

# St. Mary's Catholic School Boys Make History, Prepare To Play In State Semifinals

by Dan Brannan, Content Director  
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ALTON - St. Mary's Catholic School's eighth-grade boys team is headed for the Southern Illinois Junior High School Athletic Association (SIJHSAA) state semifinals. The boys are 24-0 heading into a matchup at 6 p.m. on Thursday, Feb. 8, 2024, against St. Mary's Central City School. The tournament play is at Rend Lake Community College.

Our Lady of Mt. Carmel from Herrin meets St. Peter and Paul of Waterloo in the other state semifinal game at 7:15 p.m. The two winners play for the state title game on Saturday, Feb. 10, 2024.

St. Mary's Athletic Director Abbie Hough said the boys' journey this season has been "amazing."

"The boys' team is making history," she said. "This is only our second year participating in this state series and to make it this far is unbelievable. I am so proud of what they and the coaching staff have accomplished so far."

The St. Mary's boys head coach is Chris Jones. Hough said Coach Jones and staff have all done an incredible job with the boys this season.

The boys squad consists of the following team members:

Eighth Grade

Connor Cochran

David Haegele

Jensen Janek

Ryan Joehl

Cam Jones

Chase Jones

Lucas Joyce

Sam Jun

Mason Widman

Seventh Grade

James Fischer

Tucker Hamilton

Park Hough

Sam Johnson

Caden Roth

Brock Woodward

Coach Hough said he believes the key to the boys' success is they play so well together as a team.

"They are a great group of boys," he said. "They have a love of basketball. They are only going to get better as they continue. They are really fun to watch. The boys also work very hard in practice and in the games."

*More later in the week about the boys' success and a visit on Our Daily Show! on Friday with host CJ Nasello.*



