Aggressive Saints march past Warriors

Written by Jim Ecker
Tuesday, 10 January 2012 23:34 - Last Updated Wednesday, 11 January 2012 01:10

The Xavier Saints arrived in an ornery mood for their basketball game at Cedar Rapids Washington Tuesday night.

They vented their frustration on the winless Warriors.

The Saints attacked all night and belted Washington, 58-42, in a Mississippi Valley Conference blowout.

Xavier was drubbed in its last two games by Cedar Falls (71-40) and Western Dubuque (55-39) and thought it was time for someone else to suffer a stinging defeat.

"We kind of took Cedar Falls and Western Dubuque a little personal," said Kevin Hosch, who helped lead the charge Tuesday. "We wanted to take it out on Wash."

Xavier played an aggressive game, attacking the rim and turning turnovers into points. The Saints (3-7, 2-3) looked passive at times last Saturday night against Western Dubuque, but they turned that around against Washington.

    "We got defensive stops that led to us getting out on fast breaks and easy buckets. Defense translates into offense," said point guard Ben McDermott.

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"We just looked to push the ball. We score a lot more points when we do that. The shots were dropping tonight."

Xavier led 28-12 at halftime and raced to a 24-point cushion at 47-23 late in the third period. Time after time, the Saints got the ball and turned the game into a track meet. They didn't always convert, but they kept on attacking.

"We came in with the mindset that we want to run," said Hosch.

The Saints (3-7, 2-3) got a big boost from their reserves. Brian Ropp tossed in three 3-pointers and scored a game-high 13 points and fellow sub Tanner Frazier scored nine points, making them the top scorers for the visitors.

Alec Clasen, a 6-foot-3 jumping jack who is one of the top high jumpers in the state, also played well as a reserve. So did guard Trey Sampson.

"Phenomenal. They were phenomenal," said Xavier Coach Matt Jenkins, who loved the way his subs performed.

Jenkins was pleased overall with the way his club played on the road. The Saints missed 17 free throws, yet still won by 16 points.

"They played hard, they played together," he said. "It's something we haven't done for four quarters, is play consistently together on the offensive end and defensive end."

It was a different story for the struggling Warriors, who fell to 0-8 overall and 0-6 in the Mississippi Valley Conference. They shot poorly and committed a string of turnovers, making it tough to get anything accomplished.

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Sean Bredl led Washington with 12 points.

Jenkins feels he has the ingredients for a successful club at Xavier as the Saints head into the second half of the season.

"That's what we're hoping," he said. "As coaches, we're trying to find something that clicks. Sometimes it works, sometimes it doesn't. Tonight it did and we were able to come away with a win."

XAVIER (58): McDermott 2 2-3 7, Hosch 3 2-6 8, Valentine 0 3-6 3, Mattke 2 4-4 8, Nelson 2 1-4 5, Clasen 2 0-1 4, Sampson 0 0-0 0, Ropp 4 2-4 13, Frazier 4 0-0 9, Schulte 0 0-0 0, Woods 0 0-2 0, Mullin 0 0-0 0, Brown 0 0-0 0, Thinnes 0 0-0 0, Breitbach 0 0-0 0, Foxhoven 0 1-2 1. Totals 19 15-32 58.

WASHINGTON (42): Tann 3 0-1 6, Moa 2 1-2 5, Holmes 0 0-0 0, Oney 2 2-2 7, Bredl 5 2-3 12, Rosenthal 1 0-0 2, Clark 0 0-0 0, Nash 2 0-0 4, Bergstrom 0 0-0 0, Williams 0 1-2 1, Butterfield 1 0-0 3, Burdt 0 0-0 0, Schulte 0 0-0 0, Pint 0 0-0 0, Bill 1 0-0 2. Totals 17 6-10 42.

Halftime - Xavier 28, Washington 12. 3-point goals - Xavier 5 (Ropp 3, McDermott 1, Frazier 1), Washington 2 (Oney 1, Butterfield 1). Technical fouls - Bredl, Xavier bench (illegal sub).