

West Central Narrowly Clinches Victory Over Calhoun in IHSA Sectional Final

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
March 2 2024 9:46 AM





IHSA PLAYOFFS - SECTIONAL FINALS/SWEET SIXTEEN GAMES

CLASS 1A

WHITE HALL - Calhoun-Brussels stayed with West Central until the game's last play on Friday night at White Hall in the IHSA Class 1A Boys Sectional Championship, but the Cougars hung on for a 64-61 win to advance to the Elite Eight.

Calhoun head boys coach Casey Longnecker said if a few things had gone here or there it could have been a different ball game against West Central.

"I am extremely proud of the boys," Longnecker added. "We have an extremely tough bunch of freshmen through seniors. We went toe to toe with them, a 30-win, top-four team in the state. Our boys have nothing to be ashamed of. It was a great effort by the boys; they put on a great show."

Freshman phenom Lane Ellerman led the Warriors with 18 points, while Jack Zipprich and Conner Longnecker added 12 points, Chase Caselton had eight points and Jack Graner tallied six points. Cougars senior Zack Evans led all scorers with 33 points. Chance Little had 13 points and Mason Berry had 11 points.

West Central's head boys coach Ryan Sichting said to give credit to Calhoun, they played us tough tonight.

"Calhoun has to be one of the most improved teams in the state of Illinois, they kept fighting, it was a credit to them. Give credit to their coaching staff Coach Longnecker and Coach Graner. They are two of the best coaches in the state of Illinois in my opinion. I am proud of our seniors; proud of our role guys. It took everybody that stepped out on the floor to win tonight."





The game was tied 16-16 at the end of the first quarter and Calhoun led 33-31 at the half. Calhoun led 50-47 at the end of the third period. The score was 62-61 West Central late in the fourth quarter, then after two free throws, they went ahead 64-61. The Warriors had the ball with 15 seconds left, but could not convert a score.

The Warriors end their season at 23-12, while the Cougars improve to 33-3, and will meet Glasford Illini Bluffs, who won the Abington-Avon Sectional over Camp Point Central 47-35, in the Jacksonville Bowl Super-Sectional Monday at 7 p.m. The Tigers are now 33-3, while the Panthers end their season 25-9.

Calhoun 61 West Central 64

Calhoun 18. 15. 17 11. 61

W. Central 18 13. 16 17. 64

Scoring

Calhoun- Jack Graner 6, Chase Caselton 8, Jake Snyders 3, Jack Zipprich 12, Lane Eilerman 18, Jack Webster 2, Conner Longnecker 12.

West Central- Berry 11, Sievers 1, Evans 33, Little 13, Brown 6.

3 pointers

Calhoun 5 (Graner 2, Zipprich 2, Snyders 1)

West Central 2 (Evans 2)

Fouls

Calhoun 17

West Central 11

Calhoun finishes with record - 23-12.



