

Martin hurt; No. 9 Cougars escape

Written by Randy Krejci

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It has been a difficult week for those associated with Kennedy High School.

The ever-popular Drew Wall, a golfer and outstanding young man, died of cancer on Monday and this certainly affected the entire Cougar community.

A new coach also was being baptized into the Mississippi Valley Conference after a long and successful career at Harlan High School. But in this case Tony Vis started the Cougars toward a, hopefully, very successful season with an intra-division victory over Dubuque Wahlert 45-41, Friday night at Kennedy.

Coach Vis replaced long-time Cougar coach Dennis Roloff for the 2012-2013 campaign. Vis spent the past seven years at Harlan and also had coaching stops at Audubon and Hudson - successful at all venues.

This was a battle of teams ranked No. 9 in their respective classes, Kennedy in Class 5A and Wahlert in Class 4A. Kennedy held a nine-point halftime lead, outscoring the Golden Eagles 11-3 in the second quarter.

Stephanie Botkin led the Cougars with 11 points and Brianna Vis, the coach's daughter, added nine.

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Morgan Martin, a talented transfer from Illinois, scored five points but suffered a knee injury. Vis described the injury as anything from “a bad bruise to a meniscus injury or possibly an ACL problem.”

Martin played only a short time in the game.

Kennedy let Wahlert hang around in the game by making only 15 of its 28 free throw attempts.

“We were OK for the most part, but could have shot better from the free throw line. We let them hang around and lost our poise a little bit at the end,” commented Coach Vis.

Wahlert, under Coach Kris Spiegler, wanted to keep the big kids off the board and attack their press and be patient. “Their posts are athletic,” she said and she identified Madi Meier as a key player that they wanted to keep in check. Meier tallied one field goal for Kennedy and finished with five points.

Even with some key graduation losses from the 2011-2012 unit, Spiegler stated, “Logan Lynch is a key leader and scorer, Olivia Smith is one which we count on for our quickness, and Tori Ochs is a role player from last year, who has a good attitude, and we will have to count on her this year.”

Lynch led Wahlert with 17 points in a losing cause, and though Smith hounded everyone on defense, she did contribute seven points for the Golden Eagles offensively. Ana Schmitt was the second leading scorer for Wahlert with eight points.

Overall, Coach Vis stated that the Cougars were “a bit stagnant” at times and admitted that Wahlert kept them off balance also at certain times and they “showed us man and zone and we couldn’t always get in a rhythm.”

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But take away the many fouls and he was happy with the way the Cougars defended.

Kennedy's next game is Saturday at Pleasant Valley. Wahlert's next game is Tuesday at home against Jefferson.

WAHLERT (41): Ana Schmit 2 3-4 8, Logan Lynch 6 3-4 17, Tori Ochs 1 0-0 2, Katrina Tranel 0 0-0 0, Emily Simon 1 0-0 2, Katy Fricano 0 0-0 0, Olivia Smith 2 2-2 7, Jade Lynch 1 1-2 3, Marissa Cody 0 2-2 2. Totals 13 11-14 41.

KENNEDY (45): Maddie Meier 1 3-4 5, Madison DeLong 0 0-0 0, Jordan Holmes 1 0-3 2, Brianna Vis 2 5-6 9, Taylor Wagner 3 0-2 6, Paige Hendrickson 3 1-3 7, Stephanie Botkin 3 5-8 11, Morgan Martin 2 1-2 5. Totals 15 15-28 45.

Halftime - Kennedy 23, Wahlert 14. 3-point goals - Wahlert 4 (Lynch 2, Schmit, Smith), Kennedy 0. Fouls - Wahlert 18, Kennedy 16. Fouled out - Ochs, Smith.