

The fourth-ranked St. Mary's Tigers roared past the 13th-ranked Opelousas Catholic Vikings, 65-29, Tuesday night in the second round of the Division IV boys' basketball non-select playoffs at SMH gym.

The Tigers (25-6) stormed out to a 21-8 first quarter lead and added to it in the second quarter as they took a 39-15 halftime advantage. SMH continued to pull away in the third quarter as their lead grew to 54-26 at the end of the third quarter as they cruised into the quarterfinals.

"I thought we guarded really well," said SMH head coach Jake Bankston. "I thought we guarded our tails off all game and that helped disrupt them. Offensively i thought we moved the ball well and got some good looks but an overall great effort top to bottom."

The Tigers were led by senior Ben Bienvenu with 26 points and 17 rebounds while Aiden Warren added 21 points. Senior Mixon Bankston set a tone on the defensive end taking four charges and recording five steals.

With the win, St. Mary's advanced to the quarterfinals for the second straight year where they will face the fifth-ranked Lincoln Prep Panthers (19-8) Friday night at home at time to be announced. Lincoln Prep defeated 21st-ranked Highland Baptist, 50-42, Tuesday night in the second round. SMH has now won 17 of their last 18 games entering Friday.