

Press Clippings 1/13/2018

SPORTS SECTION

---Daily Herald--- 1/13/18

Larkin storms back to dump Sabres

BY ALLEN OSHINSKI

Trailing Streamwood by 9 points in the third quarter, Larkin's boys basketball team just stayed the course. And created a few turnovers. The result was amazing -- the Royals closed the game on a 39-13 run and walked away with a 66-49 win Friday night.

Anthony Lynch scored 25 points, Jalen Shaw added 24 plus 9 rebounds, and Kindrel Morris added 5 points, 5 rebounds, 7 steals, and 3 assists for the Royals.

The Sabres (7-11, 0-6) led most of the first half and extended the advantage to 36-27 on a bucket by Brendon Marton in the third quarter. But Larkin outscored the home team 17-4 to close out the period. Lynch scored 10 points during the quarter.

Shaw took over in the fourth, scoring 12 of the Royals' 27 points.

Streamwood led 30-25 at the half after holding Larkin to 33 percent shooting in the Upstate Eight River matchup.

"The first half looked worse score-wise than what it actually was," said Larkin coach Deryn Carter. "We were getting a lot of stuff offensively we wanted to get. We gave up 30 points, which was probably too much but they were hitting shots. We didn't come into the locker room and try to scrap anything; it was just a matter of just kind of keeping the course."

"We have a lot of seniors on this team," said Lynch. "We've been in this position before so we just regrouped and got it together."

Part of the problem early on was guys being too unselfish.

"A couple of guys inside the zone got a little more aggressive looking for their shot," Carter said. "They were trying to be too playmake-y in the first half, catching the ball and looking around when the play is theirs."

Keenon Cole had 13 points and 14 rebounds for Streamwood. Lamont Cole added 9 points, and Nikola Sinik finished with 7.

"The story of the game was their pressure finally got to us," said Streamwood coach Paul Kowalyszyn. "They created turnovers and when you turn the ball over against Larkin, those convert into dunks and layups and those are what really ended up hurting us. And then they've got some talented players, too. You know they're going to score."

Larkin's pressure forced 27 turnovers, many of which turned into easy baskets at the other end.

It wasn't all bad for Streamwood, as the Sabres handled the Royals (10-4, 6-0) well for about 30 minutes.

"We were up 9 against a really good team," Kowalyszyn said. "The end wasn't very good, but the kids, even though we lost, I think we probably got a little bit better tonight."

---Daily Herald--- 1/13/18 **Elgin cruises to easy win**

BY JARED BIRCHFIELD

The North Boone boys basketball team could not match Elgin's first half energy burst in Friday's opening pool play game of Burlington Central's 3rd Annual MLK Classic.

The Maroons exploded during the first 16 minutes of play for 45 points while holding the Vikings to 16 en route to a 71-46 win.

"What we've talked about lately is we don't always start games well. We tried from the opening tip (tonight) to try and take this team out of everything they wanted to run and make them play basketball," said Elgin coach Mike Sitter. "We did a nice job of not letting them get into any offense and our offense feeds off our defense."

During the first 2 quarters, Elgin (5-10) forced 13 turnovers and outrebounded the Vikings, 29-18.

"We had never seen that type of pressure from another team all year so I knew it would be a little difficult for us until we settled down and got a feel for the game," North Boone coach Matt Yarc said. "A lot of times we are the faster team. They sped us up so much we were almost playing a little bit out of control."

Dan Toolsie led the first half offense, sinking baskets on Elgin's first 3 possessions. North Boone controlled the opening tip, but Toolsie poked the ball away for an uncontested layup. Elgin's man-to-man defense then forced 2 straight turnovers that the senior forward converted into buckets.

Toolsie scored 16 of his game-high 21 points in the first 16 minutes of play. He also pulled down 9 rebounds.

"It was a lot of defense. I got my points off of steals and fast breaks," Toolsie said.

Elgin led 21-8 after the first quarter.

The Maroons found their 3-point touch in the second quarter. After not making a trey in the first 8 minutes, Elgin connected on 4 shots from beyond the arc in the second period including 3 from Trey Yarber to extend its lead to 45-16 at halftime. The junior tallied 12 points on the night, all from 3-pointers.

The Maroons let up on the gas in the third quarter scoring only 9 points to North Boone's 10. After a Roy Panthier (8 points) basket at the start of the frame, Elgin's offense was silent until Trevon Morris' put back with 1:48 left in the quarter.

"We didn't come out at halftime very well," Sitter said. "But things picked up at the end of the third quarter and the beginning of the fourth quarter."

Starting the fourth quarter with a 54-26 lead, Sitter gave playing time to all of his reserves. The team's last 9 points were scored on 3-point baskets by backups Joe Hoberg, Ben Pinsel and Ryan Lim.

Elgin scored all but 2 of its points from the field. North Boone (4-10) was whistled for 4 fouls giving the Maroons only 3 trips to the free throw line.

Britton Morris scored 13 points for the Vikings while teammate Joshua Hoffman chipped in 10.

Kaneland 63, Genoa-Kingston 59: The Knights (6-10) opened the Burlington Central MLK Classic with a win behind 15 points from Rhett Espe and 14 from Blake Feiza. Brett Wallner added 10 points for Kaneland and Kyle Stuart had 9.

---Daily Herald--- 1/13/18

Maroons Upend Royals

BY SCOTT MILLER

Another chapter was written on Friday night in the long and storied history of the old Elgin High School building on Gifford Street as the Elgin Maroons and Larkin Royals' girls basketball teams renewed their rivalry in the first meeting ever at the historic gym affectionately known as The Pit. The Gifford Street facility was home for the Maroons for 33 years up until the 1972-1973 season when Elgin High School was relocated to Maroon Drive and Chesbrough Field House.

The game certainly lived up to the billing as the Maroons, who led by as many as 11 points in the second half, held off a valiant Larkin comeback for a 45-43 win in opening round action of the Elgin City Classic. The building has proved to be good luck for the Maroons. They also won a year ago against Westminster Christian.

Dajha Cooper led Elgin with 16 points and 14 rebounds. Kylie Graves added 14 points.

"I love playing here with all the history and nostalgia that surrounds the place," Elgin coach Dr. Nick Bumbales said. "The girls really seem to get excited about playing here, too. They get caught up in the atmosphere and really appreciate what it means. I think we came out with a lot of energy."

The Maroons (2-17) led just 23-22 at the half, but went on a 10-2 run at the start of the third quarter to open a 33-24 lead. Cooper and Graves each had 3-point plays to start the run. Cooper scored 9 of her points in the third quarter. Graves later gave the Maroons their largest lead of the game when she hit a pair of free throws with early in the fourth quarter to make it 42-31.

"We had a lot of players step up," Bumbales said. "Coop did a great job controlling the boards and I thought Kylie did a heckuva a job putting the team on her back. Kamiya (Harvey) did a great job possessing the ball. On defense Mackenna Downing and Emily Graves really did a nice job limiting their scorers."

The Royals (2-14) rallied to within 45-43 with 26 seconds left to play, but the Maroons denied Larkin on 3 attempts down the stretch.

"That was nervous and really exciting at the same time," Cooper said. "I feel like our defense was definitely the difference. We work on that a lot in practice. We love playing here. I feel like the energy is a lot better."

Brianna Young had 13 points to lead the Royals in scoring. Alexia Saldivar added 10 points while Haley Bohne scored all 9 of her points in the fourth quarter and was a big part of the Royals' comeback.

"We've struggled offensively all year," Larkin coach Steve Knapp said. "We came out sluggish again tonight and it stayed that way until about the final four minutes. But it's hard to climb out of that big of a hole in that amount of time."

---Daily Herald--- 1/13/18

West Aurora eases past South Elgin

BY JERRY FITZPATRICK

The South Elgin boys basketball team was treading water against visiting West Aurora for most of three quarters until the going got rougher.

The Storm led the Upstate Eight Valley matchup by a point at the half and were still within 2 points of the lead late in the third quarter until West Aurora's guards harassed, bedeviled and otherwise distressed the Storm into turnover after turnover during a 19-3 run that bridged the final period of the Blackhawks' eventual 73-55 win.

Those turnovers by second-place South Elgin turned into easy transition buckets for the first-place Blackhawks, who took a 49-43 lead after three quarters on fast-break points from point guards Traevon Brown and Damian Virgen.

"We just pressed up and they couldn't handle our pressure," said Virgen, who finished with a team-high 15 points.

West Aurora's guards caused 5 of South Elgin's 20 turnovers during the run and capitalized on multiple fast-break chances.

"That was the one key to the game," South Elgin coach Brett Johnson said. "We said if we don't let them get runouts, we will be in it at the end of the game. But we gave up so many open runouts, which led to open shots. That ultimately put us in a position where we had to battle back."

Junior guard Moshe Rogers came off the bench to sink three 3-pointers in a five-minute span to fuel the surge for West Aurora (11-4, 4-0). He finished with 13 points. His third 3-pointer with 4:14 left staked the Blackhawks to a 64-46 lead over South Elgin (10-4, 2-2).

"I just have to shoot it and not think about it too much," Rogers said. "If I think about it too much, I'll miss. Just fire it. Let it go."

South Elgin's Vince Miskiewicz (6-foot-6) and West Aurora's Jared Crutcher (6-5) fought to a near draw in the paint. Miskiewicz finished with 17 points and 10 rebounds while the Loras College-bound Crutcher had 13 points and 9 rebounds. He also blocked 9 shots, including 3 of Miskiewicz's.

"I had a few blocks on him," Crutcher said. "Just playing my game, doing me."

West Aurora enjoyed a decided advantage on the perimeter. Virgen's 15-points and Rogers' 13 were supported by 12 points and 3 steals from senior guard Cam Donatlan -- highlighted by right-handed and left-handed breakaway dunks off consecutive South Elgin third-quarter turnovers -- and junior point guard Traevon Brown's 10 points and 5 assists.

"When we roll we have so many guys that can score," West Aurora coach Brian Johnson said. "We don't necessarily need somebody to throw in 30 for us to be successful. The guys really complement each other and it showed."

David Binion finished with 15 points and 7 rebounds and junior guard Drake Montgomery had 10 points for South Elgin.