

Prairie Hawks drill City High, 68-39

Written by Guy Martino

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Offense can be produced in many ways. On Monday evening, Prairie turned to the defensive end of the floor for inspiration.

The Prairie Hawks played stifling defense that led to a barrage of 3-pointers on their way to a lopsided 68-39 victory against Iowa City High in the Class 4A substate quarterfinals at Prairie's gym.

Prairie (6-16) earned a date with top-ranked Iowa City West (21-0) in the semifinals Friday night at Iowa City West.

Prairie's transition game was in full effect as the Hawks were out and running the entire night, finding open shooters in the process.

"We really focused on the defensive end because that is where we get our offensive transition going," said Prairie forward Thomas Eilers.

Eilers particularly benefitted from the offensive spark that was created on the defensive end. He drowned five 3-pointers and finished with 15 points.

"Once I make a couple I like to keep putting them up, so that is what I am going to do," said Eilers.

His teammates were also feeling good from behind the arc as Prairie nailed nine 3-pointers in all.

"When we are dialed in and stay focused, we can shoot with the best of any team," said Prairie

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Coach James Moses. "Tonight you got the chance to witness a little bit of that."

Prairie came out in a stingy man-to-man defense, forcing the Little Hawks into several quick shots and turnovers. The Prairie Hawks were able to turn this momentum into offense and took a 33-20 lead to intermission.

The beginning of the second half is when Prairie simply put the game out of reach. Prairie kept its foot on the pedal on both ends of the floor and outscored the Little Hawks 19-6 in the third quarter.

"We really wanted to focus on our defense and rebounding to limit their second shots," said Eilers. "That is what we talked about at halftime and then we held them to six points in the third quarter."

By the time the Little Hawks could come up for a breath of air, the score was 52-26 going into the final quarter. Prairie maintained its lead throughout the fourth period and Moses sent the subs in with a little more than two minutes left in the game.

"We were full strength and we had everybody on the same page, and our guys went out and put in the work," said Moses. "We could have written this game off because of the way we finished our season, but they went out and got the job done. But that's just one game, it's a whole new season now."

IOWA CITY HIGH (39): Chester 3 4-6 10, Perry 1 0-0 2, Hein 0 0-0 0, Craig 1 1-2 3, Spears 3 0-0 6, Taylor 4 0-0 10, Posivio 0 0-0 0, Rouabhi 0 0-0 0, Forrester 1 0-0 2, Ritter 1 0-0 3, Ingram 0 1-2 1, Hickman 1 0-0 2. Totals 15 6-10 39.

PRAIRIE (68): Hanna 3 2-2 8, Eilers 5 0-0 15, Harper 6 0-0 12, Meeker 3 1-2 7, Mims 2 1-2 7, Mouglin 1 1-2 4, Smith 1 8-10 11, Butz 1 0-0 2, Koch 0 0-0 0, Kuchemann 0 0-0 0, Bechtel 0 0-0 0, Brown 0 0-0 0. Totals 22 15-20 68.

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Halftime - Prairie 33, Iowa City High 20. 3-point goals - City High 3 (Taylor 2, Ritter 1), Prairie 9 (Eilers 5, Mims 2, Mouglin 1, Smith 1).