



CM Basketball Girls Post 24 Wins, Are Tom Lane State Farm Insurance Athletes Of The Month

by Colin Feeney, Contributing Sports Writer
February 1 2022 1:48 PM



BETHALTO - The girls' basketball team at Civic Memorial High School is something special.

The Eagles are enjoying a great season so far, with its biggest highlight to date coming on Jan 22, when the Eagles defeated a previously undefeated Okawville side 53-47 in the final of the 25th Highland Invitational Tournament. CM stands 24-3 and is poised to make a big run in the IHSA Class 3A playoffs in February and possibly March. CM defeated Pleasant Plains 48-30 Monday at Pleasant Plains.

Junior Aubree Wallace was named the tournament's Most Valuable Player for her solid play in CM's journey to the title, while fellow junior Olivia Durbin was also named to the All-Tournament first team and senior Kelbie Zupan was selected for the second team.

For their efforts on and off the court this season, the entire Eagles girls basketball team has been selected the Tom Lane State Farm Female Athletes of the Month for Civic Memorial. The CM girls exemplify what team basketball is all about under head coach Mike Arbuthnot.

Arbuthnot is ecstatic about the team, their hard work, and their achievements thus far.

"I'm very proud of the kids," Arbuthnot said in an interview after the Okawville win. "They've been working hard all season and it's nice to see all that hard work pay off."

The Eagles won their first 13 games of the season before losing to Whitfield of west St. Louis County in the quarterfinals of the Visitation Christmas Tournament on Dec. 26. The Eagles also lost to Edwardsville in the fifth-place semifinals before winning the seventh-place game over the host Vivettes in their initial appearance in one of the St. Louis area's best holiday tournaments of any kind.

CM's only other losses occurred on Jan. 8 at Breese Central and Saturday to Quincy Notre Dame.

In recent statistics, Zupan is currently leading the Eagles in scoring with an average of 13.1 points per game, with Durbin right behind at 13.0 PPG and Wallace averaging 10.5 PPG. Zupan is all over the floor, performing as a defender and rebounder, but each of the girls plays in that way, on both sides of the court. Durbin is also a big presence under the boards with an average of 5.4 rebounds per game, with Zupan averaging 4.6 RPG and sophomore Avari Combes collecting 3.8 RPG. Juniors Maya Tuckson and Hannah Meiser have also made big contributions to the CM cause.

Also making contributions to the team are seniors Madaline Brueckner and Emily Williams, sophomores Olivia Goodman and Meredith Schaaf, and freshmen Meredith Brueckner, Isabella Thein and Reegan Twentte. Aubree Voyles and Brooke Harris have also played for the Eagles, with senior Claire Christeson also on the roster.

The Eagles will be hosting an IHSA Class 3A regional in February, with Cahokia, East St. Louis, Highland, Jersey, Mascoutah, Taylorville, CM, and Waterloo in the mix, with Triad hosting the other regional. The site for the sectional has yet to be announced, with the Super Sectional game at Highland. The state finals in all four classes will return to Redbird Arena at Illinois State University in Bloomington-Normal Mar. 3-5.

The Eagles look to make a successful stretch run and carry the momentum into the playoffs, with a possible long run into the postseason in store.

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