



Father McGivney Forward Jackson Rodgers Scores 18 Points In Griffins' Contest, Is A Byron, Carlson, Petri And Kalb Male Athlete Of The Month

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GLEN CARBON - Jackson Rodgers, a senior forward for the boys' basketball team at Father McGivney Catholic High School, had a solid performance in the Griffins' home opener on Nov. 29, leading the Griffins with 18 points in a 53-46 loss to New Athens in the team's home opener.



Rodgers, overall, is off to a great start, averaging 16.3 points and 0.5 rebounds per game, as is considered one of the team's top seniors on a veteran-laden team that is hoping to do well in the 2022-23 season. The Griffins started out 3-1, finishing second in the Mulberry Grove Thanksgiving tournament, losing to St. Elmo in the final, going into the game against the Yellowjackets.

For all of his efforts, both on and off the court, Rodgers has been named a Byron, Carlson, Petri and Kalb Law Firm male Athlete of the Month for Father McGivney.

Rodgers, who plays for head coach Todd Strong, felt that although the Griffins did some good things during the game, the team didn't play all that well against New Athens in their loss.

"You know, we just got outworked," Rodgers said during a postgame interview. "Second chance opportunities, we've got to limit them to one shot, we've got to stop guys from getting to the lane and it all comes down to this stuff that isn't eye-popping on the stat sheet, but valuable to winning the game."

The Yellowjackets were able to penetrate into the lane regularly as the game went on and also had a lot of good looks at the basket, where they were able to hit their shots regularly.

"You can attribute that to lack of communication, heavy legs," Rodgers said. "We came in coming off a successful and a long week last week, trying to get out here and bounce back. This season's going to be a grind, but we've just got to do some soul-searching and figure out how to right the ship."

The good thing is that it's still very early in the season and there's plenty of time to work on things in practice and improve as the season goes along.

"Absolutely," Rodgers said. "You want to lose these games in November and December, rather than February and March. So, it'll definitely be a learning experience and we'll come back Friday against (Trenton) Wesclin and see if we can apply some of that work that we put in all the time, but we've just got to put in more."

As one of the seniors on the team, Rodgers described his role and job on the team in one word.

"I have to come out and be consistent every day," Rodgers said. "In the past, I have been looked to as our scoring option. I try and do everything that I can, whether that's 10

points, 10 boards, get five assists, just overall try to make my teammates around me work while bringing energy to the game every night."

Rodgers' goals for himself and his team are varied and very achievable as well.

"We've hammered 'em down before the season even started," Rodger said. "We want to get 20 wins and we want to get to a regional final, that's it. We have the guys around us, we're four-year players and we think we can do it this year."

With some work, don't count out McGivney on becoming one of the better teams in the area this season.

"We have all the talent in the world, we just need to get those intangibles, the heart, and the hustle and we can't get outworked," he said. "We can't get outworked."