

Slow start dooms Marion girls against Wahlert

Written by Jake Koolbeck

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You often hear people saying it's not how you start it's how you finish. Such was not the case for the Marion girls basketball team Saturday night against Dubuque Wahlert.

The Indians had a torrid fourth-quarter finish, but a slow start doomed them in the end. Class 3A No. 8 Wahlert beat the No. 11 Indians, 72-59, in a non-conference game at Marion.

It was Marion's third straight loss to a ranked foe and second in as many nights. The Indians (7-3) were beaten by Prairie in their last game before the holiday break, then lost 70-38 Friday night at No. 2 Benton Community.

"We are taking a big picture approach and this will hopefully help come tournament time," Marion Coach Brian O'Donnell said about the tough stretch of games.

If you saw just the fourth quarter you would have believed the Indians greatly outplayed the Golden Eagles (9-3). Marion outscored Wahlert 23-11 in the fourth period. But they entered the quarter trailing 61-36.

Wahlert built its lead with a 20-3 run to start the game. The Golden Eagles led 28-12 after the first quarter. Their lead was 46-24 by halftime.

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"It felt like a hangover from last night. We did not play our best defense last night and it continued in the first half tonight," O'Donnell said. "If you don't come out strong, a talented team like Wahlert will make you pay."

The fourth quarter was all Marion as it attempted to pull off a huge comeback, going on a 12-0 run to start the period. Junior Beth Knapp hit a lay-up and her foul shot for a three-point play to cut the Golden Eagles' lead to single digits with under a minute to play.

"Our offense picked it up after the first half," O'Donnell said. "Our effort at both ends was much better in the second half."

Wahlert made its free throws down the stretch to hold off the Indians.

Marion was led by Knapp with 16 points. Freshman Michalyn Mohr added 10 points.

The Golden Eagles Clarie Till, an Iowa signee, missed her third game of the week with knee problems. Senior Tessa Leytem stepped up in Till's absence with 25 points. Junior Logan Lynch added 22 points.

"You can't give either of them an open look. They are excellent shooters," O'Donnell said of Leytem and Lynch. "I was impressed with how they both stepped by in Till's absence."

DUBUQUE WAHLERT (72): Beth Walker 1 2-4 4, Logan Lynch 5 9-10 22, Tessa Leytem 6 9-11 25, Olivia Smith 2 2-3 6, Marissa Cody 1 0-0 2, Maddy Nilles 1 2-3 4, Ana Schmitt 3 0-4 8, Haley Hoffmann 0 0-0 0, Tori Ochs 0 1-2 1, Kelli Koppes 0 0-0 0. Team 19 25-37 72.

MARION (59): Allison Scott 2 0-0 4, Jessie Kramer 1 2-3 4, Beth Knapp 5 3-4 16, Dani Peyton 2 3-4 8, Alyssa Jones 1 0-0 2, Amanda Sahm 2 4-4 8, Michalyn Mohr 2 6-9 10, Emi Banes 1 2-4 4, Brooke Cole 1 1-1 3, Elizabeth Deeney 0 0-0 0, Ashlin Korf 0 0-0 0. Team 16 21-29 59.

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Halftime – Wahlert 46, Marion 24. 3-point goals – Marion 4 (Knapp 3, Peyton), Wahlert 9 (Lynch 3, Leytem 4, Schmitt 2) Total Fouls – Marion 27, Wahlert 23. Fouled out – Peyton, Mohr.