

Tigerettes Win Silver Ball for Second Time in Three Years

Written by Mark Darnell
Tuesday, March 12, 2013



The Macon County Tigerettes capture the Silver Ball in AA Girls Basketball for the second time in three years. They advanced by defeating Covington and Christian Academy of Knoxville before falling to defending state champion Christ Presbyterian Academy.

On Thursday March 7th Macon opened the state tournament against Covington. The Lady Chargers were touted as the bigger, more athletic, and favored team. However, Macon was on a mission.

In the first period MCHS pushed the tempo. It became readily apparent that these Tigerettes were just as quick and could force the action and they pushed the lead to 11 points three different times. Kailyn Brooks got in a bit of foul trouble in the first half but the Tigerettes grabbed the lead 34-25 at the half.

Covington came out to push the action in the second half. After a slow cold start which saw the lead start to disappear, the Tigerettes once again increase their lead and end third period up 50-38. It appeared that the Tigerettes got a little tentative and the Lady Chargers got a lot more aggressive in the fourth period. Covington would cut the lead to two with 1:27 to go but Macon would make just enough free throws to finish the game on top 65-63 and would advance.

Scoring was: Kelsey Gregory 7, Kailyn Brooks 11, Terra Pryor 21, Briley Driver 14, and Leah Anderson 12. Reese Shrum and Whitney Wilburn would play but not score in the game.

On Friday MCHS met Christian Academy of Knoxville in the semi-finals. The Lady Warriors featured a young team, starting a freshman, two sophomores, one junior, and a six foot seven sophomore center.

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It took some time for the Tigerettes to find their rhythm. The plan for CAK was to push a zone defense out to combat the Tigerette shooting attack. With Gregory in some foul trouble the Tigerettes trailed 7-10 after one. In the second period Senior Terra Pryor came alive. Scoring on four possessions with assists from Gregory and Brooks, Macon built a 22-17 lead. Macon finished the half on top 26-23. In a repeat of the previous day, Macon starts the second half cold and slow. The Lady Warriors hit back-to-back three pointers to take the lead 31-28. Both teams take and retake the lead and at the end of three Macon trailed 39-42. Back-to-back three pointers by Brooks and Gregory made the score 45-43 with 5:53 to go. With some timely rebounding and by converting 9 of 14 free throws down the stretch, Macon was able to hold on and capture the win by a final of 64-54.

Scoring was: Gregory 14, Brooks 18, Pryor 21, Driver 3, and Anderson 8. Reese Shrum played but did not score.

With the win the Tigerettes would face the CPA Lady Lions in a rematch of the Region 5AA finals. Macon won that contest 47-33. This would be the fifth meeting of these two teams in past four years with each team beating the other two times.

Macon started the game by loosely doubling both the CPA post players. Both teams were feeling the strain of the game and after falling behind, Macon started to press. By increasing the pressure MCHS had the lead 17-15 after one. Macon got hot and went on a little streak to end the first half. With Wilburn making the last basket they went into the locker room leading 35-26. Both teams came out in the third and you could just feel that CPA was starting to push the action. However, with Brooks picking up her 9th and 10th assist (she finished with a double double), Macon led 35-26 going into the final quarter. These Tigerettes had been hot and making plays all tournament. Unfortunately they all went stone cold at the most inopportune time. The Tigerettes go scoreless on their first five possessions of the quarter and CPA scores on their first five to take the lead 47-45. It takes Macon almost two minutes to score and tie the game 47 all. CPA had the ball with 1:15 and wanted to hold for the last shot. With :14 seconds to go CPA inbounded the ball and with time expiring Freshman Adela Franco attempted her only shot of the game, at the buzzer. CPA hits the bucket and captures its second straight title by a final of 52-49.

Scoring was: Gregory 13, Brooks 10, Pryor 13, Driver 5, Anderson 6, and Wilburn 2.

The Tigerettes finish as the Runner-Up in AA Girls Basketball. Named to the AA All-Tournament

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team were Gregory, Brooks, Pryor, and Anderson. These young ladies should be congratulated on a terrific season and some exciting basketball. We say goodbye to Seniors Kelsey Gregory, Kailyn Brooks, Terra Pryor, and Whitney Wilburn and wish them well.

Photo by Julie Collins