

One final heartbreak for Marion girls

Written by Tom Fruehling

Thursday, 17 February 2011 00:12 - Last Updated Thursday, 17 February 2011 00:15

It happened again to the Heartbreak Kids.

For the eighth time this year, and the second in the last four days, the Marion girls lost by six points or less.

On Wednesday night, in their home gym, the Indians fell to arch-rival Anamosa 35-31 in overtime .

The loss in the first round of a Class 3A regional ends Marion's season with a deceiving 6-16 record.

The 12-10 Raiders, meanwhile, move on to play at second-ranked Mount Vernon (20-2) Saturday night in a regional semifinal. The Mustangs crushed Center Point-Urbana 64-32 last night.

Mount Vernon has beaten Anamosa twice already in the regular Wamac conference season, 68-26 in January and 59-34 10 days ago.

As he's pointed out before, most recently last Saturday after a last-minute 50-49 defeat at Kennedy, Marion Coach Brian O'Donnell said Wednesday's disappointing result could not be blamed on a lack of effort or desire.

"It's been the story of our season that we work hard and with tremendous heart but come up a little short. Losing so many close ones has been tough. But the girls gave it everything they had every game."

In their previous meeting in early December, Anamosa barely prevailed 27-25.

One final heartbreak for Marion girls

Written by Tom Fruehling

Thursday, 17 February 2011 00:12 - Last Updated Thursday, 17 February 2011 00:15

Raiders Coach Jack Leighty employed the same winning strategy in the rematch.

“With our size advantage upfront, we used a 2-3 zone to try to keep the ball out of the paint. We knew we'd give them some good looks outside. Lucky for us, they didn't fall.”

Usually sharp from behind the arc, the Indians made only two 3-pointers.

O'Donnell said his team should have driven more into the lane.

“I didn't think we were aggressive enough. We did too much dribbling around outside instead of attacking inside.”

On offense, the Raiders held the ball for as long as possible before getting it into one of their big girls in the middle.

“Really, we'd like to score more points than we do.” Leighty. said.. “But we've struggled to score all year.

“We've relied on tough defense. I'll admit our game sometimes looks ugly.”

Marion's young first-year coach gave the opponent credit for slowing down the pace of the game.

“We let them control the tempo and played right into their hands,” O'Donnell said. “I was happy with how we defended them and with our rebounding. But we missed a lot of opportunities on offense.”

One final heartbreak for Marion girls

Written by Tom Fruehling

Thursday, 17 February 2011 00:12 - Last Updated Thursday, 17 February 2011 00:15

Leighty said his team was prepared for what he called a “dogfight” with their Wamac conference next-door neighbor.

Winning in overtime against Maquoketa last week helped toughen his girls for another game.

Indeed, it was a nip-and-tuck affair all last night.

Tied at 5-5 after the first quarter, Anamosa squeezed ahead at half 12-10.

It was knotted again at 20-20 after three quarters and at 27-27 at the end of regulation.

In overtime, Anamosa came out with six quick points.

The Indians got is as close as 33-30 on a steal and a lay-up by quicksilver junior guard Dani Peyton with 43 seconds left, but Anamosa closed the game out from the free throw line.

As frustrating as the season was for Marion in many respects, the players seemed upbeat afterward.

“We came out strong tonight and made them earn the win,” said sophomore sparkplug Micaela Combs. “Coach says defense wins ball games, and our defense kept us in the game.”

Peyton acknowledged the team needs work on offense.

One final heartbreak for Marion girls

Written by Tom Fruehling

Thursday, 17 February 2011 00:12 - Last Updated Thursday, 17 February 2011 00:15

“We’ll be in the gym tomorrow morning, working on our shots, getting ready for next season.”

ANAMOSA (35): Kellie Vaughn 0 7-12 7, Abi Tuetken 1 0-0 2, Tristan Camp 5 2-5 12, Lauren Buck 2 2-6 7, Kayla Zumbach 1 2-3 4, Lindsey Bildstein 1 0-0 3, Mallory Wagner 0 0-0 0. Totals 10 13-26 35.

MARION (31): Leah Smith 2 0-0 4, Jessie Kramer 2 1-2 5, Krisin Kramer 3 1-2 8, Dani Peyton 3 3-6 9, Alyssa Jones 1 0-0 2, Beth Knapp 1 0-0 3, Micaela Combs 0 0-0 0, Allison Scott 0 0-0 0, Paige Perkins 0 0-0 0. Totals 12 5-10 31.

Halftime – Anamosa 12, Marion 10. End of regulation – Anamosa 27, Marion 27. 3-point goals – Anamosa 2 (Bildstein, Buck), Marion 2 (Knapp, K. Kramer). Total fouls – Anamosa 13, Marion 22. Fouled out – Zumbach.