

ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER

Crean Lutheran boys complete perfect league run

By [TIM BURT](#)

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It's already been quite a year for Crean Lutheran's boys basketball team. The Saints won their second consecutive Academy League title and finished the year ranked No. 6 in Orange County.

But coach Josh Beaty and his players are hoping more good times are ahead.

Crean Lutheran (23-4) is seeded fourth in the CIF-Southern Section 4A playoffs.

The Saints opened the playoffs with a 73-67 victory over Whittier Christian in overtime Wednesday night at Crean Lutheran. The Saints move on to the second round Friday on the road against St. Bonaventure.

"We didn't get any breaks, our road is very tough but I'm sure there are other coaches that feel that way," Beaty said. "We'll have to do it the hard way."

Crean Lutheran wrapped up a perfect league season with a 70-33 victory over Sage Hill in front of a capacity crowd in the Crean Lutheran gym Feb. 11.

The Saints built a 32-15 halftime lead and coasted the rest of the way. Michael Bagatourian led the way with 28 points. Even Kittelsen had 15 points and Tim Ghita and Thomas Scriven 12 points each for the Saints (12-0 in league).

It was the kind of performance Crean has demonstrated all season.

"It's great with these seniors; they've put in so much work and they have great attitudes and they're great kids to coach so it's great to see them have back-to-back league championships," Beaty said.

"They love each other, they're very unselfish and they're just so committed to doing things the right way."

Bagatourian, who is averaging 20 points and 10 rebounds a game, put on another strong showing.

"He's been our best player all year," Beaty said. "He's a great kid and a great competitor and is very unselfish."

The 6-foot-6 junior who resides in Irvine had high hopes going into the league race, with the top goal being a league title.

"It's exactly what we expected, nothing more to it," said Bagatourian. "We always thought we could compete with anyone in the county. We lost some tough games early on but we bounced back. Everyone is so together. We play as a team and everyone loves each other."

Ghita and Even Kittelsen are averaging 13 points a game and Brett Kittelsen is averaging 10 points a game.

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