

St. Francis-Holy Ghost Eighth-Grade Girls Make History - Capture Third In IESA State Girls Basketball Tourney

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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JERSEYVILLE - The St. Francis-Holy Ghost eighth-grade girl's basketball team made history this season with its 28-24 win over Ottawa Marquette in the Illinois Elementary School Association (IESA) Class 1A third-place game Thursday night. The IESA third-place victory was St. Francis-Holy Ghost's top finish since 2006. Sigel St. Michael's captured the state championship in 1A 30-22 over Lincoln West/Lincoln Broadwell.

Mary Jones led the scoring with eight points while Vanessa Lorton added seven. Neely Goetten and Maleah Derrick scored six points each.

“We had a fantastic group of girls,” St. Francis-Holy Ghost head coach Kelly Goetten said. “This was our highest finish other than the 2006 seventh-grade team that placed runner-up in 2006. Every single girl on our team was important all season. It is so cool to have such a well-rounded team.”

Derrick was captain and was “a phenomenal leader” through the season, Coach Goetten said. “She always keeps her head in the game and I want to compliment her about the leadership.”

Coach Goetten also thanked St. Francis/Holy Ghost School's support group and the entire Jerseyville community for their support on their state-run.

“I am so proud of these girls and the whole community,” she added. “I haven’t seen signs like this across town in quite some time. The majority of these girls will play basketball in high school. I can’t wait to see how they do in high school. Jersey should have some good girls' basketball teams in the future.”