

Knapp nets 26 as Marion girls dance to win

Written by Tom Fruehling

Wednesday, 30 January 2013 00:28 -

With their sixth win in the last seven games, the Marion girls are girding themselves for the stretch run.

“We’re playing good when we should,” said senior shooter Beth Knapp after torching Independence for 26 points in a runaway 54-35 victory at home Tuesday night.

Coming together when it counts under new coach Corby Laube, the Indians (12-6) remain in hot pursuit of the Wamac West title with a 9-3 conference mark.

They stay tied in second place with the Center Point-Urbana Pointers, who closed the gap at the top to one game by defeating league-leader Benton on Tuesday.

Now on a four-game win streak, Marion has a showdown at CPU next Tuesday following a home game with Williamsburg on Friday.

“We’ve stressed all year that we want to finish strong,” said Laube, the Marion athletic director who took over the team when former coach Brian O’Donnell left for a school administration job.

“We laid an egg against Benton (a 55-38 loss two weeks ago), but we’ve been playing really well.”

He said defense was once again the key to the second victory of the season over Independence (9-8, 6-6).

“We were really good,” said Laube, a former Marion boys coach. “We didn’t give them any transition points, and we didn’t give them points on offensive rebounds. We made them work hard on offense all night.”

Knapp nets 26 as Marion girls dance to win

Written by Tom Fruehling

Wednesday, 30 January 2013 00:28 -

As usual, sophomore Michalyn Mohr was a force in the middle, pulling down eight rebounds and grabbing eight steals. She also had two blocks and scored 11 points.

"Mike has a nose for the ball," Laube said.

Despite missing several easy buckets, the Indians took a 26-15 lead into halftime by holding the Mustangs to five points in the second quarter.

"We really came out with a lot of defensive intensity," Knapp said. She explained that the team did an impromptu pre-game dance in the locker room that got them fired up.

"I don't think the coaches knew about the dance party," she noted. "But it loosened us up, got us relaxed and ready to go. We were pumped up."

Knapp herself was fully charged, scoring 14 points in the first half and adding a half-dozen in each of the last two quarters for a season-high point production.

A dangerous long-range marksman, she scored when the Mustangs left her open on the outside and on hard drives to the basket. She also made eight of 11 free throws after being fouled going to the hoop.

"For a pure 3-point shooter, she's really improving her mid-range game," Laube pointed out.

With Knapp continuing to pump in points, the Indians closed the first half and started the second with a 16-0 run to take a 19-point lead midway through the third quarter.

Knapp nets 26 as Marion girls dance to win

Written by Tom Fruehling

Wednesday, 30 January 2013 00:28 -

They eventually built the margin to 28 before the Mustangs mopped up with nine straight points at the end.

Knapp credited teammates for her big night.

"We have a very unselfish team," she said. "Any one of us can get hot, and we know who's hot and get the ball to them.

"Tonight just happened to be my night."

Playing in and out again on gimpy legs, senior floor general Micaela Combs directed the offense without taking a shot all night. Dubbed "the assist maker" by Knapp, Combs said she sees her role as making stops on defense and setting up others on offense.

"I just try to keep everyone patient and to keep pushing hard all the time," said the gutsy point guard, who is seeing doctors at the University of Iowa Sports Clinic about her chronic leg problems.

Knapp said her teammate is an inspiration.

"We knows she's playing in pain," the night's high scorer said. "We know how hard it is for her. That just makes the rest of us want to play harder."

INDEPENDENCE (35): Chelsea Ratchford 0 0-0 0, Kelsey Ratchford 3 3-3 9, Stephanie McMillan 1 1-2 3, Ashlyn Bagge 0 2-2 2, Mackenzie Black 2 0-0 5, Molly Gustafson 2 0-0 4, Suzi Grover-Wegmuller 0 2-2 2, Mackenzie Thompson 0 0-0 0, Brittney Fuller 1 1-2 3, Tristin Ludwig 1 3-3 5, Megan Kinseth 1 0-0 2. Totals 11 12-14 35.

Knapp nets 26 as Marion girls dance to win

Written by Tom Fruehling

Wednesday, 30 January 2013 00:28 -

MARION (54): Micaela Combs 0 0-0 0, Amanda Sahm 1 0-0 2, Paige Perkins 2 2-2 6, Beth Knapp 9 8-11 26, Michalyn Mohr 2 7-9 11, Emi Banes 2 2-4 7, Tessa Jordan 0 2-2 2, Jozee Peyton 0 0-0 0, Madi Redlinger 0 0-0 0, Marissa Whitney 0 0-0 0, Steph Hedtke 0 0-0 0, Danica Chalstrom 0 0-0 0, Erica Kelly 0 0-0 0. Totals 16 21-28 54.

Halftime – Marion 26, Independence 15. 3-point goals – Independence 1 (Black), Marion 1 (Banes).