

## Waukee too tall for Lions, 56-51

Written by Jim Ecker

Wednesday, 04 December 2013 00:03 -

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The Waukee Warriors strolled into the Linn-Mar gym Tuesday night with an imposing front line that stood 6-foot-10, 6-foot-8 and 6-foot-7, but the Lions simply got out their pea-shooters and began firing away.

The Lions almost chopped Waukee down to size, but the Warriors escaped with a 56-51 victory in the season opener for both teams before heading back into the fog for the trip home.

"I loved the way our guys competed. I thought we really battled," Linn-Mar Coach Chris Robertson remarked. "That's a tough matchup. We don't have anybody over 6-5.

"That's what I told them: Be disappointed with the result, but don't be disappointed with your effort."

The Warriors were not just big, they were also good. Nate Gehring, a 6-10 senior, will play at Pepperdine next year. Michael Jacobson, a 6-8 junior, was the third-best rebounder in Class 4A last year at 10.5 per game. Anthony Nelson, a 6-7 junior, also can play the game.

"We're very fortunate," said Waukee Coach Justin Ohl. "And they're good basketball players."

Waukee's triple towers combined for 49 of their team's 56 points, but the little Lions hung in there with 6-foot-4 Jon Schlotterback and 6-foot-5 Ryan Schmidt battling on the inside and Linn-Mar's guards popping from the outside.

Jordan Bohannon hit three 3-pointers and scored 21 points for Linn-Mar despite missing most of the second quarter with two fouls. Nic Uhlir and Trevor Noble scored 10 points apiece for the Lions and Lane Halupnik netted eight.

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Bohannon, a sophomore point guard, hit three straight baskets in the fourth quarter to give Linn-Mar the lead at 44-42, 46-45 and 48-47 with about four minutes left in the game. The youngest of the four Bohannon brothers gave Waukee problems all night.

"That Bohannon kid," Ohl said after the game, relieved it was over. "There aren't any more of them coming along, are there?"

Bohannon averaged eight points for the Linn-Mar varsity last year as a freshman and appears ready to claim a spot as one of the top guards in the Mississippi Valley Conference. He worked hard during the summer to improve, often with his three older brothers who all starred at Linn-Mar before playing Division I ball in college.

"I just worked on my ballhandling, and staying low and being explosive on my finish," said Bohannon. "I have to make the offense flow. That's what I worked on during the summer."

Robertson said Bohannon is quicker, faster and noticeably better.

"He's improved tremendously," the coach said. "He's just going to get better and better, and people need to realize he's just a sophomore. He's got a lot of good days ahead of him."

Ohl was impressed with Bohannon.

"He's improved in every area. That's what good players do," said Ohl, whose team played Linn-Mar last year as well. "It's scary that he's a sophomore."

Waukee took a 52-48 lead late in the game, but Uhlir hit a 3-pointer to pull Linn-Mar within 52-51. Nelson made a layup to give Waukee a 54-51 edge. Linn-Mar committed a turnover and Michael Winger hit two free throws to make it 56-51 with 29.6 seconds remaining.

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The Lions launched several 3-pointers in the final seconds, but none connected.

Linn-Mar visits Bettendorf Saturday night.

WAUKEE (56): Winger 1 2-2 5, Frey 0 0-0 0, Crites 1 0-0 2, Jacobson 6 6-8 19, Howe 0 0-0 0, Nelson 6 4-6 16, Gehring 6 2-5 14, A.Allen 0 0-0 0, T.Allen 0 0-1 0, Rose 0 0-0 0. Totals 20 14-22 56.

LINN-MAR (51): Uhlir 3 2-3 10, Murphy 0 0-0 0, Noble 5 0-2 10, Brennecke 0 0-2 0, Bohannon 9 0-1 21, Larson 0 0-0 0, Schlotterback 0 0-0 0, Halupnik 3 0-0 8, Schmidt 1 0-0 2, Brandt 0 0-0 0. Totals 21 2-8 51.

Halftime - Waukee 29, Linn-Mar 26. 3-point shots - Waukee 2 (Winger 1, Jacobson 1), Linn-Mar 7 (Bohannon 3, Uhlir 2, Halupnik 2). Fouled out - none.