

Mims sparks Prairie past Warriors

Written by Carl Gonder

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Michael Mims sure knows how to change a game.

Making three spectacular plays that shifted the momentum of the game, the 5-foot-9 junior guard led the Prairie Hawks to a workmanlike 47-41 victory over the Washington Warriors Friday night at Washington.

Prairie won its second game in a row and improved to 4-7 overall and 2-5 in the Mississippi Valley Conference. Washington lost its third straight and slipped to 2-7 overall and 2-5 in the MVC.

With the Hawks holding a slim four-point lead late in the third frame, Mims buried a long 3-pointer and then made a spectacular left-handed scoop layup on consecutive possessions. His no-look pass for an assist to start the fourth quarter gave his team an even bigger lead.

Scoring five of his seven points in that key stretch, the Hawks never looked back.

“When I hit that shot and then the layup, it was fun,” Mims said. “We all rallied around each other and used each other as motivation.”

Mims said games with Washington are always tough.

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“Everybody played hard. It was a crazy hard-fought game,” he said. “Wash always plays us tough and close. I’m proud of our guys. We played one of our best games of the season.”

Mims had seven points, five rebounds and three assists in the low-scoring affair.

Cal Clark, a 5-foot-10 sophomore guard, hit some clutch free throws in the final minute and led the Hawks in scoring with nine points.

“I think we probably played our best defense of the season and that was one of the main reasons we won,” Clark said. “We just wanted to play our game and do the things we do well.”

Washington had one more field goal than Prairie, but the Warriors made just 8-of-18 shots from the foul line. The Hawks hit 15-of-23.

Warrior boss Adam Sanchez said he was pleased with the effort.

“I thought we played really hard and battled,” he said. “We just couldn’t get some big shots and key free throws to go in when we needed them. I think sometimes we are just trying too hard. Effort-wise we were outstanding.”

Sanchez agreed that Mims won the game for Prairie.

“Those were big plays for them,” he said. “He’s an outstanding player. It was such a low-scoring game that a couple of possessions were going to swing it and those were big plays.”

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Jake Kramer was the only player to score in double figures for either team with 10 points for Washington. Maurice Arrington and Jared Printy each added nine points for the Warriors.

Prairie Coach James Moses was elated with the win. "We had a lot of players respond tonight," he said. "We did some good things."

Moses agreed with Sanchez about his point guard.

"Mike Mims has been one of our leaders and the future is bright with Mike leading the team," he said. "He also plays well with Cal (Clark) and they definitely complement each other. It is nice to see that team chemistry."

Moses called the teamwork "beautiful."

"Everybody is about the team and that is what is beautiful," he said. "It is beautiful to be able to coach this team."

It has been a week of up and downs for Prairie. The Hawks overcame some adversity in winning 55-51 at Cedar Falls on Tuesday night, the first time since 2001 that a Prairie boys team has won there. The team then lost the services of 6-foot-1 senior Kentrel Smith, who has decided not to continue playing basketball.

"The story on Kentrel is that he quit," Moses said.

"We lost a tough one here at Washington last year," Moses said. "It was great to be able to prevail tonight."

"I think we put an exclamation point on things and got a nice win here tonight," he said.

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PRAIRIE (47): Coen Brown 2 3-3 8, Cal Clark 2 4-6 9, Michael Mims 3 0-3 7, Jalen Rima 0 3-4 3, Bryce Meeker 2 2-2 6, Andrew Bechtel 0 0-0 0, Austin Fisher 2 1-1 6, Mitch Lorenz 1 2-4 4, JoJo Simpson 2 0-0 4, Drew Yanecek 0 0-0 0, Austin Schrader 0 0-0 0, Brody Alberts 0 0-0 0, Dylan Kuchemann 0 0-0 0. Totals 14 15-23 47.

WASHINGTON (41): Montaves Anderson 1 1-5 3, C.J. Nelson 0 0-0 0, Drew Hoeger 0 0-0 0, Razadon Taylor 0 0-0 0, Reid Snitker 1 0-1 2, Jake Kramer 3 2-2 10, Maurice Arrington 4 1-2 9, Brock Severson 0 0-0 0, Jared Printy 4 1-2 9, Max Claassen 0 0-0 0, Steven Kramer 0 0-0 0, Tyler Soenksen 1 0-0 2, Brad Harriott 0 0-0 0, Keegan Moore 1 3-6 6, Nehemiah Newman 0 0-0 0, Anthony Rodriguez-Bleakley 0 0-0 0, Julian Good-Jones 0 0-0 0, Terry Jenkins 0 0-0 0. Totals 15 8-18 41.

Halftime - Prairie 16, Washington 15. 3-point goals – Washington 3 (J.Kramer 2, Moore 1), Prairie 4 (Brown 1, Mimms 1, Clark 1, Fisher 1).