



# **Explorers get past upset-minded Mascoutah and reach regional championship**

by John Hough, Sports Writer  
February 28 2018 12:30 AM



WATERLOO - A ten-day layoff before the playoffs is never ideal.

Then mix in a hungry opponent that oh, by the way, is gunning to end your perfect season.

The undefeated Marquette Catholic Explorers faced the upset-minded Mascoutah Indians and met different kinds of adversity. However, like all great teams, they found a way to persevere and earned a 54-43 victory in the Class 3A Waterloo Regional Semifinals on Tuesday night.

The Explorers improve to 29-0 and will play Civic Memorial or Columbia at 7 p.m. on Friday.

“I don’t think got the idea that everybody is going to come for them. You’ve a really good season, maybe some people respect what you’ve done, maybe some people don’t, but you’re gonna get a lot of teams best punches right now,” Marquette head coach Steve Medford said.

Jake Hall and Sammy Green tallied 16 points each for the Explorers. Green scored 14 of his 16 in the second half. Forward, Nick Hemann added 13.

“We weren’t shooting the ball. If we can get, some paint touches that’s kind of what we’ve done all year long. We trust a lot,” Medford said. “We tend to pound it down to them if it’s a tie ball game.”

Tyler Jowett’s 11 points led Mascoutah. Jaydon Stewart followed with nine, and Malik Green chipped in eight.

The Indians got out to a hot start leading 9-2, but the Explorers weathered the storm and trailed 11-10 heading into the second quarter. From there on out it would be a reasonably even ballgame.

Marquette actually was on a 20-9 run and led 22-18, but Mascoutah managed to tie things up at 22 all heading into halftime.



The third quarter was a test for the Explorers as Green picked up two quick fouls, which gave him four for the game at the time. In came reserve guard Chris Hartrich.

Despite Green's next-level point guard mechanics, Marquette was doing fine without him and went on a 10-0 run to go up 39-31. During that sequence, senior leader Regan Snider rolled one of his ankles, and that called for Jayce Maag to take his place.

For Medford, those two players made the most significant difference.

“We played a little Roulette with Sammy in that third quarter and sometimes call go your way or don’t go your way. That call went against us and he got his fourth foul,” Medford said. “With Jayce Maag and Chris Hartrich stepping in playing those six minutes and doing some good things with Regan and Sammy going out, I thought that was the difference in the game.

Shawn Wienstroer connected on a jumper and then a three-pointer to reduce the Marquette lead to 39-36 with just over six minutes to play in the game.

Green came back into the game shortly after and with less than four minutes left the senior point-guard asserted his leadership. He was sent to the free-throw line six times and nailed all of his attempts. Green would seemingly direct the Explorers the rest of the way as he ended up scoring 11 straight points to help seal the victory.

For Medford, this wasn’t a great game for his team by any sense of the word, but he is happy that they can use this as a wake-up call going forward in the playoffs.

“I thought they played harder than us. I haven’t said that all year long,” Medford said. “I thought had a little more effort and that’s sad to say. I think it’s a good thing we got punched in the face a little bit. This will wake them up a little bit.”

“We had to knock a little rust off, but if you think about it, we didn’t play really good defense. I didn’t think we executed. I didn’t think we got the 50-50 balls and we still win by 11.”













