

Alton Middle School Eighth Grade Girls Basketball Team Defeats Cahokia Wirth in IESA Sectional, Qualifies For State

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BETHALTO - The seventh-grade girls basketball team at Alton Middle School will be playing on Thursday night in Bolingbrook for their second consecutive Illinois Elementary School Association state title, and to extend their winning streak to 50 games in a row.

This weekend, the seventh-grade team will have a little company, albeit in another part of the state.

The eighth-grade Junior Redbirds will be playing in the IESA Class 4A state tournament this weekend, thanks to a 33-11 win over Cahokia Wirth in the sectional game played Wednesday evening at Trimpe Middle School in Bethalto.

The eighth-grade team improved their record to 22-1 with the sectional win, and will be looking to join their seventh-grade counterparts in bringing a championship back to Alton.

The eighth grade Junior Redbirds hosted their regional last week, drawing a bye into the semifinals as the number one seed. In a play-in game Dec. 3, Jersey defeated Edwardsville 32-28, and then in the semifinals later that evening, Alton won over Jersey 59-7, while Edwardsville Liberty won over Trimpe 28-13. In the final, played Dec. 5, the Junior Redbirds defeated Trimpe 48-20 to advance to the sectional.

In the regional played at East St. Louis Clark, the top-seeded hosts eliminated Granite City Coolidge 44-4 in the first semifinal played Dec, 5, and in the second semifinal, it was Wirth winning over East St. Louis Lincoln 33-18. In the final, played Dec. 6, Wirth won over Clark 33-6 to move on to Wednesday's sectional.

Alton will play in the state quarterfinals on Saturday morning at Macon Meridian High School, with the Junior Redbirds going up against Gwendolyn Brooks Middle School of Harvey in the first quarterfinal, with the tip-off coming at 10 a.m. Should the Junior Redbirds win, they'll play in the semifinals later that day, going against the winner of Urbana Middle School and Mokena, with the tip coming at 5 p.m. The final is set for Thursday, Dec. 19 at 7:30 p.m.