

McDougall leads Prairie to payback win

Written by Tom Fruehling

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Prairie Coach James Moses saw his game plan Monday night go right out the window before the team even broke a sweat.

He's been touting junior point guard Jace Hanna, the Hawks' starting quarterback this fall, as the key guy to run the show on the basketball court this winter.

In the season opener at home against Davenport West, however, Hanna picked up his second foul in the first two minutes of the game and sat the rest of the half.

He was whistled for his third foul after just nine seconds in the third quarter, then his fourth five minutes later and sat some more.

Still, Prairie got some terrific play off the bench and a break-out performance from senior swingman Matt MacDougall in a gut-check 63-50 win over always-tough Davenport West.

"It shows the depth we have this year," Moses said, "and the quality of our bench. A lot of kids got an opportunity to play a lot of minutes. And I thought they all played well. That's going to be important this week since we play three games."

The Hawks stay home to face North Scott Thursday and then travel to Muscatine Saturday night.

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Moses said he saw a lot to like for the first game of the year.

West had beaten his bunch by more than 20 points last year and kept its three star players.

“They’re a well-coached team, “ the second-year Prairie coach said. “They’ve got a lot of good athletes, very fast and quick. And they play a physical game. So, for us, it’s like we’ve now been battle tested. We’ve got some things to learn. But we showed some perseverance tonight.”

First two substitutes DeMetrius Harper and Kentrel Smith picked up the pace when they came in and added some bulk under the boards.

Moreover, Moses said, the veterans on the team stepped up.

Senior guards Jacob Aune and Brooks Kehoe each had solid floor games with Hanna on the bench much of the night.

“We just kept fighting the whole night,” said Aune, who put Prairie up by four halftime by following up his missed free throw with a steal and a buzzer-beating bucket.

Then there was Kehoe, who turned the game around midway in the third period after collecting his fourth foul. In one brief spurt, he hit a 3-pointer and made two steals leading to baskets to put the Hawks ahead 40-29.

“All night, we just kept playing tough defense and making stops when we had to,” Kehoe said.

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MacDougall, a senior who plays much taller than the 6-foot-4 he is listed at, led his team with eight over-the-rim rebounds and was clearly the star of the game. He topped all scorers with 19 points and was a steady presence on both ends of the court all night.

“He’s our floor leader,” Moses said. “I call him a ‘silent assassin’ ‘cause he doesn’t say much, but he leads by his actions.”

For his part, MacDougall credits his summer with former Iowa star Kenyon Murray’s AAU Legacy team with helping building his confidence and skills.

“Traveling all over like we did really gave me some good experience,” he said.

Aune and junior Tom Eilers played on the same squad.

“For one thing, it gave them a chance to play games all summer long,” Moses noted, “and against some good competition and top players. That’s bound to help them and us.”

DAVENPORT WEST (50): Darren Stringfellow 2 4-7 8, Joe Scott 7 1-4 17, Marlon Stewart 2 3-4 7, Cole Tatge 4 2-3 10, Dylan Beckman 0 0-0 0, Nasir Shabazz 2 0-0 6, Tyrus Johnson 0 2-2 2, Devonne Brown 0 0-0 0. Totals 17 12-20 50.

PRAIRIE (63): Jacob Aune 4 0-1 9, Brooks Kehoe 1 2-2 5, Jace Hanna 1 4-6 7, Matt MacDougall 8 2-2 19, Tom Eilers 3 5-5 12, Tyler Mouglin 0 0-0 0, DeMetrius Harper 3 0-0 6, Kentrel Smith 1 1-2 3, Bryce Meeker 1 0-0 2, Garrett Rasmussen 0 0-0 0. Totals 22 14-18 63.

Halftime – Prairie 27, Davenport West 23. 3-point goals – Davenport West 4 (Shabazz 2, Scott 2), Prairie 5 (Aune, Kehoe, Hanna, MacDougall, Eilers). Total fouls – Davenport West 21, Prairie 24. Fouled out – none.