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SPORTS

---Daily Herald---01/04/2020

Streamwood stops Larkin for 4th straight win

By: Jerry Fitzpatrick

Defense is not Streamwood's calling card.

The up-tempo Sabres entered Friday's Upstate Eight Conference boys basketball game at Larkin allowing more than 75 points per game.

Yet, two key defensive stops in the waning seconds helped the offensive-minded Sabres prevail 73-69 for their fourth straight win.

Junior Darrel Luce was fouled on a putback attempt and sank both free throws to give Streamwood (8-7, 3-2) a 70-69 lead with 30.3 seconds left.

Larkin tried to get the ball in the paint on its ensuing possession, but Streamwood junior guard Zach Marquez stepped into the passing lane for a steal. He was fouled with 5.6 seconds left and sank both free throws to establish a 3-point lead.

"Our defense is based on sprinting back and getting on the ball side of the floor," Marquez said. "I saw a guy coming down the lane so I cut him off."

Trailing by 3 with 3.9 seconds left, Larkin had a chance to inbound the ball but Streamwood sophomore Richard Santiago deflected the incoming pass off a Larkin player to regain possession.

Finishing with consecutive turnovers was a fitting end for Larkin (1-13, 1-4), which committed 21.

"Very disappointed," said Larkin coach Deryn Carter, whose eight-man rotation did not include sophomore Fernando Perez Jr. (ankle). "It's been the story of our year so far: self-inflicted wounds. We get a 6-0 run and we give up a 7-0 run. We have to get better. We have to get a lot better."

Streamwood led 20-14 after a quarter, fueled by 8 of Marquez's game-high 23 points, including a pair of 3-pointers.

Junior Kyle Maybrun scored 9 of his 15 points in the second quarter to give Streamwood a 40-33 halftime lead.

Six Royals scored in the third quarter. Larkin took the lead briefly on a Mirko Sarovic bucket in the post, but Andrew Phan's 3-pointer at the buzzer boosted Streamwood to a 56-54 lead.

The lead changed hands four times in game's final three minutes. Larkin led 69-68 with a chance to extend the lead with 1:02 remaining, but sophomore Damari Wheeler-Thomas missed two free throws. Luce was fouled at the other end, sank 2 free throws and the Sabres never trailed again.

"To start the new year like this is an amazing feeling," Marquez said.

"We've won four in a row now after winning our last three at the Jacobs Tournament," Streamwood coach Kent Payne said. "We're just going to try to keep getting better. Our kids really like competing."