

Junior Saints basketball cruises to CISAA playoffs



By Jake Courtepatte

Momentum is often the x-factor in a team's postseason run, and the U16A St. Andrew's College Saints are hoping that rings true in CISAA basketball playoffs.

A final regular season record of 12 ? 3 is good for second-place in the top junior tier of independent schools, an impressive finish capped off by a four-game winning streak. That sets up a semifinal matchup with Crescent School, the third-place finishers who also hold an impressive record of 10 ? 4.

Despite the strong finish, the game should prove to be a challenge for the Saints: their last defeat came on Feb. 3, a three-point game at the hands of Crescent School. The Saints returned the favour with a three-point win of their own over Crescent two games later, a 39 ? 36 effort that saw Noah Hulton put up 12 points while Bilal Mahmood added ten of his own.

The championship tournament wraps up Saturday at the home of the highest remaining seed, which would be the 13 ? 1 St. Michael's College, who handed the Saints their other two regular season defeats.

The varsity Saints playoffs hopes were dashed on Friday in a 63 ? 55 loss to St. John's Kilmarnock, the second of three must-win games to end the season to stand a chance of making the postseason. They ended the season the following day with a lopsided loss to the top-seeded Ridley College.

In junior varsity, the Saints ended the season on a high note by squeaking out a 36 - 35 win over Lakefield College School on Saturday, finishing with a 5 ? 5 record for second in the Western conference and home court advantage to open the playoffs. They face De La Salle, the third-seeded team in the East, in league quarterfinals. The league's championship tournament is also set for Saturday at Toronto Montessori School in Richmond Hill.

For schedules, visit www.cisaa.ca.