

## The Road to Glory: Tigerettes Advance to State Tournament

Written by Mark Darnell  
Tuesday, March 5, 2013

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The Macon County High School Tigerettes advanced to the State Tournament by defeating Creekwood on Saturday evening. It is the second state appearance for this team in the past three years.

By winning Region 5AA, Macon County won the right to host a game in the Sub-State round of the TSSAA Tournament. Creekwood made an appearance in the final AP girls basketball top ten poll and lost a narrow contest to Region 4AA champ Page. Coach Beam indicated that their star, Senior Rachel Bell, might be one of the best girls' players that Macon had seen to date.

With a rambunctious crowd of between 1,800 and 2,000 fans, many crowded into the gym a full hour before tip-off for a seat. The Lady Red Hawks won the tip, but that is about the last thing they would control in the next hour and a half. The Tigerettes opened in a man-to-man defense with Driver drawing the task of guarding Bell. Creekwood wasn't able to convert outside chances and Macon was, as four of the five Macon starters scored in the first period. After one Macon led 12-8.

With a player like Bell, you cannot stop her, only slow her down. That is just what Coach Beam and these girls did. In the second quarter, the Tigerettes seemed to impose their will on the Lady Red Hawks. When they wanted to run, they did. When they wanted to run half-court offense, they did. When they wanted to make a run, they did. Brooks and Anderson had some very timely baskets. With a Macon lead of 17, Whites Creek scored five points in the last minute of the half to close the gap to trail 17-29 at the half.

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In the third quarter, Macon kept their foot on the gas. All five starters kept in the flow of the game by scoring in the period. Gregory, Pryor, and Driver hit some key 3 point shots in the quarter and Pryor and Driver once again teamed up to slow down Bell. Usually one player cannot beat you, and Creekwood didn't have anyone else to step-up when Bell was shut down. After three Macon led 44-31.

In the final period the Tigerettes would keep their focus on advancing with the win. Bell missed five of her six shots in the final quarter and the Lady Red Hawks were forced to foul early in the period. Even though the Tigerettes missed the front end of two one-and-one opportunities, they still shot nine of twelve from the charity strip to seal the victory. Coach Beam was able to get all his players into the game as the Macon faithful saluted the Tigerettes as they post a 62-48 victory.

Scoring was: Kelsey Gregory 9, Kailyn Brooks 16, Terra Pryor 12, Briley Driver 9, Leah Anderson 14, and Cassidy Brooks 2. Reese Shrum, Whitney Wilburn, Lyndsey Belton, Marisa Owens, and Jade Ellis all played but did not score. The Tigerettes shoot 8 of 20 from behind the arc and 22 of 43 from the field overall. They made 10 of 14 free throws.

The bracket draw for the State Tournament was held on the 3rd in Murfreesboro. The Tigerettes will face Covington on Thursday the 7th at 4 p.m. at Murphy Stadium at MTSU. Come out and support the Tigerettes.

(Photos by Julie Collins)