

McGivney Catholic's first boys varsity basketball win provides boost to team

by Brent Feeney, Sports Writer
January 9 2017 3:07 PM



GLEN CARBON – McGivney Catholic is just in its fifth year of operation since opening in the fall of 2012. Needless to say, the school is still experiencing its share of firsts.

Back in the spring of 2015, the Griffins – who had yet to graduate a class at the time – won the IHSA Bass Fishing Championship title. This year, the Griffins moved up to the varsity level with both its boys' and girls' basketball teams.

McGivney's boys had a very good season in 2015-16 at the junior varsity level, but when this season got under way, the Griffins experienced some growing pains similar to a major-league expansion team, dropping their first 12 games.

That changed recently as McGivney defeated Ramsey 47-33 in the seventh-place game of the Vandalia Holiday Tournament. The game was the first-ever win for McGivney at the boys varsity basketball level.

“It was great for the boys to get that first win,” said **Griffin coach Rich Beyers**. “It's not easy going to practice and wondering if you'll ever win a game; I was so happy for the boys getting that win.

“One thing about the kids – they work really hard and keep getting better. We may not be as talented as other teams, but our kids are working hard and learning the game.”

The Griffins start three freshmen and two juniors; their leading scorer is Dan Jones at 8.9 points per game, followed by Logan Shumate at 8.1 PPG and Alex Loeffler at 6.6 PPG. Shumate is averaging 7.2 rebounds per game, followed by Loeffler at 5.9 RPG and Eli Skubish at 2.3 RPG.

“There are a lot of positives here,” Beyers said. “The negatives are that we're still learning how to play the game; a lot of schools have kids who start learning to play when they're in fifth or sixth grade. We're still learning how to see the floor and see what options we have. Sometimes we have some tunnel vision from that aspect; we'll see just the rim instead of the floor.

“We are working hard and learning about the game. Mistakes are going to happen; what we want to do is limit our unforced errors. We're going to keep pushing and keep working hard no matter what.”

One of the things McGivney hopes to do is establish what the program will be about and what they want future Griffin players to expect when they join the team. “There's a lot to look forward to for the future,” Beyers said.