

# Crean Lutheran keeps rolling along in SoCal basketball regionals



Crean Lutheran Gum Majak, right, wins a rebound over Orange Glen's Angel Nieves during the CIF-SS Division 3 Regionals game at Crean Lutheran in Irvine on Wednesday, March 7, 2018. (Photo by Kyusung Gong/Contributing Photographer)

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IRVINE – Another close game, another historic win for Crean Lutheran's boys basketball team.

The Saints beat Orange Glen of Escondido 52-48 on Wednesday in a CIF Southern California Division III Regionals first-round playoff game at Crean Lutheran.

Crean Lutheran (24-9) will be at home for a second-round game Saturday against Murrieta Mesa (25-9).

The Saints had a 42-40 lead going into the fourth quarter. They quickly stretched that to a six-point advantage early in the fourth, but Orange Glen (18-14) cut its deficit to 49-48 by the middle of the quarter.

Crean's Jake Conerty made one of two free throws to make it 50-48 midway through the fourth and at that point both teams went cold. The teams traded missed shots until the Saints' Isaiah Johnson took a backcourt-to-frontcourt pass from Derek Bagatourian near the 3-point line, wheeled around an Orange Glen defender and one-hand scooped a layup in the final seconds to create the final margin and continue Crean's history-making season.

Crean Lutheran two weeks ago reached the CIF-Southern Section Division 3AA boys basketball semifinals for the first time with a 42-40 win over San Gabriel Academy. In the semifinals, the Saints upset top-seeded St. Anthony of Long Beach 59-55 to get to their first boys basket championship game. They beat Knight of Palmdale 62-61 in double-overtime to earn Crean's first CIF-SS boys basketball championship.

And their first CIF State tournament game Wednesday over scrappy Orange Glen of the CIF-San Diego Section is their first CIF State tournament win.

Isaiah Johnson, a 6-foot-6 junior forward, again was Crean's leading scorer with 15 points. Conerty, a sophomore forward, scored 10. Junior post Gum Majak scored eight with nine rebounds and four blocked shots.

Crean's opponent in the regional semifinals, Murrieta Mesa, defeated CIF-San Diego Section champion Santa Fe Christian of Solana Beach 62-53 in a Division III first-round game Wednesday. In the CIF-SS playoffs, Murrieta Mesa lost to Notre Dame of Riverside in the 3A semifinals.

#### **In Division IV:**

**El Cajon Christian 69, Segerstrom 60:** The Jaguars' first CIF State boys basketball tournament game ended in a first-round loss at home. AJ Espinoza scored 29 points and Abraham Negrete added 18 points for the Jaguars. Segerstrom, which qualified for the regionals by advancing to the CIF-SS Division 4AA semifinals, finished the season 19-11.