



photo by Bruce Brierley

Sacred Heart players celebrate after winning the Section 8A tournament and advancing to the State tournament for the first time in program history

Eagles win thrilling double overtime game to advance to State

Bruce Brierley
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Sacred Heart boys defeated Northern Freeze 59-56 in the Section 8A semi-finals and Cass Lake-Bena in the championship game 69-67 to advance to the State tournament at Williams arena in Minneapolis.

Saturday (March 15) Sacred Heart fought back from an early deficit to earn a season sweep of the Freeze and advance to the championship game.

The Freeze went on a 9-0 after Sacred Heart started the scoring and held onto that lead through the first half leading 30-29 at the break. In the second half Sacred Heart came out with a stout defense keeping the Freeze from scoring for the first four minutes. They used that momentum and timely free throw shooting to build and maintain the lead through the end of the game and held off the Freeze's final

possession to win the game in regulation.

"I'm incredibly proud of the men's effort," says Sacred Heart Head Coach Destry Sterkel. "It isn't just tonight it's an everyday type of mentality. In the weight room, practice court and classroom this group fights and competes."

Sacred Heart was led by Ethan Arntson who scored 16 points, and Josiah Sundby with 15 points.

Sacred Heart would need that fight and compete in the Friday (March 18) showdown with the fifth ranked team in the state Cass Lake-Bena. After falling behind 10-4 Sacred Heart went on a 10-0 run as they finished the first half with a 30-19 lead. Cass Lake was not done. They came out strong in the second half pulling to within 30-25 and took a six point lead with seven minutes left in the game.

EAGLES

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Josiah Sundby (3) examines the Pathers defense before setting up the offense.

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(March 16 & 23, 2022)

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photo by Bruce Brierley

Sacred Heart students urge on the team during a time-out at Friday's championship game.



photo by Bruce Brierley

Kobe Tomkinson reacts after completing the age-old tradition of cutting down the net.

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Sacred Heart battled back and led by two as time wound down but the Panthers put back a rebound as time expired to knot the game and force OT.

It looked like Cass Lake might pull away scoring the first four points of overtime but Sacred Heart persevered and fought back to take the lead. Cass Lake forced another OT where Sacred Heart built a five point lead. The Panthers clawed back but

couldn't find the magic to complete the comeback.

"We punched our ticket to state and we are so proud of how these men fought," says Coach Sterkel. "They've done it all year and they did it again tonight! SOAR EAGLES!"

Kobe Tomkinson 27, Sam Gapp 14, and Ethan Arntson 13 points all hit double figures to pace the Eagles offense.

With the Eagles improve their program best record to 28-3 and advance

to the State tournament where they will battle with the number three tournament seed New Life Academy of Woodbury (26-3) on Wednesday evening (5:00 p.m.) at Williams Arena in Minneapolis.

Northern Freeze 56

Sacred Heart 59
Halftime: Northern Freeze 30, Sacred Heart 29

NF: Everett Nelson 14, Carson Moen 7, Caleb Bray 4, Jade Werb 2, Ryder Blazejewski 8, Austin Kautzman 8, Maximus Klopp 13

Sacred Heart: Sam Gapp 9, Josiah Sundby 15, Ethan Arntson

16, Landen Denney 8, Zach Martin 5, Kobe Tomkinson 6

Cass Lake-Bena 67

Sacred Heart 69, 2 OT

Halftime: Sacred Heart 30, Cass Lake-Bena 19

End of regulation: Sacred Heart 55, Cass Lake-Bena 55

End of first overtime: Sacred Heart 60, Cass Lake-Bena 60

Cass Lake-Bena - Kaiden Urrita 3, Kaydin Lee 29, Allen Fairbanks 13, TrayVaughn Lee 2, Leroy Staples-Fairbanks 17, Darrin Brown 1

Sacred Heart - Sam Gapp 14, Isaac Zavoral 2, Josiah Sundby 7, Ethan Arntson 13, Landen Denney 2, Zach Martin 4, Kobe Tomkinson 27



photo by Bruce Brierley

Sam Gapp finishes off a 12-5 run to put the Eagles up 51-50 with 2:20 remaining in the regulation.



photo by Bruce Brierley

Landen Denney gets a good jump to start the second overtime.



photo by Bruce Brierley

Coach Sterkel reacts after the final buzzer went off signaling the first Eagle boys section championship.



photo by Bruce Brierley

Isaac Zavoral shoots from the charity line in the first half against Cass Lake-Bena.



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A complete job description is available at redlakewatershed.org. Please submit a cover letter and resume to the Red Lake Watershed District, 1000 Pennington Avenue South, Thief River Falls, MN 56701, or email RLWD@redlakewatershed.org

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