

Warriors upend Cougars to end drought

Written by Jim Ecker

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Cedar Rapids Washington High School's long nightmare in boys basketball has ended.

The Warriors snapped a 26-game losing streak Friday night by topping Kennedy, 53-50, in a Mississippi Valley Conference game at Cedar Rapids Kennedy.

Washington had not won a game since February of 2011. The Warriors lost their final game of the 2010-11 campaign, lost all 21 games last season and lost their first four games this season under new coach Adam Sanchez.

Washington got off to a good start Friday, built a 23-10 halftime lead and held on at the end. There were hugs and high-fives outside the Washington locker room as they celebrated the victory.

"It's a great day to be a Warrior!," exclaimed senior David Rosenthal, who contributed eight points.

Washington does not have much firepower, but Sanchez has emphasized defense, hustle and being aggressive this season. It paid off Friday.

"It's crazy. It's unbelievable," said senior Jason Oney, who led the Warriors with 10 points. "It's an amazing feeling.

"Our game plan was to come out strong, and that's what we did. The difference was our energy."

Kennedy chopped a 44-33 deficit to 53-50 on a 3-pointer by Anthony Carter with five seconds remaining. Kennedy fouled Montaves Anderson, who cooperated by missing two free throws, but Carter's halfcourt heave at the buzzer was not close and the Warriors had their victory.

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"It's about time," said Rosenthal, relieved.

"It was a great team effort," he said. "We played 32 minutes. That's what we said coming into the game. We wanted to play the full 32 minutes and out-hustle them in everything. And we did. We outlasted them."

Austin Bergstrom hit five key free throws in the final minute for Washington to help keep Kennedy at bay.

Benjamin Struss led the Cougars with 11 points.

WASHINGTON (53): Anderson 0 2-6 2, Bergstrom 1 5-6 7, Butterfield 2 3-5 8, Taylor 3 2-2 9, Rosenthal 3 2-4 8, Holmes 1 0-0 2, Clark 2 1-2 5, Good-Jones 1 0-0 2. Totals 16 19-31 53.

KENNEDY (50): Murdock 4 0-0 10, Carter 4 0-2 9, Fuller 0 0-0 0, Fergus 0 1-2 1, Bardsley 1 3-4 6, Martin 3 1-2 7, Koelling 0 0-4 0, Johnson 0 2-2 2, Holzer 1 0-0 2, Heitland 1 0-0 2, Struss 5 0-0 11, Daniels 0 0-0 0. Totals 19 7-16 50.

Halftime - Washington 23, Kennedy 10. 3-point goals - Washington 2 (Butterfield 1, Taylor 1), Kennedy 5 (Murdock 2, Carter 1, Bardsley 1, Struss 1).

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