

Meier leads Kennedy girls past Linn-Mar

Written by Randy Krejci

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Both schools in this rivalry were wrapping up their regular season Mississippi Valley Conference action in the game at the Cougar gym and it was Cedar Rapids Kennedy finishing the conference action on a high note with a 58-51 victory over Linn-Mar on Senior Night. The leading scorer of the contest for Kennedy was Madison Meier with 15 points and Paige Hendrickson chipped in with 14 leading the Cougars.

Kennedy, a member of the Mississippi Division held on to third place for sure with a 9-4 record in conference play and finished behind the two Iowa City schools in the standings. Kennedy has a non-conference encounter Saturday against Marion in the Cougar gym to finish out the regular season before beginning Class 5A tournaments with a matchup next Wednesday against Jefferson at Kennedy.

Linn-Mar has fifth place in the bag and finishes just under .500 in the conference standings of the Valley Division and concluded its regular season 9-12 overall. The Lions were paced by the overall scoring leader of the contest—senior Mykaela Brandt with 19 and Kristen Eiles was also in double figures with 11 and hit three long bombs in the second half to keep Linn-Mar always within striking distance.

In a nice gesture by Athletic Director Aaron Stecker, seniors of both teams were recognized prior to the game and it was a senior on both teams, daughters of the respective head coaches, that played extremely well. “I’ve been through many senior nights throughout all my coaching, and yes, when it is your daughter being introduced and honored, it is special,” cited Kennedy Cougar Coach Tony Vis. “We wanted them to honor the entire team by playing as hard as we possibly could.”

“We wanted to hold our turnovers under 10 for the night, keep Linn-Mar in the 40s, and win the battle of the boards,” stated Vis.

Rebounding was a key for the Cougars in the second half—especially on the offensive end. His daughter, Brianna, scored eight points, played pesky defense, and hit both of her free throws for a team that was 18 of 21 on the line.

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Coach Mike Brandt of Linn-Mar countered with a daughter of his own. Mykaela Brandt had five 3-point goals in her 19 points and seemingly every time Kennedy looked to put the game away, she hit a long shot under pressure to keep the Lions in the game.

"We're building our confidence on defense (in the last couple of games) and we knew there were great athletes at Kennedy. This was a great 21st game for us to play preparing for the post-season," Coach Brandt said.

Linn-Mar is getting used to playing on the road. The tournament trail finds them going to Prairie next Wednesday and if they can win that would face Washington on their court. Ultimately, a visit to Ankeny would involve those teams in a regional final later this month.

LINN-MAR (51): Taylor Robertson 0 0-0 0, Hannah Yearling 0 2-2 2, Mykaela Brandt 7 0-0 19, Sara Strauel 1 1-2 3, Jenna Harms 1 0-0 2, Aryn Jones 1 0-0 2, Kristin Eiles 4 0-0 11, Anna Foley 0 0-0 0, Courtney Major 1 3-4 6, Alexis Libenguth 3 0-0 6. Totals 18 6-8 51.

KENNEDY (58): Madison Meier 4 4-4 15, Madison DeLong 1 0-0 2, Jordan Holmes 3 4-4 11, Brianna Vis 3 2-2 8, Abigail Hellweg 0 0-0 0, Taylor Wagner 0 0-0 0, Mariah Vis 0 0-1 0, Paige Hendrickson 4 6-6 14, Stephanie Botkin 3 2-4 8. Totals 18 18-21 58.

Halftime - Kennedy 25, Linn-Mar 18. 3-point goals - Kennedy 4 (Meier 3, Holmes 1), Linn-Mar 9 (Brandt 5, Eiles 3, Major 1).