

Cougars bump off Cedar Falls, 59-55

Written by Jim Sullivan, Waterloo Courier
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CEDAR FALLS - Ryan Schultz's walk from the basketball court to Cedar Falls' locker room is not a long one.

That does not mean the trip down the stairs is easy, especially for a team mired in a seven-game losing streak.

Still, the Tigers' head coach likes what he sees when he enters the locker room and he liked much of what he watched on the court Tuesday. Cedar Falls lost to Cedar Rapids Kennedy, 59-55, on a night when Schultz thought his team played well.

"I was very happy with the way we played," said Schultz. "I thought we played as hard as we've played in quite some time, although that hasn't been a thing that's been a problem for us this year."

Schultz added, "Obviously, we want to win and it's hard. It's hard to keep going down there each night and get the things moving in the right direction. But we're staying positive, and that's a good thing."

Cedar Falls (6-14) trailed the Cougars by as many as 13 points in the second half. The Tigers struggled against the aggressive, trapping, matchup zone deployed by Jon McKowen, the former Wapsie Valley High star and one-time coach at NU High. He's in his first year at Kennedy.

The Tigers, though, didn't fade away. In fact, they got hot, hitting 12 of 15 shots from the field at one point and 16 of 23 (69.6 percent) through the entire second half.

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Center Kyle Boomgarden had 10 of his 12 points in the final two periods. Guard Durrell Jackson took the ball to the basket consistently on the way to a team-high 15. Drew Marchesani hit a couple of 3-pointers.

"We take those positives from it," said Schultz.

The Tigers could not overtake the Cougars (15-5, 11-4), even though they crept within four points twice and three once. Cole Murdock hit a couple of key layups, and a Tiger accidentally tipped the ball into the Cougar basket as Kennedy held on.

A.J. Carter led Kennedy with 16 points. Murdock finished with 13.

KENNEDY (59): Zach Daniels 3-9 1-2 9, A.J. Carter 6-10 3-5 16, Derek Jacobus 1-2 1-1 3, Cole Murdock 5-10 0-0 13, Drew Heitland 2-3 2-7 6, John Bardsley 3-5 0-0 6, Austin Holzer 1-2 0-0 2, Bryton Heisler 2-4 0-1 4. Totals 23-43 7-16 59.

CEDAR FALLS (55 : Durrell Jackson 7-14 0-0 15, Lewis Mickey 3-4 0-0 6, Keeon Johnson 4-10 2-2 11, Drew Marchesani 3-5 0-0 8, Kyle Boomgarden 6-6 0-3 12, Brian Cook 0-1 0-0 0, Jacob Leisinger 0-1 0-0 0, Jared Deines 0-1 0-0 0, Denison Harrington 1-1 0-0 3, Ben Fienup 0-0 0-0 0. Totals 24-43 2-5 55.

Halftime - Kennedy 26, Cedar Falls 20. 3-point goals - Kennedy 6 (Daniels 2, Carter 1, Murdock 3), Cedar Falls 5 (Jackson 1, Johnson 1, Marchesani 2, Harrington 1).