

BOYS BASKETBALL: Metro East falls 43-34 in first loss of season against Marquette

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ALTON - Heading into **Tuesday, Dec. 8's** game at **Marquette Catholic High School (4-2)**, both **Explorers** coach **Steve Medford** and **Metro East Lutheran Knights (6-0)** coach **Anthony Smith** knew that it was going to be a good match.

After a slow first half, the two teams made up for lost time and offensively shined. Unfortunately for the visitors, the Explorers defeated the Knights **43-34**, ending their six-game win streak.

“ is a good team that has some really good talent,” Coach Metford said after the game. “It feels good to get a good win tonight.”

As soon as the first period began, it seemed that a bit of miscommunication was occurring with the Knights right out of the gate. After Coach Smith called a time-out nearly 30 seconds into the period, junior **Braden Woolsey** knocked in his first basket of the evening. The Knights’ coach called yet another time out before two minutes had passed on the clock.

Shortly after the ball was returned into play, senior **Ben Sebacher** of the Explorers landed a basket to tie the game. His teammate junior **Nick Messinger** was quick to nail a flawless three-pointer. After a series of missed shots by Knights, junior **Kenrique Brown** made the successful push to secure a scoring play. Explorers sophomore **Reagan Snider** a three-pointer himself. MELHS senior **Jacob Johnson** made in the first of two free throw shots to end his team’s offensive push in the first at a small score of 5. Senior **Shandon Boone** of the Explorers landed yet another three-pointer in the first for his team, bringing his team’s score to 11.



At the end of the first, the Explorers led the Knights **11-5**.

The second period was sort of dull in terms of offense for the Explorers. Shandon Boone was the lone scorer for his team in this period, knocking in a basket and landing two points.

With the Explorers' defense working like crazy, the Knights only had a bit more offensive luck. Woolsey earned two on free throws. Johnson knocked in another basket for his team and senior **Teddy Fifer** landed one basket for the Knights.

At half, the Explorers continued to lead the Knights **13-11**.

The third period is where both of the team's offense really shined. With both teams bringing in 15 points, this was the type of game that the audience and the athletes for that matter were hoping for.

For the Explorers, Boone brought in 7 points from a three-pointer, two free-throw points and a regular basket. His teammates senior **Trevor Collins** and Snider both brought in four each before the final buzzer.

Fifer of the Knights finally showed the audience what he was made of, bringing in seven himself in the third period. Johnson brought in four points, and his teammates Woolsey and sophomore **Eli Jacobs** both landed two points each.



At the end of the third, the Explorers continued to lead the Knights by two with a score of **28-26**.

After recouping with Coach Medford, it seemed like the Marquette Catholic High School Explorers basketball team made it their ultimate goal to extend the lead. They succeeded in that matter by putting 15 more points on the board. Sebacher landed a whopping 8 points this period with his classmate **Trey Aguirre** putting four on the board himself. Snider closed out the period by landing three points from successful free throws.

The Knights' last effort towards victory was an eight-point rush courtesy of Johnson, Brown and junior Noah Coddington. Unfortunately, it wasn't enough to push them in the lead in any point in the period and their team fell to the Explorers **43-34** at the final buzzer.

"It's one of those rare nights that the defense showed up and the offense didn't," Coach Smith said. "We knew we were in for a tough game. I knew offensively, we never struck. We knew we'd have nights, but not nights like tonight."