

MELHS TURKEY TIP OFF: Marquette Catholic grasps third place in 57-29 victory against Southwestern

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November 29 2015 1:11 AM



EDWARDSVILLE -Marquette Catholic High School upset Southwestern 57-29 Saturday evening for third place in the gold bracket of the Metro East Lutheran Turkey Tip Off Classic Tourney.

MCHS Head Coach Steve Metford was quite proud of how his team played in the contest.

“We played really well tonight,” Metford said. “Offensively, we were a little slow to get going, but once we figured it out, our guys executed very well.”

To start off the first period, both teams made three shots before even making a basket. Southwestern made it on the board first with a free-throw by sophomore **Caleb Robinson (#12)**. After a five-point lead pushed by his classmate **Ben Lewis (#22)**, the Explorers finally hit the scoreboard with a three-pointer by sophomore **Reagan Snider (#23)**.



With some more teamwork, the Marquette Explorers held a two-point lead as the final buzzer sounded to end the first with a score of **12-10**.

In the second, Marquette decided that early engagement would be a great strategy to stick with. Snider knocked in another three-pointer for the Explorers and his teammates, seniors **Trey Aguirre (#1)**, **Ben Sebacher (#32)** and **Shandon Boone (#10)** scored one, two and a whopping eight points respectively.

In the nine shot attempts that the Piasa Birds made in the second, only two of those shots were successful. In this case, that meant junior **Colin Baumgartner's (#25)** standard two-point basket and his teammate sophomore **Justin Bailey's (#1)** three-pointer wasn't enough to bring the Piasa Birds back to their glory. The second period ended with the Explorers in the lead with a score of **27-15**.

The Piasa Birds struggled offensively in the third. Before Bailey could land his second three-pointer of the evening, five separate shot attempts were made by him and his teammates. Baumgartner and Lowis could only score on a free throw and a standard basket point after six other shot attempts.



On the other hand, the Explorers only missed six out of the 13 shot attempts they made. Snider, and his teammate sophomore **Nick Messinger (#11)** both scored three points each this period. Boone brought in four points himself and his teammates Bailey and freshman **Chris Hartrich (#12)** both brought in two points each before the end of the period. The Explorers held a 20-point lead with a score of **41-21**.

Yet again, the Marquette defense was too much for the Piasa Birds to handle in the fourth. With over 14 attempts with 10 missed shots, the Birds brought in eight points courtesy of junior **Dylan Green (#4)**, sophomore **Caden Heyen (#11)** and a successful free throw by Robinson.

The Explorers still showed their offensive expertise with a whomping 14 points scored in 16 attempts. Snider led the pack again with six points scored this period. Sebacher, Boone and Aguirre followed their teammate with two points scored each. Junior **Bryce Pettiford (#21)** and freshman **Nick Hemann (#25)** made their way on the board for the first time with one point each during free-throw attempts.

The Piasa Birds clearly could not keep up with the offensive prowess of the Explorers as they were defeated **57-29** to fall in fourth place in the gold bracket. The Explorers celebrated their fourth place win like they had won the championships themselves.

“Our guys pride themselves on playing really good team defense throughout the year,” Coach Metford said at the end of the game. “Our team came up to the challenge on that tonight and I’m really happy about it.”