

## Press Clippings 1/22/2022 to 1/25/2022

### Daily Herald

#### Larkin's fast start keys win over South Elgin --- 1/22/2022

By Dave Hess, Daily Herald Correspondent

After a big win at Bartlett Tuesday, you might think Larkin would start slow against South Elgin Friday night.

That didn't happen.

Propelled by a 10-1 start, the host Royals were able to defeat the pesky Storm 72-62 in Upstate Eight Conference action.

"We didn't have a hangover from the Bartlett game," said Larkin coach Deryn Carter. "We had a lot of energy to start the game. We wish we would have better sustained effort. We have a lot of work to do."

Making 4 of their first 5 shots, the Royals (20-2, 11-0) held a 9-point lead with 5:33 left in the initial quarter. Fernando Perez scored 7 points including a 3-pointer during the Royals' early run.

Larkin's biggest lead during the first 8 minutes was 18-4 after a layup by Jamarion Stubbs off an perfect bounce pass by Perez with 2:22 left.

Paced by 16 first-half points from Drew Cwik including a trey, the Storm (11-12, 7-4) got to within 40-30 at the half.

The Storm scored the first 4 points of the second half on a pair of driving layups by Josh Genz, closing within 40-34 with 6:43 left.

South Elgin couldn't get any closer.

Larkin seized control of the game with a 7-0 run led by a 3 from Perez and baskets by Stubbs and Jakob Blakley. After a Perez 3-pointer the Royals led 47-34 with 4:11 remaining.

Larkin's biggest lead was 58-41 with 6 minutes left after a 15-footer from Damari Wheeler-Thomas.

Wheeler-Thomas led the winners with 22 points while Stubbs scored 14.

"As a team we didn't want to have a letdown after the big win at Bartlett," said Stubbs. "We take every game as a conference championship game, We have played together a long time and have a great bond and friendship. We are all accountable for each other."

Perez added 13 points with two 3s and 5 assists.

Cwik kept the Storm in the game with 29 points with a pair of 3s.

"Drew had a good game," said South Elgin coach Brett Johnson. "He executed his role."

Genz added 14 for the Storm.

"I know there is good effort in these kids," said Johnson. "We played even after their 10-1 start. We need to execute better."

## **Daily Herald**

### **McEwen shoots Bartlett past St. Charles North --- 1/23/2022**

**By John Lemon**

It's not easy to get **Bartlett** sophomore guard Kelton McEwen to leave a gym.

Just ask his coach, Jim Wolfsmith.

"We'll have a 5:30 practice, over at 7:30, he asks, 'Coach can I shoot?' He's not there for 10 minutes. He's there for an hour. It's 9 o'clock and I'm like, 'Kelton, I've got to go, it's past my bedtime.'

"He's a gym rat," Wolfsmith said. "You can see it in the way he plays the game."

McEwen certainly showed how much that practice is paying off in a nonconference matchup Saturday against St. Charles North. McEwen scored 18 of his 26 points in the second half as the Hawks used a 14-0 run in the third quarter to earn a 56-50 victory.

"Kelton is just a smooth guard," Wolfsmith said. "He can shoot it. He can handle it. You see him shoot free throws down the stretch to finish games. Just a smart, smart heady kid. He's really stepped his game up."

McEwen offered a simple reason for all his extra shooting.

"I just find it fun to be in the gym, getting shots up, working on my game because then it produces wins and I like to win a lot," McEwen said.

McEwen led Bartlett (14-4) with 8 points in the first half as the teams went to the locker room tied at 23.

After a steal and breakaway dunk by St. Charles North's Ethan Marlowe to start the third quarter, McEwen swished a 3-pointer to put the Hawks ahead to stay.

Conrad Luczynski followed with an inside basket, McEwen made 2 free throws, Marty McCarthy scored on a drive, a McEwen layup and Jacob Magnanao's 3 capped the 14 straight points that left the Hawks up 37-25.

Max Love finally ended the St. Charles North drought with a 3-pointer, then hit another from the corner to pull within 37-31.

The North Stars (10-10) fell behind again 45-34 early in the fourth quarter when the 7-foot-3 Luczynski finished with his left hand inside. Again, Love led the North Stars back, getting as close as 52-48 and 54-50 in the final two minutes.

McEwen had the answer, scoring on a baseline floater, then going 4-for-4 at the line in the final :34.7 seconds.

"My teammates trust me to make shots at the end of the game," McEwen said. "When they started pressing we did a good job taking care of the ball. It was good to get back on track against a really good team."

Ian Smith added 9 points and Luczynski scored 8 as the Hawks rebounded from Tuesday's loss to Upstate Eight-leading Larkin.

"I love where we're at right now, staying together as a team," said Wolfsmith, whose team is missing sharpshooter Nathan Searce with a finger injury. "Guys are stepping up. Jacob Magnanao, he was good, Keegan Kunzer, flying around on defense. They are doing their roles. Great team win."

Love matched McEwen with 26 points for the North Stars, who had a quick turnaround following Friday's overtime loss to Wheaton Warrenville South.

"I'm sure it's not easy but we need to be tougher than that," North Stars coach Tom Poulin said. "This is a game we should win. It's disappointing. We're playing .500 basketball right now because we're just not as consistent at things. We're making too many mistakes from game to game. We need to pay attention to detail."

# Daily Herald

## Burlington Central stymies South Elgin in matchup of conference leaders --- 1/23/2022

By John Lemon

One thing Collin Kalamatas likes about his Burlington Central girls' basketball team this season is how much they pay attention to details.

That goes for the scouting reports, knowing what to expect from an opponent.

The Rockets were ready for visiting **South Elgin** on Saturday in a matchup of teams leading the Fox Valley and Upstate Eight Conferences, respectively.

South Elgin likes to shoot the 3-pointer, and Burlington Central made sure not to give up many open looks in a 44-34 victory.

The Storm (18-5) finished just 3-of-19 behind the arc and didn't score more than 11 points in any quarter.

"We knew 3s were going to be a big deal for them so we worked on it a lot in practice, running them off the line," Burlington Central senior Taylor Charles said. "Once we took away the 3 it really crippled their offense."

Charles led both teams with 15 points, 10 rebounds, 4 assists and 6 blocked shots.

"We love scouting reports," the Princeton-bound Charles said. "We all get a matchup with people who we could be guarding and their weaknesses, strengths. We really try to play to those."

Burlington Central (14-7) also struggled from 3-point range, sinking just 2 of 16, but found enough offense to lead nearly the entire game.

Up 11-8 after one quarter while holding the Storm scoreless for the first four minutes, the Rockets extended their lead to 22-16 by halftime with a 9-4 run thanks to a 3-pointer from Sam Origel, Haley Lindquist's steal and layup, another Origel bucket and Page Erickson's baseline drive.

Caroline Croft scored South Elgin's first seven points of the second half, giving the Storm what turned out to be their only lead at 23-22.

Burlington Central quickly regained control, starting with an inside move by Charles before three straight baskets by Origel for a 30-23 advantage after three quarters.

"She's got a lot better these last couple months," Kalamatas said of Origel, who scored 13 points. "She's starting to understand how to score in a varsity basketball game. She definitely carried us in the third quarter."

Lauren Knief found Charles open for a 3-pointer early in the fourth quarter to put the Rockets up 34-23. Charles and Becca Carani both scored on backdoor cuts as South Elgin never got closer than 6 points again.

Croft led the Storm with 13 points, and Ella Winterhalder added 9 while drawing three more charges.

"If there was an All-American team for charges she would be on it," Storm coach Dan Mandernack said of Winterhalder, who became the school's all-time 3-point leader earlier this season.

"When you play a good team like that, it's hard. We're not going to get the easy points off pressure defense and transition. We count on our 3s. We took the lead in the third quarter and they went on a nice run."

Carani added 11 points and 8 rebounds for the Rockets, who enjoyed a good weekend not only with their two wins but also a loss by Huntley Friday that put them into the FVC lead.

Kalamatas was pleased with how his team defended Saturday.

"We put a lot of value into that scouting report and the girls buy into that, they look forward to that, looking at what we have to do to be successful. It's a fun part of it," he said.

"That (defending 3s) was one of our top points of emphasis, South Elgin can pour it in, their range is unlimited. It took a lot of efforts by our guards to work their butts off. I think that's what our identity is now and they embraced it."