

# Southwestern clinches 1st place in JCHS Holiday Tourney after battle 53-46 against Calhoun

by Madelaine Gerard, Staff Writer  
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**JERSEYVILLE** - After a nail-biting championship match at the **Jersey Community High School Holiday Tournament**, the **Southwestern High School Piassa Birds** defeated the **Calhoun High School Lady Warriors** basketball team on **Wednesday**.

Southwestern coach **Steve Wooley** was ecstatic after his team took the top spot in the three-day long tournament.

“Offensively, we had better balance. We had more kids contributing this time around,” he said. “We need to get more kids comfortable to create more depth on the bench. It has to be an ongoing thing for us.”

Coach Wooley is just happy that his seniors had the opportunity to shine and bring home a trophy during the tournament.

“The ball bounced their way tonight,” Calhoun coach **Aaron Baalman** said about his team’s loss. “We needed some of the girls to come out and land those outside shots but it just didn’t happen tonight. I had a strange feeling that we were headed towards a loss tonight. We got too comfortable. We’ll straighten it back out.”



Once the game got started, the both the Piasa Birds and the Lady Warriors were on top of their games. Calhoun seniors **Courtney Holland** and **Madison Lehr** brought in two three-pointers right out of the gate. At the same time, Southwestern seniors **Karlie Green** and **Maddy Greeling** nailed three-pointers themselves.

Tied at 6-6, **Kassidy Klocke** scored two for the Warriors to begin a streak of points for her team. After she threw in a three-pointer herself, junior **Grace Baalman** locked in two points from free throws and brought the score to 13-6 in her team's favor.

In a comeback attempt by Southwestern, senior **Erin Laubscher** earned a free point. Shortly after, she took and nailed an excellent three-point shot to bring her team's score to 10.

Before the final buzzer, junior **Jordan Holland** of Calhoun steadied her team's lead by adding three more herself. At the end of the first, Calhoun lead Southwestern **16-10**.

In the second, Southwestern had a chance to play a bit of catch up. Greeling landed three points from a basket and one successful free-throw shot. After a three-pointer by junior **Jenna Moore**, the score was tied at 16-16.

Klocke quickly tossed the ball in for another two points for Calhoun, but Southwestern senior **Malea Bailey** locked in two to tie the score again at 18-18. She went on to extend to take the lead after she scored a three-pointer.

**Grace Baalman** went on a point-producing terror for Calhoun, bringing in eight points before the final buzzer, taking the lead for her team.

While Emma Baalman was assisting the Warriors, Greeling brought in one more two-point basket for Southwestern.





At half, the Calhoun Lady Warriors continued to lead the Southwestern Piasa Birds **26-23**.

The third period was another active eight minutes for Calhoun. After Greeling tied the score for Southwestern again at 26-26 with a three-pointer, senior **Emma Baalman** locked down two more from free throws. After Grace Baalman knocked in four points from two shots, the score was at 32-26 in their Calhoun's favor.

Greeling kicked off Southwestern's push after landing a free throw point. Her teammate junior **Jenna Moore** locked down a three-pointer to bring the score to 32-30.

After another basket was scored by Klocke for Calhoun, Laubscher earned two from free throws for Southwestern.

Shortly after Greeling nabbed her second three-point basket of the period, Klocke rebuttled with another basket. The push was close, but not close enough for Southwestern to take the lead. Behind by one, Southwestern was losing against Calhoun with a score of 36-35 at the end of the third.

After meeting with their coaches, it seem that something truly overcame the Piasa Birds in the fourth. Their offense finally came alive, showing off the talent that brought them into the championship game in the first place.

Two free throws by senior **Kelsey Rhoades** brought the Piasa Birds' score to 37. After a rebuttal by sophomore **Junie Zirkelbach**, the score was gridlocked at 37-37.



After nailing a three-pointer, Moore began her team's push towards victory, but not before C. Holland could earn two more for Calhoun.

Greeling locked down two more for the Birds and a free-throw shot by Laubscher brought the score to 43-39 in Southwestern's favor.

Calhoun's Emma Baalman earned two successful points from free throw opportunities and then went on to score another basket for the team to tie the score at 43. Unfortunately, this was the last time that could tie the game.

After one more free throw from Laubscher, Greeling brought in three more for the Piasa Birds from a basket and one free throw point herself.

A series of fouls by Calhoun allowed Moore to bring in two free points to further her team's lead to 49-43. A foul committed on Rhoades earned them yet another point to raise their score to 50.

**Calhoun junior Jordan Holland scored her team the last standard goal of the game. Emma Baalman landed the last free point before three more free points were given to Southwestern's Greeling and Green. The Southwestern Piasa Birds had defeated the Calhoun Warriors 53-46 at the final buzzer in a great comeback victory.**