



You don't always measure victory by the results on a scoreboard.

For Casey Colter (**left**), victory comes with the end of 12 long weeks of chemotherapy, a positive report from the doctors and a return to the sidelines as head coach of the Mt. Juliet Christian Academy Lady Saints basketball team.

Following Monday's Senior Night 52-21 win over Providence Christian Academy of Murfreesboro, the team is 2-1 since he's been back on the bench.

"It's therapeutic for me to be here because I've missed them so much," Colter said Monday. "Listening to them on the radio is not like being here in person. I can see their faces when they've done something wrong and I can get after them -- it's those teachable moments that you live for as a coach -- that's what I've been missing out on."

Nagging back pain led to a diagnosis of cancer and eventual aggressive treatments at Vanderbilt Hospital for the 32 year-old former assistant coach at Tennessee Temple.

"I was very lucky to have a strong core group of family, friends and co-workers praying for us," Colter said. Now finished with his chemo treatments, he still has a long road of physical therapy ahead.

"I'm still struggling some, keeping my counts up, but the doctors have given us great hope — I hope to be coaching the Lady Saints for a long time."

MJCA athletic director Paul Christensen said Colter's attitude while fighting cancer has been inspirational for the K-12 school.

"Casey and his determination just means so much to MJCA," Christensen said. "Our regional opponents have donated money to help Abby and him out. Some of our TSSAA officials have brought checks — it's been something to see."

**MJ Christian 57, Columbia Academy 54 (girls)**

COLUMBIA -- Allison Mahabir had 21 points Tuesday night to lead the Lady Saints to a 57-54 victory at Columbia Academy. Jessica Melvin added 14 points as MJCA improved to 13-13 overall / 4-8 in the East-Middle Region.

**MJ Christian 51, Columbia Academy 44 OT (boys)**

COLUMBIA -- Down eight headed into the fourth quarter, Mt. Juliet Christian staged a furious comeback to catch Columbia Academy in regulation, then pulled out a 51-44 overtime road win.

"This was a super big win in spectacular fashion," said coach Paul Christensen. "What a way to close out an exciting regular season."

Three Saints scored in double figures -- big man Ben Wankel with 19, Trevor West with 12 and Sam Mummert with 11. MJCA improved to 16-9 / 7-4 in the East-Middle Region. The Saints will host Zion Christian Academy Friday in the first round of the Division II tournament.

**MJ Christian 52, Providence 21 (girls)**

A 20-2 second quarter run was more than enough to propel Mt. Juliet Christian to a 52-21 Senior Night win over visiting Providence Christian of Murfreesboro Monday, Feb. 6.

Nine Lady Saints broke into the scoring column, led by 11 points from Shelby Leech. Lynnze Ethridge added nine while Cassie Scott and Lauren Wankel each had eight. TSSAA Division II East / Middle Region tournament play opens later this week.

**MJ Christian 61, Providence 37 (boys)**

Mt. Juliet Christian held visiting Providence Christian to 15 points in the second half of Monday night's 61-37 Senior Night victory.

"Not the prettiest of games tonight," said coach Paul Christensen, "however, I was reminded about how special this senior class really is. It has been an honor and a blessing to coach these four young men. I am proud of them all."

Senior post Ben Wankel powered his way to 27 points inside while Brandon Wall knocked down a pair of 3-pointers and finished with 10 points. Sam Mummert had seven points; Zach Polloch and Trevor West had six each.

**By TOMMY BRYAN, sports editor**