

Noble sparks No. 9 Lions by Ankeny

Written by Jim Ecker

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Trevor Noble looks like a throw-back athlete from the 1950's with his crew cut, rugged good looks and nose for the ball.

He played like a modern-day star Tuesday night.

Noble shot 8-for-8 from the field and scored a career-high 17 points to help No. 9 Linn-Mar defeat Ankeny, 68-52, in a non-conference game at the Linn-Mar gym.

Noble received a series of sharp passes from his teammates and lived around the basket as the Lions shook off tight losses to No. 1 Iowa City West and No. 4 Ankeny Centennial this past weekend and got back on the winning path.

"We wanted to get back out here and show ourselves we can still win and still play our best basketball," said Noble, a 6-foot-4 senior.

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Noble starts for Linn-Mar and was averaging 5.8 points when the night began, but he essentially tripled his normal production against Ankeny (5-8).

"Noble is hard to guard, because he never stops moving," said Linn-Mar Coach Chris Robertson. "He's always moving. If his guy turns his head and goes to help, he's going to find an open area around the basket."

Once Noble got the ball near the bucket, he knew how to finish.

"I stay around the hoop and try to find open alleys in there," he said. "Any my teammates were finding me."

The Lions (9-3) needed a big night from Noble because Linn-Mar stars Jordan Bohannon and Nic Uhler both struggled from the field. Bohannon, who has been battling walking pneumonia, shot 3-for-10 and scored eight points. Uhler was 2-for-9 and finished with six points.

The Lions proved once again they are not a two-man team, however. Beau Klostermann (8 points), Jordan Brandt (7 points) and Jason Tichy (7 points) provided good support off the bench and starting center Ryan Schmidt supplied six points and eight rebounds. Brandt was a sparkplug with five steals and four assists.

"The one nice thing is, we're showing we have several guys that can do it," said Robertson. "Different guys have stepped up. It hasn't been the same guy, which is kind of nice."

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Noble was happy to oblige Tuesday.

"We know Bo and Uhlir are going to get their best shots from everybody else, so it's up to us other guys to step in and step up," he said. "We have to do our job and score points ourselves."

Schmidt and Noble formed a potent pitch-and-catch combination on the Linn-Mar football team this past fall and both of them are looking to play football in college. Schmidt passed for 14 touchdowns and ran for 21 TDs last season, while Noble caught nine of those TD passes and also returned an interception for a touchdown.



They give the Lions some much-needed size and strength on the basketball floor as well. Robertson said Schmidt and Noble are terrific leaders on the team.

"Basketball is probably not their primary thing. They're football guys," said Robertson. "But they're great leaders and they know their role. They don't ever try to do more than they're capable of."

Noble is thinking about playing football at Coe or Grand View. Schmidt said he's still looking around, trying to find the right fit.

"I'm going to play somewhere," said Schmidt. "It's what I've wanted to do since I was little."

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Schmidt wanted to play basketball this season, rather than devoting all his energies to football. "I'm best friends with all the guys," he said. "I'm not going to leave my team my senior year."

Noble had 16 points midway through the third quarter, helping Linn-Mar to a 43-28 lead at that point. The Lions stretched the margin to 20 points at 59-39 on a pair of free throws by Tichy with 6:16 left in the game.

Linn-Mar played well in spurts, but had some choppy stretches as well following the tough losses to Iowa City West and Ankeny Centennial by a total of six points Friday and Saturday.

"We didn't play our best tonight. That was obvious," said Robertson. "But we were probably due for a little letdown after what we went through last week. To have a little letdown and still get a win, I guess, is a good thing."

Conor Riordan led Ankeny with 11 points.

ANKENY (52): Cummins 1 2-2 4, Neal 0 0-0 0, Shannon 0 0-0 0, Rinker 3 0-0 8, Hanna 0 0-0 0, Whitaker 2 1-2 6, Riordan 5 0-0 11, Walljasper 2 1-1 6, D. Maschoff 2 0-0 5, Plummer 2 0-0 5, McCoy 0 0-0 0, Scott 1 1-2 3, Inthalangsy 0 0-0 0, McLeod 1 0-0 2, T. Maschoff 1 0-0 2, Reiter 0 0-0 0.
Totals 20 5-7 52

LINN-MAR (68): Uhlir 2 2-2 6, Evans 0 0-0 0, Murphy 2 0-0 4, Noble 8 1-3 17, Bohannon 3 0-0 8, Kraus 0 0-0 0, Klostermann 4 0-0 8, Bundy 0 0-0 0, Tichy 2 2-2 7, Willenborg 0 0-0 0, Halupnik 2 0-0 5, Schmidt 2 2-3 6, Brandt 3 0-0 7, Dixon 0 0-1 0, Sylvester 0 0-0 0. Totals 28 7-11 68.

Halftime - Linn-Mar 37, Ankeny 22. 3-point goals - Ankeny 7 (Rinker 2, Whitaker 1, Riordan 1,

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Walljasper 1, D. Maschoff 1, Plummer 1), Linn-Mar 5
(Bohannon 2, Tichy 1, Halupnik 1, Brandt 1).