

## Kennedy smothers winless Waterloo East

Written by Sher Jasperse

Tuesday, 10 January 2012 23:56 - Last Updated Wednesday, 11 January 2012 01:25

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Kennedy's Courtney Strait, the leading Class 4A scorer in the state, has carried the Cougars on her shoulders throughout much of this rebuilding season.

Tuesday night, her teammates shared the load.

Playing an undersized and underpowered Waterloo East squad that couldn't get the lid off the basket all evening, the Cougars used a team-wide effort to crush the Trojans, 79-11, in a Mississippi Valley contest on Kennedy's home floor.

Kennedy led, 46-2, at halftime.

Coach Dennis Roloff shifted his starting lineup to an all-senior group and eventually gave everyone on the team a chance to shine. He got points from 12 of the 15 players who saw action.

Strait passed the ball around freely but still managed to score a team-high 18 points and grab 11 rebounds before sitting midway through the third period.

"East is struggling right now, and it's hard to have your team tone it down," said Roloff, who took little satisfaction in the magnitude of the win. "We're working to be better, and it makes it tough for us too, because we want Courtney to be able to score points."

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"She had opportunities and I was trying to let her score 23 points to keep her average, but you're just taking a chance, and there are other kids on the bench that should be playing.

"She's a workhorse and she'd have played the whole game, but when we're 60 points up we don't need that. I wanted to get everybody in and give them an opportunity to play."

Senior guard Mariah Simmons joined Strait in double figures with 11 points, seven above her average, and seniors Kaylese Johnson, Aryn Nelson and Capria Davis all chipped in points.

"I thought Kaylese played hard again. She played very well down at Waukee (on Saturday) and was all over the floor and I thought she carried it through this game," Roloff said.

"And I thought Mariah came out and hit a lot of nice shots too. We really need seniors to pick it up and hit shots like that because we've got to get scoring from somewhere."

On this night, the scoring came from everywhere for the Cougars as they controlled the ball at both ends of the court and made the most of their plentiful fast break opportunities.

By the second half, even the Kennedy fans were pulling for a few Trojan shots to drop.

"We got a chance to work on our fundamentals again and get back to basics," said Simmons, who hoped Tuesday's effort would help the Cougars prepare for their Friday night tilt against Cedar Rapids Jefferson. "I'm not really much of a shooter, so it was a pretty good game for me."

Paige Hendrickson scored nine points for the Cougars, Jordan Holmes hit seven, and Stephanie Botkin had six points to go with seven rebounds.

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Shakari Baker-Bruce scored six points for the Trojans.

Kennedy (5-6, 4-5) plays at home Friday night against Jefferson, while Waterloo East (0-11, 0-9) hosts Dubuque Hempstead.

WATERLOO EAST (11): Shania Robinson 1 0-0 2, Margot Avice 0 0-0 0, Shakari Baker-Bruce 3 0-0 6, Symone Robinson 0 0-0 0, Dakia Frazier 1 0-0 3, Brinesha McKinney 0 0-0 0, Aryona Umoren 0 0-0 0, Katie Werner 0 0-0 0, Tashie O'Neal 0 0-0 0. Totals 5 0-0 11.

KENNEDY (79): Madi Meier 2 2-2 6, Courtney Strait 7 0-0 18, Mariah Simmons 5 0-0 11, Kaylese Johnson 2 1-3 5, Aryn Nelson 1 2-6 4, Stephanie Botkin 3 0-0 6, Paige Hendrickson 4 1-2 9, Jordan Holmes 3 0-0 7, Taylor Wagner 1 0-0 2, Sarah Zinser 1 0-0 2, Capria Davis 2 0-1 4, Taylor Sohn 2 1-1 5, Grace Reinhart 0 0-0 0, Mati Schwartzhoff 0 0-0 0, Setsuna Yokota 0 0-0 0. Totals 33 7-15 79.

Halftime - Kennedy 46, Waterloo East 2. 3-point goals – Kennedy 6 (Strait 4, Simmons 1, Holmes 1), Waterloo East 1 (Frazier). Fouled out – Shania Robinson.