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Sports Section

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Grant hangs on to down Streamwood

BY JARED BIRCHFIELD

The Streamwood boys basketball team outscored Grant 16-10 in the fourth quarter of an opening-round pool play game Friday at the Hinkle Holiday Classic at Jacobs.

However the late surge was not enough to overcome the lead Grant built during the Bulldogs held on for a 50-41 win.

"Keenon (Cole) got a couple of blocks in the fourth. We got out in transition and we made a couple of buckets and the guys got some energy," said Streamwood assistant coach Ryan Smith. "That's how we have to start games. We can't dig ourselves into a hole."

Smith was filling in for head coach Paul Kowalysyn, who had been out sick this week.

Streamwood trailed Grant 40-25 at the start of the final quarter.

Neither team scored in the first 2 minutes. Grant's Tavarus Williams (9 points) broke the ice with a putback, widening the Bulldogs' margin to 17.

The Sabres responded with a 9-0 run to pull within 8 points. A Brendon Marton (8 points) bucket started the run at the halfway mark of the quarter. It was the first Streamwood (4-7) basket since a Jack Maybrun 3-pointer from the right corner at the 2:03 mark of the third quarter.

Cole followed Marton with a slam dunk. The junior forward led Streamwood in scoring with 12 points. Marton added 3 more points with a bucket and a free throw. DeAngelo Flynn (10 points) ended the spurt with layup.

A 3-point play by Chase Maifield (9 points) widened Grant's margin to 11. Cole responded with a fadeaway jumper to narrow the lead to 9, but that was as close as the Sabres would get.

The Bulldogs' defense held Streamwood to single digits in the first and third quarters and to 10 points in the second quarter. Grant (3-5) controlled the boards, outrebounding the Sabres 28-17.

"I thought our guys did a great job on the glass," Grant coach Wayne Bosworth said. "We did a real nice job of boxing out and limiting their size."

The Bulldogs led 11-6 after the first quarter and 23-16 at the half. Guard Henry Kusiak led the first half attack, scoring 9 of his game-high 14 points -- all on 3-pointers -- in the first 16 minutes of play.

"We got some easy shots in the first half," said Bosworth. "We got some layups and wide-open 3s."

"We didn't come out with a lot of energy and Grant did," Smith said. "They fed off of each other well."

Both teams continue pool play on Saturday. Streamwood plays Crystal Lake South, while Grant faces Dixon.

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Bartlett comes back to topple Johnsburg

BY STEVE NICHOLS

The way Johnsburg's Zach Toussaint was shooting from deep through three quarters Friday night at the Hinkle Holiday Classic, Bartlett's start in pool play had a very grim look to it.

But after Toussaint hit his sixth 3-pointer for a 5-point Skyhawks lead with 6 minutes left in the game, Bartlett simply had enough.

"I was tired of seeing Toussaint hitting 3s uncontested," said Hawks coach Jim Wolfsmith, whose team picked up its defense, fueled a 14-0 run over the last 5 minutes and took home a 63-51 win in style to go 1-0 in Pool II play at Jacobs.

"You could see him, just the rhythm of good shooting like that, he wanted those shots," Wolfsmith added. "And I thought we did a much better job with (Austin Gates) and (Byron Price) of working over their ball pick and making their shots harder and forcing them to go under the stripe."

That change helped the Hawks (4-6) outscore Johnsburg 22-5 after Toussaint's last 3. He finished with a game-high 26 points on 9 of 22 shooting. Toussaint never sank a shot thereafter going 0-for-7 and the Skyhawks (4-4) went just 3-for-19 in the quarter and drained just 1 shot in the final 5 minutes. Bartlett, which shot 20 of 37, reversed the momentum and sizzled at the end going 7 of 8 in the fourth while draining 11 free throws.

Ben Fisher poured in 8 of his team-high 21 points in the fourth where things opened up for the Hawks while Gates had 15 points and 6 rebounds and Tomas Vikonis had 13 points, 7 rebounds and 4 assists.

"I think we just had to contain Toussaint," said Fisher, who added 3 rebounds. "We were really lacking running our offense. We could get whatever we wanted the whole game, but we were just not putting in the hole."

But the Hawks did when it mattered and worked the ball inside, where they scored 20 points overall in the paint on 10 layups and 19 at the free throw line. They went inside during their run in the fourth, as a Price layup off a steal cut Johnsburg's lead to 2 with nearly 5 minutes left. Fisher's layup tied it on the Hawks' next possession with 4:42 left and Vikonis, who drew a foul on the Hawks' subsequent possession with 4:23 left, gave Bartlett a 48-46 lead from the stripe, its first since the 3:42 mark of the third quarter. Bartlett never looked back.

"Well good defense begins good offense," Wolfsmith said. "We started finishing shots, we hit our free throws and that's what happens in this game. If you play good defense, the offense rolls."

Johnsburg turned the ball over 12 times as Price totaled 3 steals and the Skyhawks shot just 30 percent in a game that seesawed throughout. But leading 46-41 and then going cold as ice was a bitter pill to swallow.

"There's no explanation," Johnsburg coach Mike Toussaint said. "We're averaging 74 points per game. We just didn't play our tempo. They controlled the tempo and changed up their defenses."

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Larkin dominates Lake Park

BY ALLEN OSHINSKI

Larkin's boys basketball team followed somewhat familiar script Friday: let an opponent with a weaker record hang around for awhile then, with Jalen Shaw dominant at both ends, open up the game after intermission.

The Royals turned a 7-point halftime lead into a 65-50 win against Lake Park in nonconference action in Elgin.

Shaw finished with 17 points, 9 blocks, 4 rebounds and 2 assists. Anthony Lynch added 15 points and 6 boards for the Royals (7-2).

Larkin broke the game open with a 17-6 run in the third quarter to go up 45-29. The Royals were starting to pull away in the first half, leading 26-15, but lost the momentum as the Lancers scored the last 4 points of the half.

"I was real disappointed with the way we finished the half," said Larkin coach Deryn Carter. "I thought we took three uncharacteristically bad shots. And sometimes a bad shot is not 'we don't think you can make it and we don't have confidence in you,' but it's the time and the score. We were up 13, we had them on the ropes, and there was a 6-point swing there."

Carter knows the Royals won't have as much margin for error next week in the Proviso West tournament.

"A 6-point swing could put the game out of reach with some of the teams we're going to try to play next week," he said.

Shaw did a little of everything, hitting a couple of jumpers and threading some nice passes to open teammates. He knows he needs to help his team in the short term while also preparing to play at the next level.

"You've got to help your teammates as much as you can," he said. "Being on the next level, you've got to do everything. Big men are starting to shoot nowadays, they're starting to dribble. You've got to do everything in the book."

The Lancers were able to stay in the game in large part by dominating the backboards. They outrebounded the taller Royals 35-20.

Isaac Moore had 8 points to go along with 8 rebounds for Lake Park (2-6). Thomas Zakic added 8 points and 5 boards off the bench before fouling out.

Kindrel Morris and Lorenzo Coney added 7 points apiece for Larkin. Pierre Black hit a pair of 3-pointers to spark a 10-0 second-quarter run with Shaw on the bench after picking up his second foul. Isaiah Talley also scored 6 points for the Royals.

Larkin led by as much as 65-41 before Lake Park's reserves finished the game on a 9-0 run.