

Marquette Catholic, Nashville face each other in DuQuoin Sectional Final

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DU QUOIN – Two of Metro-East's best small school powers collide on Friday night when Marquette Catholic (30-3) goes up against Nashville (33-2) in the final of the IHSA Class 2A Du Quoin sectional final at Anders Gym. The tip-off is set for 7 p.m.

The Hornets are looking to get back to the Final Four for the first time since 2014 when they lost the final to Bloomington Central Catholic 76-62 in triple overtime. Nashville has won a championship previously, taking the Class A title in 1978.

The Explorers are looking to advance to the super-sectional for the second time in the last three years. Marquette lost to Mt. Carmel 61-40 in 2017.

Marquette has won two in-season tournaments, having won the Metro-East Lutheran Turkey Tip-Off Classic and the Columbia-Freeburg Holiday Tournament. Their only losses have come to Madison, Breese Mater Dei, and Murphysboro in the Sparta Mid-Winter Classic.

Seniors Chris Hartrich and Nick Hemann have led the Explorers most of the way, with Hemann averaging 11.7 points-per-game in statistics from the St. Louis Post-Dispatch, while Hartrich has averaged 11.3 points-per-game. Hemann was also named the MVP of the Turkey Tip-Off Classic.

Brett Terry and Spencer Cox also play key roles for Marquette. Cox's scoring average is 7.4 points-per-game, while Terry averages 7.2. And don't overlook players such as Nate Hall, Cortez Harris, and Jack Rice. All three have contributed to the Explorers, with Rice averaging 6.6 points-per-game, Harris 5.6 and Hall 5.1.

The Hornets' only two losses came back-to-back, losing the championship game of the Breese Mater Dei Holiday Tournament to Briarcrest Christian of Eads, Tenn., outside of Memphis, and to Pinckneyville. Nashville won the Trenton Wesclin Thanksgiving Tournament at the beginning of the season.

Carson Parker leads the Hornets with a scoring average of 15.2 points-per-game, while Bryce Bultman is right behind with 14.6 points-per-game. Terry Pelczynski, Tristen Hercules and Matt Anderson round out a good starting five, with Anderson averaging 6.4 points-per-game, Pelczynski 5.9 and Hercules 5.1.

Kelton Harre and Tanner Bergmann have also contributed to Nashville's success, with Harre averaging 5.0 points, and Bergmann 4.4.

The Marquette-Nashville winner will play against the Vandalia sectional winner, either Fairfield or Teutopolis, in the super-sectional at SIU Arena in Carbondale on Tuesday, Mar. 5. The winner advances to the state finals Mar.8-9 at Carver Arena in Peoria.