

Washington can't cash in on Kennedy charity

Written by Tom Fruehling

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The Kennedy boys are 6-2 after narrowly escaping winless Washington 53-48 Friday night at home.

But Cougars Coach Bob Fontana knows they're living on the edge, especially from the free throw line.

Missed charity shots late in the game led to a one-point loss earlier to Dubuque Wahlert, and the same fate cost them in a three-point defeat at Dubuque Senior. As a team, the Cougars have hit only 59 percent of their free throws.

While they took a 42-27 lead over Washington (0-7, 0-5) into the fourth quarter, the Cougars almost blew it because of their ineptitude at the line. For the game, they were just 7 of 18. But 10 of the misses came in the fourth quarter.

"That is a huge concern," said Fontana. "It's very disappointing that we can't hit our free throws at the end of games."

For the Warriors, wholesale fouls almost got them a win in a game that looked lost with just three minutes left. They were then down by 14 and hadn't mounted much offense all night.

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The Cougars went into a slow-down game, and Washington started fouling just for a chance to get the ball back.

The kamikaze strategy almost worked.

Over a two-minute span, Kennedy missed five from the stripe, including two after the Warriors were called for an intentional foul. The Cougars retained possession but then lost it on a double dribble.

"We got mentally lazy," Fontana said. "Our seniors have to do a better job showing leadership. For the whole fourth quarter we just stopped playing."

Washington's Cybryan Moa and Jason Oney, who scored 10 points apiece, hit a pair of baskets apiece and the score was 49-44 Kennedy with 1:12 to go.

Two more charity misses by the Cougars and two makes by the Warriors cut the margin to three.

Kennedy's Trevor Heitland finally stopped the bleeding, however, by canning both of his free shots with 40 seconds left.

"We had periods of lapses throughout the game," said Washington Coach Brad Metzger. "But we never completely imploded. We just didn't leave ourselves much room for error at the end of the game."

Kennedy's Cody Bell, who led his team in scoring with 13, said the Cougars were fortunate to hang on for the victory.

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"We got a comfortable lead," he said, "and then we kind of just coasted. We quit attacking the basket and started settling for jump shots.

"But a win's a win, and we'll take it."

WASHINGTON (48): Tann 2 0-0 4, Butterfield 0 0-0 0, Moa 5 0-0 10, Holmes 2 3-4 7, Rosenthal 0 0-0 0, Schulte 0 0-0 0, Oney 4 1-1 10, Bredl 6 0-0 12, Nash 2 1-2 5. Totals 21 5-7 48.

KENNEDY (53): Hayden 4 0-0 11, Fergus 0 0-0 0, Carter 0 2-6 2, Martin 1 0-0 2, Heitland 2 4-8 8, Jahlas 2 0-0 4, Bell 6 0-2 13, Christians 2 1-2 5, Koelling 1 0-0 2, Struss 3 0-0 6. Totals 21 7-18 53.

Halftime - Kennedy 32, Washington 19. 3-point goals - Washington 1 (Oney 1), Kennedy 4 (Hayden 3, Bell 1). Fouled out - Jahlas.