basketball/chatelain-winnebago-shines-on-big-stage/article_3424a078-7b44-57ba-b772-ofa462ab1da4.html)

### Vocabulary

What is a **stereotype**?

Is **Indian** an acceptable name for the first people to live in North America?

Why are some people offended by the word **firewater**?

### Talk About It

“All the negativity that was surrounding them at the time didn’t show on the court.”

**What challenges did the individuals on the team face?**

“They made us all proud.”

**How did expectations affect the team?**

“It isn’t about you. It’s about the whole team on the court...”

**What did the boys accomplish as a team?**

### Write About It

Tell about a time when you set a goal, and what you did to try to achieve it. How did the people around you help? What got in your way? What were the biggest challenges and how did you react to them?

### What makes a person a hero?

How would things be different for the Bago Boys if they lived in a big, urban center instead of a small town on a reservation?

