

No. 1 West shoots past Hawks, 69-47

Written by Guy Martino

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IOWA CITY -- For Iowa City West, the hole in the hoop seemed to grow larger with the passing of each quarter.

It ended up being ocean sized by the end of the game.

The shots started raining in during the second half Monday night as the top-ranked Trojans defeated visiting Cedar Rapids Prairie, 69-47, in a Mississippi Valley Conference boys basketball game at the West High gym.

“The basket went from looking like a little pea, to looking like they were shooting into the Pacific,” said Prairie Coach James Moses of the Trojans' second-half shooting spree.

West (14-0, 9-0) took a 29-20 lead going into the half, but came out after the break looking to put the game out of reach. Led by Dondre Alexander and Jeremy Morgan, the Trojans scored 40 points in the second half, and built an insurmountable by the end of the third quarter.

Alexander had a team high 15 points, while Morgan finished with 14 and a few momentum inspiring shots.

“Jeremy came out hot in the second half,” said Moses. “We just weren’t able to disrupt and make things tougher for him. He seemed to hit a comfort zone after a couple shots.”

Other Trojans joined the fun throughout the night, as the ocean-sized hoop accommodated nine different scorers and saw eight 3-pointers fall through.

Sophomore Wyatt Lohaus scored 13 and big man Jacob Gylten chipped in 12.

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Prairie (6-7, 2-6) came out early in the game playing inspired, grabbing an 11-9 lead in the first quarter after a Jacob Aune steal and layup. But that was the last time the Hawks led. Aune was a bright spot for Prairie, scoring a game high 17 points.

The undersized Prairie Hawks were just playing from behind.

"They require a tough matchup because they have a really balanced starting five," said Moses. "And some of the lineups they put out there are bigger than some college level teams. That is a unique advantage that they have."

The first possession of the third quarter, West Coach Steve Bergman barked out instructions as his team was running down the court. They proceeded to perfectly execute a lob play that sparked a 9-0 run.

"I think they got some inspiration from Coach Bergman coming out of the half," said Moses. "He does a great job and I have a lot of respect for him."

Then, with the score 31-20, the Trojans broke the Prairie Hawks spirit in one possession. Gylten went up strong and made a basket along with a called foul. He missed the free throw, but the ball was rebounded by Alexander who put it back up for another "and one" call.

Alexander then missed the free throw. Gylten dove for the loose ball which ended up in the hands of Lohaus, who buried a 3-pointer and completed a seven-point possession that put the Trojans up 38-22.

"I think we got a little fatigued as the game went on, but I also think that we learned some lessons of how to try and focus for all four quarters," said Moses.

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West went on another 9-0 run to start the fourth quarter to solidify the victory.

“You have to give Iowa City West respect. They are the number one team in the state and they proved it tonight,” said Moses.

Prairie hosts Cedar Rapids Kennedy Tuesday night.

PRAIRIE (47): Jacob Aune 8 0-0 17, Matt MacDougall 1 0-0 2, Jace Hanna 2 0-0 5, Thomas Eilers 0 4-4 4, Brooks Kehoe 0 0-0 0, DeMetrius Harper 5 0-1 10, Kentrel Smith 1 0-0 3, Bryce Meeker 0 1-2 1, Jomaryon Simpson 2 1-1 5, Garrett Rasmussen 0 0-0 0, Cody Tonyan 0 0-0 0, Tyler Mougins 0 0-0 0, Mitchell Adams 0 0-0 0. Totals 19 6-8 47.

IOWA CITY WEST (69): Jeremy Morgan 6 0-1 14, Dondre Alexander 5 4-4 15, Wyatt Lohaus 4 2-2 13, Myzeah Batie-Gaddy 2 0-0 4, Jacob Gylten 5 1-2 12, Jason Stewart 1 0-0 2, Austin Swank 2 0-0 5, Tavian Smith 0 0-0 0, Richard Bryant 1 0-0 2, Mark Lowe 1 0-0 2 Reid Bonner 0 0-0 0, Josh Verry 0 0-0 0. Totals 27 7-9 69.

Halftime - West 29, Prairie 20. 3-point goals - West 8 (Lohaus 3, Morgan 2, Alexander, Gylten, Swank), Prairie 3 (Aune, Hanna, Smith).