

## West's quick start dooms No. 6 J-Hawks

Written by

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IOWA CITY – Cedar Rapids Jefferson entered Friday night's clash against Iowa City West as the sixth-ranked team in Class 4A in the state. It also came into the game having won five out of seven, including three in a row.

That impressive streak ended as Jefferson lost to Iowa City West, 59-45, with the J-Hawks playing catch-up for almost the entire game.

Jefferson Coach Stuart Ordman said the game was decided within the first five minutes of tip-off.

"We came out lackadaisical and casual, and they definitely took it to us," he said.

Jarrold Uthoff, the state's leading scorer, led the J-Hawks with a hard-earned 28 points and 11 rebounds, and also was a perfect 10-10 at the charity stripe.

Iowa City West was led by sophomore duo Dondre Alexander and Jeremy Morgan, who went for 18 and 13 points, respectively.

The loss drops Jefferson to 12-3 overall and 8-3 in the Mississippi Valley Conference. West advances to 11-4 overall and 7-4 in conference play.

Iowa City West jumped out of the gates and relied on its hot outside shooting to build a comfortable lead early against a J-Hawks team that couldn't find its rhythm on either side of the ball.

Having scored only four points in the initial six minutes of the first quarter, Jefferson looked to get it to its leading scorer down low for the remainder of the first half.

"We tried to get that high-low lob and we just did a couple isolations, pick-and-rolls, stuff like that," said Uthoff.

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The J-Hawks went into halftime down 31-20.

Uthoff's 16 first-half points prompted the Trojans to change their defensive outlook, forcing him outside of the paint and limiting his chances to get to the line in the second half.

"They tried to get me to put it on the floor up top, and whenever I got into the post they helped out well," he said.

Uthoff's 5-10 shooting in the second half, along with Tyler Hemphill's four points off the bench, drew the J-Hawks within eight in the fourth quarter. But with only three minutes remaining, time, along with the ability to break Jefferson's full-court pressure, was on the Trojans' side.

Lack of energy was ultimately the J-Hawks' demise, Uthoff said.

"We just got outplayed tonight," the senior said.

The J-Hawks are missing starting point guard Taylor Olson, who, according to Ordman, is out indefinitely with a back injury. Ordman said he was unsure about Olson's return.

"I thought we weren't able to move the ball as well as we would have liked, and I credit West's defense to a great extent," Ordman said.

"We're going to have to learn to operate without (Olson). I think the game plan is going to stay the same. We're just going to have to find ways to execute it."

Jefferson's next game is Monday, Feb. 7, against No. 2 Cedar Falls.

JEFFERSON (45): Uthoff 9 10-10 28, Saunders 1 0-0 2, Brown 0 0-0 0, Meiborg 0 2-2 2, Kramer 3 0-0 6, Denny 0 0-0 0, Hemphill 2 0-0 4, Rooney 0 1-2 1, Larson 1 0-0 2. Totals 16 13-14 45.

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WEST (59): Alexander 3 8-8 16, Morgan 4 3-5 13, Gylten 2 1-4 5, Lohaus 2 0-0 5, Ukah 3 3-4 9, Franz 2 1-2 5, Seyfer 1 0-0 2, Swank 2 0-0 4. Totals 19 16-23 59.

Halftime – Iowa City West 31, Jefferson 20. 3-point FG – Jefferson 0, Iowa City West 5 (Morgan 2, Alexander 2, Lohaus).