



# **METRO EAST TOURNAMENT ROUND UP: EAWR, Roxana, MELH all head to championships in brackets, Marquette, Southwestern to compete for third place**

by Madelaine Gerard, Staff Writer  
November 28 2015 12:45 AM

**EDWARDSVILLE** - Throughout the week, local teams from **Southwestern, East Alton-Wood River, Roxana and Marquette Catholic High Schools** have all gathered at **Metro East Lutheran High School** to participate in their **35th annual Turkey Tipoff Classic**.

Friday, the teams made their way through their individual brackets to divvy out the best of the best in boys basketball.

Fortunately for all but two area teams, the Oilers, Shells and Knights will be headed to the tournament's championship round tomorrow beginning at noon to battle it out for the first place spots in their bracket.

The Explorers and Piasa Birds will face one another at 7:00 p.m. to decide who will take the third-place position in their gold bracket.



## **METRO EAST LUTHERAN VS. SOUTHWESTERN (42-41)**

In the most nail-biting game of the evening, the **Metro East Lutheran High School Knights** defeated the **Southwestern High School Piasa Birds 42-21** with fewer than 10 seconds left on the clock.

“I told my guys, hit or miss, we had to make a play on the other end,” Metro East Head Coach Anthony Smith said. “We need to go into over time or we need to make a good play. We had to push it up court and take our chances. I saw a hand go on the glass and the buzzer go off, and I said, ‘did we just win?’”

In the first period, MELHS senior **Teddy Fifer (#00)** brought in two three-pointers for the Knights, bringing in a heavy command for his team early on. 6’6” junior **Noah Coddington (#35)** towered over the competition to bring in four points. Senior **Jason Johnson (#5)** was 1-4 for shots taken and junior **Braden Woolsey (#23)** brought in two each to bring the Knights’ score to 14 when the buzzer ended the first.

However, the Piasa Birds were always hot on the Knights’ tails when they scored, especially during this first period. Junior **Collin Baumgartner (#25)** brought in five

points for the Piasa Birds in quick succession after his teammate, senior **Zach Seymour (#23)** landed a three-pointer. With the help of a free throw point from sophomore **Justin Bailey (#1)** and another basket scored by his classmate **Caleb Robinson (#12)**, the Piasa Birds only trailed by Knights by three with the score of **14-11** at the end of the first.



Metro East had a steady command over the ball during the second period. The Knights landed seven of their attempted 13 shots to the hoop whereas the Piasa Birds could only make in five shots of their attempted 14 shots. The score at the end of the second was **27-20** in the Knights' favor.

During the third period, all bets were off and the game just kept getting closer and closer. After some intense back and forth between the two teams. It seemed that the meeting in the locker room was what the Piasa Birds needed to recoup and recollect their thoughts. After heading out, Seymour nailed a three pointer after two shot attempts by Baumgartner, as well as sophomores **Caden Heyen (#11)** and **Ben Lowis (#22)**. The Birds' offense pushed past the Knights to close out the period with a score of **35-34** in favor of Southwestern.



The fourth period was truly neck and neck the entire time. The Piasa Birds made seven shot attempts before Baumgartner finally landed a basket, The Knights were determined, with the work of junior **A.J. Risavy (#13)** and sophomore **Kenrique Brown (#3)**, the Knights pulled back into the lead.

When the score raised to 40-37, the Piasa Birds kept creeping back up to the Knights. After a couple of time outs and turnovers resulting in some two successful free throws by Heyen, the Piasa Birds thought that with less than 10 seconds to go, they had bested the Knights. Oh, how wrong they were.

After the final time out of the game was called, there remained only 8.1 seconds left on the clock. Jason Johnson made his way down the court and nailed the perfect, game winning basket, allowing his team to defeat their opponents by an extremely narrow margin of one point. The crowd cheered and the team all huddled and jumped together to celebrate their victory against the Piasa Birds of 42-41.

“It’s a good win for us,” Coach Smith said. “Getting to the championship game in your own tournament is a plus, so just getting there is going to be awesome. It gives us a chance to play another quality game tomorrow.”



## GIBAULT VS. MARQUETTE CATHOLIC (49-45)

When the final game of the evening began around 8:30 p.m., the Gibault Hawks were determined to engage quickly with the Marquette Catholic Explorers.

In the first quarter, the Explorers quickly got ahead of their opponents by baskets made by senior **Ben Sebacher (#32)** and his classmate **Shandon Boone (#10)**. The Hawks made it on to the board and came back with a vengeance after a slam dunk by sophomore **Trevor Davis (#33)** and a follow-up three pointer. Other than Davis, his teammate and senior **Brian Deterding (#42)** scored four more points. The score was **13-11** in favor of Gibault Catholic High School at the end of the first.

In the second, the Hawks pushed to extend their lead from plays by Deterding, Davis and freshman **Karson Huels (#12)**. In order to close up the gap, Sebacher, Boone, senior **Trey Aguirre (#1)** and senior **Trevor Collins (#33)** made their mark on the scoreboard. Marquette only fell short by two points to close out the period with a score of **24-22**.



Both teams successfully scored six times throughout the course of the third. However, the Explorers pushed by with just one more point than the Hawks in this period as a result of a successful three-point shot from sophomore **Nick Messinger (#11)**. The Explorers finally held a one-point lead against the offense-heavy Hawks with a score of **37-36** to end the period.

The fourth quarter was pivotal for Gibault to extend their lead. Unfortunately for them, the Explorers were determined to use every ounce of their power and ability to make sure that the lead wasn't too extensive. They also made great time of stalling the game by using up their remaining timeouts with less than a minute to go on the clock. After four successful baskets, one successful three-pointer, and two successful free throws from the Hawks, the Explorers could only come up with eight of their own points courtesy of Sebacher, Messinger and junior **Reagan Snider (#23)**. The final buzzer sounded and the Explorers fell to the Hawks 49-45.

"It really just came down to offensive rebounds," **Marquette Head Coach Steve Medford** said. "All and all, I thought we did a pretty good job. We talked and said we had to get ourselves back and get on the horse. I thought we did a pretty good job on the board."

**Gibault Head Coach Dennis Rueter** was quite impressed with the night's game as well.

"I felt we did a very good job on Boone and Sebacher. We kind of matched back and forth there. We just made a couple more plays than they did," he said. "We really defended well toward the end."

**Roxana High School defeated Odin Public High School 82-52 in their 4:00 p.m. matchup on Friday.**

**East Alton-Wood River High School took down Valmeyer High School 59-39 in the Bronze Bracket semifinal at 6:00 p.m. the same day.**

### **BRONZE BRACKET**

Valmeyer vs. New Athens - 10:00 a.m. (3rd Place)

East Alton-Wood River vs. Christ Our Rock Lutheran - 12:00 p.m.

### **SILVER BRACKET**

Odin vs. Cleveland - 1:00 p.m. (3rd Place)

Roxana vs. Bunker Hill - 2:30 p.m.

## **GOLD BRACKET**

Southwestern vs. Marquette Catholic - 7:00 p.m. (3rd Place)

Metro East Lutheran vs. Gibault Catholic - 8:30 p.m.