

# St. Teresa Bulldogs slide past Tuscola for first Lady Warrior loss of 2019

**By Lenny Sementi**

Central Illinois Conference-leading St. Teresa's Lady Bulldogs entered historic Tuscola gym and slid out the back door with a win to remain unbeaten in the league. Once more, defense ruled the day for Coach Tim Kohlbecker's crew holding one of the area's top scoring teams to well under the season average, but the ladies in black and gold came up a few short on the offensive end falling at home this past Thursday by six points, 40-34.

"We gave one of the best teams in central Illinois all they could handle," commented the coach. "Our defense kept us alive and gave us an opportunity to win, but offensively, we simply missed too many shots around the basket."

The two teams traded leads six times in the first half and entered the break separated by just one point with St. T in front 20-19. Brynn Tabeling found Lexie Russo in the paint early in the first. Russo then kicked it back out to a wide-open Tabeling who then found the bottom of the net to get things started. The sophomore guard ended things in the first stanza, as well, hitting a three with two ticks left on the clock, giving the Warriors a 9-7 lead at the first horn. Sandwiched in between was a three ball from senior Grace Dietrich.

rich. Tabeling was good on 2 of 5 from the field in the game.

The Bulldogs hit an early trey to recapture the lead by Natalie Bates answered with a coast-to-coast jaunt following a steal on their next possession to knot it back up at 12's. Bates and Tabeling were strong on defense all evening long combining for 13 steals while forcing more than 20 turnovers. Russo did some damage on defense as well collecting two steals in the game to go with her three blocked shots. Two more threes by the visitors, however, led to a 20-14 advantage with just over a minute left in the frame.

Two steals by the dynamic duo and a 5 for 6 effort at the free throw line by Bates, Dietrich, and Tabeling down the stretch cut into the deficit and pulled the Warriors to within one at the break down 20-19.

Dietrich handed Coach K. the lead on the opening possession of the third thanks to a three ball.

The third-year varsity player led all Warriors with 10 points. She was good on 2 of 4 from outside the arc in the contest and was perfect from the charity stripe, connecting on all four of her attempts. Marrissa Russo and Abbey Jacob did some damage off the bench as the two teams traded points most of the third until a late trey put the Bulldogs on top

32-28 heading to the fourth.

Tuscola knocked on the door twice early in the final eight minutes of action with buckets by Bates and L. Russo only to watch St. T secure the win at the line hitting 3 of 4 free throws in the last two minutes to secure the victory. Russo was tops in the rebounding department, grabbing a game high 10 boards.

The first loss of 2019 ends an eight-game winning streak dropping the Warriors to 17-6 overall on the year.

"From a positive perspective, we showed ourselves we have the ability to play with anyone, and that's an exciting thought heading into the conference tourney and regionals," Kohlbecker stated.



Photo: Douglas Cottle

**Warrior Grace Dietrich** attempts a three-pointer during CIC basketball action with the St. Teresa Bulldogs Thursday, Jan. 17. The Bulldogs edged the Warriors 40-34.

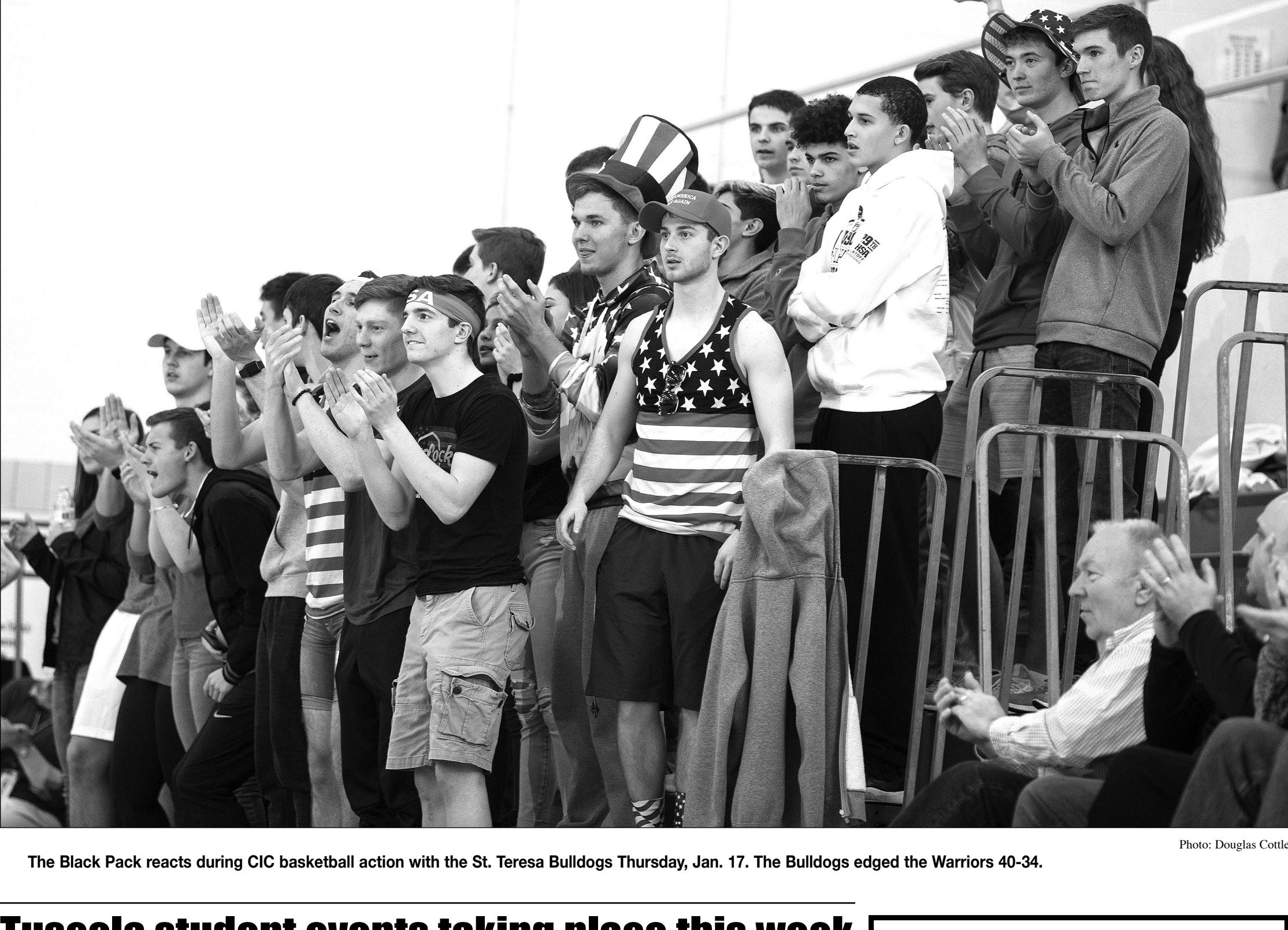


Photo: Douglas Cottle

The Black Pack reacts during CIC basketball action with the St. Teresa Bulldogs Thursday, Jan. 17. The Bulldogs edged the Warriors 40-34.

## Tuscola student events taking place this week

**Tuesday, Jan. 22**

- EP seventh grade boys' basketball-Regionals at Shelbyville Moulton Middle School-6 p.m.

• EP volleyball vs Monticello-6 p.m.

• HS boys' basketball at Arthur Christian-6 p.m.

**Wednesday, Jan. 23**

- ILMEA All-State Festival at Peoria

**Thursday, Jan. 24**

- EP volleyball vs Oakland-6 p.m.

• Freshman boys' basketball vs ALAS-6 p.m.

**Friday, Jan. 25**

- EP volleyball at LSA-6 p.m.

• HS boys' basketball at PBL-6 p.m.

**Saturday, Jan. 26**

- HS boys' basketball CIC Tourney at Warrensburg

Monday, Jan. 28

• Kindness Week

- EP volleyball vs Unity-6 p.m.

• Freshman boys' basketball at SJO-6 p.m.

• HS girls basketball vs Meridian-6 p.m.

**Tuesday, Jan. 29**

• Kindness Week

- EP volleyball vs ALAH-6 p.m.

• HS girls' basketball at Altamont-6 p.m.

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