COMMANDERS FALL IN SECTIONAL

LEBANON -- After a nip and tuck battle Chattanooga's Grace Academy salted away Monday's TSSAA sectional at the free throw line for a 55-49 win at Friendship Christian's Bay Family Sportsplex.

Grace had an eight-point lead with less than a minute remaining, but two turnovers and five quick points by the Commanders' Lee Maasen cut that to 52-49 with :29 seconds remaining. But Friendship missed two attempts to potentially tie or get within one point.

The Commanders led 15-4 late in the first quarter, but Grace cut into the deficit with five quick points and the game settled into a back-and-forth tempo until the midway point of the second. That's when the Golden Eagles forced three consecutive turnovers, turning each into a layup, and took their first lead with 3:52 left before halftime. That was part of a 17-2 run to end the first half, helping build a five-point lead.

Grace maintained momentum in the third quarter, building a 10-point lead. Mr. Basketball finalist Brandon Herman scored 10 of his game-high 25 points in the fourth quarter and was the only Golden Eagles player to make a field goal in the final period.

Post man Parker Teeter led the Commanders with 17 points while Hardie Sorrels added 11 and Cameron Hill nine points on three 3-pointers. FCS ends the season at 21-9 while Grace advances to the state tournament with a record of 22-7.

Grace Academy (55) — Rector 2, Terrell Church 12, Wilson 6, Nelson 8, Schley, Brandon Herman 25, Ruebusch, Carter, McMasters 2.
Friendship Christian (49) — Maasen 7, Parker Teeter 17, Hardie Sorrels 11, Hill 9, Wilson 2, Patterson 3.
3-point goals: Grace 3 (Church 2, Herman); Friendship 5 (Hill 3, Maasen, Patterson).