

“This Is Our Home Court” - CM Sinks Triad 47-46 On DJ Dutton's Buzzer Beater

by Nathan Tucker, Sports Reporter
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BETHALTO - Less than a week after they met in Litchfield, the Eagles of Civic Memorial and the Knights of Triad clashed again in Bethalto on Friday night.

Triad claimed a big 52-37 win in tournament action last weekend in Litchfield, but CM head coach Lee Green felt things could be different on the Eagles' home court.

In that loss, CM were down four heading into the final quarter, and Triad steamrolled them to a 15-point win. The Eagles avenged that defeat in dramatic fashion Saturday night, winning 47-46 on a buzzer-beating three-pointer by DJ Dutton.

“(Triad) is an incredibly good team, very well coached,” said Lee Green of his opponents Friday night.

Triad jumped out to a ten-point lead after the first quarter, thanks in large part to the offensive efforts of sophomore shooting guard Tyler Thompson, who had ten in the quarter on his way to a 19-point effort.

Slowly but surely, CM kept themselves in the contest by limiting Thompson and the rest of the Triad offense with stingy defensive play. Their hard-nosed defensive efforts were

embodied by sophomore Jack Piening, who took an inadvertent elbow while defending his man that knocked a tooth loose, only came out of the game briefly while he was patched up.

“I got an elbow to my tooth,” said Jack Piening after the game. “And (the tooth) was pushed back, (CM’s trainer) had to push it back into place, and then I put my Invisalign braces in to keep it straight.”

“Jack’s a tough kid, quarterback of the football team,” said Lee Green. “They fixed him up and he came back in and knocked down a big shot. Played some good defense too. Jack is a warrior.”

Piening’s big shot in the fourth quarter was followed by two threes from Adam Ogden, who had 15 points on the night. With time for just one CM possession remaining, the Eagles found themselves trailing by two.

CM senior guard DJ Dutton made one shot each quarter Friday night, but with time winding down, hadn’t made a basket in the fourth and final quarter. Dutton took the inbound pass and saw there was seven seconds left on the clock.

Instead of driving and looking for two to tie the game, Dutton dribbled to the right wing, faked to his right, pulled up, and drained a deep three-pointer as the final tenths of a second trickled off the clock in the main gym at Civic Memorial High School.

“DJ Dutton just made an incredible shot there,” said Lee Green. “I credit the kids and how hard they played. They really wanted it.”

Triad, and their traveling student section and vocal fanbase, were sent back down to Troy stunned. The CM students stormed the court and celebrated, as CM always loves a big win against “hated” rivals Triad.

“These kids, I wouldn’t want to coach anywhere else,” said an emotional Lee Green following the big win. “I love these kids. We just had to stay within ourselves, run our offense, and play our game, and we get one shot, and that’s it.”

Things are going CM’s way as of late, and their play over the last two weeks has seen them win six of their last seven. They play at Red Bud on Tuesday.

Triad drops their second in a row, and has a quick turnaround to host Waltonville Saturday afternoon to avoid three straight defeats.

