

Oller, Harkins Guide Father McGivney's Girls Basketball Team To Win Over Maryville Christian

by Colin Feeney, Contributing Sports Writer
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MARYVILLE - Sami Oller led Father McGivney Catholic's girls' basketball team with 23 points, while Mary Harkins added 12 points as the Griffins won their Gateway Metro Conference opener Monday night at Maryville Christian 62-11.

It was a wire-to-wire win for McGivney, who was able to play well in all facets of the game, especially in its transition game.

"The girls came out quick in the first quarter, built a nice lead," said McGivney head coach Jeff Oller, "and did a really good job in transition tonight."

It's the first conference win of the season, of course, for the Griffins, and conference games are always important for all the schools involved. Nevertheless, it was still a good thing to get a win in the first GMC game.

"It's great to start off with a conference win," Oller said. "We know we've got some tough games ahead, so it's nice, to begin with, a conference win and build some momentum."

The Lions are playing in their first year in the Illinois High School Association, and Oller feels that the school is heading in the right direction in making the transition to the IHSA.

"Maryville's a new program and in their first year in the IHSA," Oller said, "and they're doing a great job in building their program."

Although it's early in the season, the main goal right now for the Griffins is a simple one indeed - get better with each passing game.



"We're just hoping to get better each game," Oller said. "We played in the Columbia tournament in the first week, and we had some good games there. We were better by the end of the tournament."

The Griffins held leads of 19-2, 35-6, and 51-9 after the first three quarters, outscoring the Lions in the fourth quarter 12-2 to take the win.

To go along with Oller's 23 points and Harkins' 12 points, Emily Johnson scored eight points for McGivney, while Alexis Bond, Julia Stobie, and Izzie Vernarsky all had four points apiece and both Devin Ellis and Jada Zumwalt each scored two points.

Maryville is now 0-3 on the season, while the Griffins go to 3-1 and will have its home opener on Thursday against Centralia Christ Our Rock Lutheran in another key

conference tilt. The tip-off is set for 7:30 p.m. Meanwhile, the Lions play at East Alton-Wood River Saturday afternoon at 1:30 p.m., then host Marquette Catholic next Monday evening at 7:30 p.m.

"We hope we can come out and compete," Oller said about the Griffins' upcoming game against the Silver Stallions. "We had a close game against them in the regional semifinals last year, so we have to come out and compete in a conference game."





[Dan Brannan also contributed to this story.](#)