

## Brandt shakes off broken nose to spark Lions

Written by Jim Ecker

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Mykaela Brandt missed one basketball game this season with a broken nose and mild concussion, suffered in a freak babysitting accident last Saturday.

She was determined it wasn't going to stop her again.

Brandt returned to the lineup Saturday night and popped in 22 points as Linn-Mar trumped Muscatine, 71-49, in a non-conference game in the Linn-Mar gym.

Brandt was babysitting for five kids when they decided to go outside and get some exercise.

"We were playing football and I got elbowed in the nose and it broke," she said with a smile and giggle. "And I got a concussion."

The kids ranged in age from 13 down to a second grader. And yes, contact was allowed.

"She definitely does not just sit around and babysit," said Mike Brandt, her father and Linn-Mar's head coach. "If you get her as a babysitter, you're going to play and do some things."

Brandt and his wife were in Ankeny last Saturday watching their son play basketball when Mykaela called.



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"She called pretty upset and we thought, 'What happened to the kids?' " Brandt related. "She said, 'I broke my nose. Should I pop it back in?' "

Brandt's mother took Mykaela for treatment, rather than letting Mykaela try to fix the problem herself. And as a precaution, she was not allowed to play in the season opener against Keokuk on Tuesday night.

"It wasn't a fun household around our house when we told her she couldn't play on Tuesday," Brandt said. "She was really biting at the bit to get back to it."

Mykaela has a tender nose and slight discoloration under her right eye, but it didn't slow the aggressive 5-foot-6 point guard from putting her shoulder down and driving into traffic against Muscatine.

"I kind of forgot about it," she said of the sore nose.

She did not wear a face mask or any form of protection. "It may hurt a little bit if she gets hit, but she'll just go on from there," her father and coach said. "That's how bad she wants to play."

Brandt hit a series of hard-driving layups, popped in three 3-pointers and distributed the ball effectively to her teammates. Sara Strauel scored 16 points for the Lions (2-0) and Shanice Cheatham netted 12.

"I was very, very happy with the way she played," Coach Brandt said. "Just her aggressiveness and what she brings rubs off and everybody steps up and follows. And I saw that tonight compared to Tuesday night.

"You've got to have that point guard that gets us into the flow, whether it's scoring or passing or



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driving. She has to be that kind of leader on the floor."

Muscatine led, 10-9, with two minutes left in the first quarter when the Lions caught fire and scored 12 straight points for a 21-10 margin early in the second period. Linn-Mar steadily pulled away and led by 16 points at halftime, 38-22.

Leticia Lerma led Muscatine (2-1) with 11 points.

MUSCATINE (49): Clemens 2 0-0 5, Thiesse 4 0-0 9, Walgren 3 3-4 9, Lerma 5 1-2 11, Beauchamp 0 0-0 0, Shoultz 1 1-2 3, Miller 2 0-1 4, Greenhaw 3 2-4 9. Totals 20 7-13 49.

LINN-MAR (71): Brandt 8 3-4 22, Strauel 5 6-8 16, Thrune 4 0-0 9, Cheatham 5 2-4 12, Major 1 4-6 7, Yearling 0 1-2 1, Harms 0 0-0 0, Eiles 1 0-0 2, Duggan 1 0-0 2, Koelker 0 0-0 0, Ryder 0 0-0 0, Libenguth 0 0-0 0. Totals 25 16-24 71.

Halftime - Linn-Mar 38, Muscatine 22. 3-point goals - Clemens, Thiesse, Brandt 3, Thrune, Major. Fouled out - Beauchamp.