

# Griffins' Sami Oller Returns With High Basketball Expectations, Is A Byron, Carlson, Petri and Kalb Female Athlete of Month

by Colin Feeney, Contributing Sports Writer  
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GLEN CARBON - Father McGivney Catholic forward/guard Sami Oller returns to her senior season as one of the most highly regarded area girls' basketball players.



Oller, a star in basketball, girls volleyball and track and field in the shot put and discus, will be one of the key components for the Griffins as the 2023-2024 season unfolds.

She is feeling very confident about how the season will go this year.

Last year was a very successful campaign for the Griffins, who went 29-4, but were upset in the IHSA Class 1A regional by Carlyle 52-46 at Metro-East Lutheran's Hooks Gym. The loss didn't dim anything from Oller's season, as she played brilliantly, averaging 14.5 points and 4.3 rebounds per game, shooting 59.6 percent from the field, 25.9 percent from behind the three-point line, and 71.2 percent from the free throw line, and also contributed 55 assists, 87 steals and 25 blocks.

McGivney is already off to a good start, having defeated Belleville East 57-47 in their opener at the Columbia Tip-Off Classic. Oller knows the team has worked hard in the off-season and preseason practice has gone well for the Griffins.

"We've been working really hard in practice and try to work together as a team and get better," Oller said in an interview this week after practice at McGivney.

The loss to the Indians in the regional final last season was a tough way to end the Griffins' season, but Oller and her teammates have pushed it aside and have indeed worked hard to get ready for the new season. There may be some unfinished business, but Oller and her teammates are feeling very confident about the new season.

"We are just trying to get better as a team and come back stronger than last season," she said.

Oller will be bringing much to the table for the Griffins in the new season. She can not only play with the best inside, but she is an outstanding shot from long range and can handle the ball.

"I definitely think I'm very versatile," Oller said, "with being able to play inside and out."

Oller added: "For myself, I want to be able to just push myself and be able to lead the team. I think we can go pretty far. That's an expectation and a goal we've been having since the summer for this season, because of our height and our versatility for everybody. We've been working towards that."

*Again congratulations to Oller, an outstanding student-athlete and a Byron, Carlson, Petri and Kalb Female Athlete of the Month for the Griffins.*