

# CM Wins Second Postseason OT game In Sectional Championships Over Mattoon

by Bradley Piros, Reporter  
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BETHALTO – For the second time this postseason, a Civic Memorial girls basketball game went into overtime. The first was Feb. 18 against East St. Louis when the Eagles were crowned Regional Champions, and again last night (Feb. 25) when CM outscored the Mattoon Green Wave 72-68 to become Sectional Champions.

With the win, the Eagles move to 31-4 and get to continue their dramatic, yet entertaining, postseason run.

CM got off to a hot start in the first quarter, thanks to two three-pointers from junior guard Olivia Durbin. They led 12-10 at the end of the first quarter, but Mattoon battled back and led 25-24 at halftime.

CM was trailing by eight at the half against East St. Louis, so they've done it before. The Eagles have a come-from-behind mentality and certainly never gave up. Mattoon kept their foot on the gas however and after three quarters they still led by a single point 43-42.

The fourth quarter is when things really got interesting. The game went back and forth with the two teams exchanging the lead a few times. The Eagles took a huge blow when senior guard Kelbie Zupan fouled out with two minutes to go. But CM held on.

After 32 minutes the teams were deadlocked at 60 and it needed overtime to separate them.

The Eagles jumped out to a two-possession lead at 69-65, but senior Mallory Ramage drained a three for Mattoon and brought it back within one. CM led 69-68 with 14 seconds remaining and counted on junior guard Aubree Wallace to make her free throws, which she did. She scored five in OT and Durbin scored two. Eventually, the Eagles outscored Mattoon 12-6 in OT. Ramage scored all six for Mattoon.

For the third straight game now, Durbin led the Eagles in points. She put up 26 points and made 6 three-pointers against Mattoon. In the past four postseason games, she has combined for 90 points, a blistering average of 22.5 points per game.

"I tell you what, It's nice to have her on our club. When she gets her feet set, she's got so much confidence. You want it in her hands because you know she's going to knock it down," CM head coach Mike Arbuthnot said after the game about Durbin.

She was only one of three players to score in double digits. Zupan had herself a night scoring 20 points despite fouling out. She could only look on from the bench as her team fought for the win in OT.

When asked about Kelbie not being able to play in OT, Arbuthnot said "it was tough."

The other player in double digits was Wallace who scored 13, nine of which came from the free-throw line. She went 9-10 from the line overall and made them when it mattered most.

The Green Wave gave it everything they had, with three of their players scoring in double digits. Leading the way was Loyola University Chicago commit Mallory Ramage with 26, matching Durbin's performance. Ramage had a relatively quiet first half with only five points, but she took over the game in the second half and was a big reason why her team kept it close. Her teammate Chloe Pruitt put in 19 and Faith Niebrugge scored 12 for Mattoon.

This game was played at such a high intensity, in front of yet another sold-out gym at Civic Memorial. It's a huge advantage to host an entire sectional and an honor to go on and win the thing in front of their home fans.

Arbuthnot was a little lost for words when asked about the crowd's energy throughout the game.

"WOW. Having a home Sectional Final is kind of a big deal and I'm just happy that we're able to send everybody home happy." He jokingly said that the bars around town are sure to make a lot of money tonight.

It's a dream postseason and one that gets to continue on into the Super-Sectional game. The Eagles will head to Highland on Monday (Feb. 28) to take on Mahomet-Seymour at 7 p.m. The Bulldogs are 29-4 and beat Lincoln 52-43 in their Sectional Championship.

While they won't get to play in front of a home crowd again, CM's postseason run isn't quite over yet.