



# Redbirds run past Ritenour in Tipoff Classic game

by Brent Feeney, Sports Writer  
November 23 2017 9:47 AM







ALTON – Wednesd



ay night's Alton Tipoff Classic tournament game between the host Redbirds and Ritenour was an up-and-down, physical affair from the start.

In the end, though, the Redbirds used a third-quarter spurt that opened up enough of a lead to help give them an 85-69 win at the Redbird Nest to go to 2-0 on the season and in the tournament with two games to go.

In other games Wednesday, Carnahan of south St. Louis city defeated Belleville Althoff 56-51, O'Fallon topped Riverview Gardens 61-33 and St. Mary's of South St. Louis city got past Carbondale 70-62.

“We're pleased” with the win, said Redbird coach Eric Smith. “That's not necessarily like a team we'll face in our (Southwestern) conference (the Huskies play in the Suburban North Conference in north St. Louis County); they've got good length and their kids competed; it's impressive what they did – they're competitive and they didn't back down and they played hard.”

It was a fast-moving, physical game “for awhile,” Smith said. “It was what we hoped, being up-and-down, a little bit of a fast pace to it; we felt that kind of negated a little bit

their physical play – we wanted to get them up-and-down the floor a little bit; it had a little pace to it – that was nice.

Alton jumped out to an early lead on the Huskies, scoring the first seven points of the game before Ritenour got on the board, but from there, the pace of the game quickened dramatically and the Huskies kept chipping away at the Redbirds, who came up with big score after big score to hold off Ritenour's challenges.

The fast, up-and-down pace is how the Redbirds like to play. “Generally, that's how we like to do things,” Smith said. “We scouted them a little bit; that's kind of their MO too; it was expected and it's kind of nice for us to have someone we can run up-and-down the floor with.”

Four Redbird players were in double figures on the night, led by Malik Smith with 22 points and Kevin Caldwell with 20 points; Darrell Smith had 17 points and Josh Rivers had 12 points on the night. Ritenour was led by Jonathan Bishop's 15 points.

The Redbirds take on Southwestern Conference rival O'Fallon at 7:30 p.m. Friday; the finals are set for Friday, with the fourth-place team in each group clashing at 3 p.m., the third-place teams meeting at 4:30 p.m., the second-place teams playing for third at 6 p. m. and the first-place teams going up against each other for the championship at 7:30 p. m. before the Redbirds go up against Granite City at 3:30 p.m. Dec. 2 at SIU-Edwardsville's SWC at the E festival.





