

J-Hawks top Indians in girls jamboree

Written by Tom Fruehling

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As part of a full night of season-opening exhibition games Friday in the Kennedy Jamboree, the Jefferson girls may have set a dubious record.

In their abbreviated 16-minute 34-28 win over Marion, the J-Hawks committed 18 fouls with 11 of them coming in the first quarter.

One of their players, Kieley Brathwaite, even managed to foul out despite a format in which coaches used their whole roster to get the kinks out.

“Obviously, we have to quit fouling so much,” said Jefferson Coach Jason Edwards. “The girls got a little too itchy and a little too grabby out there tonight.”

The Indians failed to take advantage, though, converting on just 10 of 20 free throws.

Plucky junior point guard Amanda Sahm hit 9 of 10 and kept Marion in the game with a team-high 16 points. She had all but one of her team's total as the J-Hawks took a 23-11 first-period lead.

“I was really happy that our kids kept fighting after we got down so far at the start,” said Indians Coach Corby Laube. “We have a young team and we have to hang our hat on hustle and

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defense. Overall, I liked our play tonight.”

Jefferson is even more inexperienced, having lost all five starters from last season. Back is top reserve sophomore Amanda Ollinger, joined this year in the front line by freshman Kennedy Dighton. They led the scoring Friday with eight and 10 points, respectively.

“They give us some length,” Edwards said. “And they can both play on the perimeter.”

They can also run the floor, which suits the J-Hawks' style of play.

“We like to get the ball and go up and down,” according to the second-year coach. “Sometimes we get in a little bit of a hurry. We have to learn not to rush so much.”

The only other close game of the night was Iowa City West's 24-22 squeaker over Prairie.

Rounding out the field in the 33rd annual jamboree, Linn-Mar rolled over Benton Community, 38-14, while Washington walloped Mount Vernon, 41-14, and Kennedy crushed Solon, 43-12.

Prairie led West 17-13 after the first period but then went cold. The Hawks didn't score again until Taylor Moenk knocked down a 3-pointer with 1:59 left. She tied it up at 22-22 on a layup with 20 seconds to go, but Iowa City's Emily Halverson tipped in a rebound at the buzzer to win the contest.

“We just had trouble getting into the flow of the game,” said Prairie Coach Steve Doser.

Linn-Mar had little trouble with the Benton Bobcats, jumping off to a 22-6 lead on a steal and basket by newcomer Katie Sommer. In her debut with the Lions, the senior transfer from Dubuque Senior had six points while twin sister Kristie had seven. Junior guard Olivia

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Montague led Linn-Mar with 10 points, including two 3-pointers.

"We lost seven of our eight top players from last year," noted Lion Coach Michael Brandt. "We got some bugs worked out tonight. We have a ways to go, but our younger players are stepping up."

With three starters out of action, Coach Dennis Roloff's Mount Vernon team fell behind Washington 18-1 and never did catch up. Leading 23-2 after one period, the Warriors played most of the final eight minutes with substitutes. Senior stars Dani Franklin and Aleena Hobbs each scored nine points while fellow senior MJ Kamin led the way with 10.

"With Dani and Aleena, we've got two good players to build around," said Washington Coach Frank Howell. "As others gain experience, we'll do a lot of growing as the season goes on. I saw a lot of good things tonight."

In the night's finale, host Kennedy spurred to a 30-8 first quarter lead over Solon and emptied the bench the rest of the way. Showing a formidable starting lineup, the Cougars displayed balanced scoring in the rout.

Senior Morgan Martin, out much of last season with a knee injury, topped the chart with 11 points, while silky smooth senior Paige Hendrickson added seven and sparkplug Madi Meier six. Senior Jordan Holmes and junior Stephanie Botkin chipped in with five points each.