

# Top-Seeded Griffins Get By Beardstown - Set Up Semifinal Against Hosting Hawks

by Bradley Piros, Reporter  
January 24 2024 10:33 AM



CARROLLTON - While everyone else kicked off the 49th Annual Lady Hawk Invitational on Saturday, the Father McGivney Griffins got a few days extra rest.

McGivney earned the No. 1 seed in the tournament and a first-round bye. They opened the tourney on Tuesday night against the Beardstown Tigers and won 54-35.

"That something that the girls worked toward," McGivney head coach Jeff Oller said about obtaining the top spot. "Getting that respect from your colleagues and other teams in your area is special."

It would have been the Griffins' first game in a week if it wasn't for a sudden addition to the schedule.

"It was weird," Oller said on not playing Saturday with everyone else. "We added a game against Valmeyer last Thursday to get a bit of a tune up. Because we played last Tuesday and didn't want to sit for a whole week. I was glad they were able to come out ready to go."

The Griffins got out to a 6-2 lead Tuesday night starting with a three from Sabrina Ivnik and then a free throw and a basket from Sami Oller. The Tigers battled back to grab a brief 7-6 lead before McGivney closed the quarter on a nine-point run going ahead 15-7 after the first quarter.

McGivney opened the second quarter on a 12-3 run to boost its lead to 27-10. Beardstown still had some fight and cut the deficit to 30-20 at halftime.

"That was a tough matchup defensively to be honest," coach Oller said about the Tigers. "They're really good ball handlers, they're quick, they can shoot. But, I think we came out better in the second half getting the shooters and stopping the drive."

The Griffins outscored Beardstown 24-15 in the second half and held on for their fourth win in a row as they improved to 17-7.

Natalie Beck led McGivney with 17 points while Oller added 16. Ivnik scored eight, Jada Zumwalt had six, Mia Lieberman had five, and Emily Johnson had two.

"Offensively, we did a good job," coach Oller said. "It was balanced. We scored on the outside and the inside tonight which is what we always want."

McGivney moves on to the semifinals against the hosting Carrollton Hawks, [51-38 winners over Jerseyville](#), on Thursday, Jan. 25 at 6:30 p.m.