

Kennedy folds in 4th against Hoover

Written by Randy Krejci

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Des Moines Hoover scored 26 points in the fourth quarter and stunned Kennedy, 56-46, Saturday night in a non-conference boys basketball game at Kennedy.

Kennedy (1-1) outscored Hoover 13-3 in the third quarter to turn a six-point halftime deficit into a 34-30 lead.

But the fourth quarter posed a major challenge for the Cougars.

"The guards didn't really do what we had intended and we had too many empty possessions," Kennedy Coach Bob Fontana said.

The teams were tied, 34-34, at the 6:56 mark in the final stanza. But Hoover's Kahlid Edwards hit a key field goal, and two free throws by Ahlijah Thomas helped propel the Huskies to 13 straight points.

"Early in the fourth quarter we forgot how we got the lead," Fontana said. "The run was frustrating for us as coaches."

Fontana went on to state that being more consistent on offense will be a key focus of upcoming practices.

"The way we played down the stretch against a very quick and athletic team led to our downfall," he said. "We will still work on finding five guys who are really ready to play."

Hoover had five players in the scoring column and was led by Malachi Canada with 22 points.

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Chris King chipped in with 15.

Only one Kennedy player was in double figures and that was the workhorse in the middle, Drew Heitland, who battled in the pivot and earned his way to 10 points.

Nine players scored for Kennedy. Johnathon Koelling had four goals in the second half and finished with eight points.

A major highlight for the Hoover faithful late in the contest was a monster jam by one of their two seniors, Gatlat Toang, who put an exclamation point on the fourth quarter surge with his dunk after a steal and break-away.

Hoover used some early three-point goal success to take an early 17-11 first quarter lead.

Both teams scored 10 points apiece in the second quarter and Hoover led 27-21 at half behind the nifty scoring of Canada, who had 14 points at halftime.

The Cougars had a very impressive third period.

"We had a good final four minutes of the second quarter and we played well in the third quarter," Fontana said.

Kennedy was 13 of 13 from the free-throw line.

DM HOOVER (56): Khalid Edwards 3 1-2 7, Ahlijah Thomas 2 2-2 8, Chris King 4 5-6 15, Malachi Canada 8 5-6 22, Gatlat Toang 2 0-0 4, Dorian Houston 0 0-2 0. Totals 19 13-18 56.

KENNEDY (46): Taylor Oltman 1 0-0 2, Blake Murdock 0 2-2 2, Anthony Carter 0 2-2 2, Draven Fuller 2 2-2 6, Riley Fergus 0 0-0 0, John Bardsley 1 4-4 7, Patrick Martin 0 2-2 2, John Koelling 4 0-0 8, Andrew Johnson 0 0-0 0, Drew Heitland 5 0-0 10, Ben Struss 3 1-1 7. Totals

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16 13-13 46.

Halftime - Hoover 27, Kennedy 21. 3-point goals - Hoover 5 (Thomas 2, King 2, Canada), Kennedy 1 (Bardsley). Team fouls - Hoover 16, Kennedy 16. Fouled out - None.