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### Motivated Crean Lutheran topples St. Margaret's

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BY JOHN SCAFETTA  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

IRVINE – Crean Lutheran's [Michael Bagatourian](#) is quickly learning that while the spotlight shines brightest in rivalry matchups, stage presence in the fourth quarter is what matters most.

"It takes a lot of heart and a lot of defense," the sophomore said of what is required to pull out a victory.

Buoyed by Bagatourian, the Crean Lutheran boys basketball team knocked off St. Margaret's, 51-48, Friday night to force a tie for first place in the Academy League.

The win snapped the Saints' five-game losing streak against the Tartans (14-5, 5-1), which dated to Feb. 3, 2012.

"These guys really wanted the win, especially after Tuesday night when we got upset here at home (by Sage Hill)," said Crean Lutheran coach [Josh Beaty](#).

The Saints (16-2, 5-1), who have won 14 of their last 15 games, implemented an unrelenting press and received a series of timely baskets in the final frame.

Bagatourian scored nine of his 20 points in the fourth and played lock-down defense against arguably the best player in the league, St. Margaret's [Brent Cahill](#).

Crean Lutheran consistently limited Cahill, the Academy League player of the year in 2013-14, from finding open shots. Cahill, who leads the league in scoring with 23.5 points per game, was held to five points. The senior went 1 for 12 from the field.

"With Michael, it's just not his shot-making, he was guarding (Cahill) down the stretch, mostly in the fourth quarter," Beaty said of Bagatourian. "He limited a really good player."

There were three fourth-quarter ties, but Bagatourian's 3-pointer from the left corner, coupled with a key baseline turnaround jumper with 56 seconds remaining, helped Crean Lutheran take the lead for good at 49-47.

After St. Margaret's converted one of two free throws with under a minute to go, the Saints' [Brett Kittelsen](#) knocked down a jumper in the lane with 14 seconds on the clock.

As the seconds ran down, the Tartans' [Brian Murphy](#) launched a 3-pointer from deep beyond the left wing, but the ball hit the iron and bounced toward the left baseline.

[Christopher Murphy](#) had 19 points to lead St. Margaret's, which had a 10-game winning streak snapped, and [Brian Murphy](#) added 17 points.

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