

McDermott, Winker lift Saints by Wash

Written by Tom Fruehling
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When the chips were down Friday night on their home floor, the Xavier boys counted on their two aces.

Sharpshooters Adam McDermott and Calvin Winker accounted for 13 points in a fourth-quarter surge that brought the Saints from a seven-point deficit to a come-from-behind 63-58 win over Washington in a Mississippi Valley Conference game.

“They’re our money players,” said Xavier Coach Ryan Luehrsmann, “and they rose to the occasion. They made their shots when it counted.”

The Warriors (2-5, 2-3 MVC) led right from the start, jumping off to a quick 9-2 burst when Jared Printy nailed a 3-pointer.

With 6-foot-6 pogo stick Maurice Arrington cleaning the backboards and balanced scoring coming from a deep lineup, Washington nursed a narrow lead throughout and went into the final stanza ahead 46-39.

At crunch time, though, the Saints clamped down.

They took their first lead at 47-46 when McDermott notched his third trey of the night. And when Winker scored from underneath on a nifty pass by Mitchell Burger, Xavier (5-3, 2-2 MVC) built its lead to 54-46.

In the first six minutes of the final period, the Saints went on a 15-0 tear before Arrington broke the ice with a short jumper. That was the junior jumping jack's first basket of the second half after scoring eight points in the first half and rimming out several close-in tips.

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"He's a tremendous jumper and beat us up pretty good on the offensive boards in the first half," Luehrsmann said. "But we switched Calvin (Winker) on him, and he's a darned good athlete himself. He did a heck of a job."

Besides keeping the ball away from Arrington and cutting down on his rebounds, Winker scored 16 points. McDermott led his team with 21 with three 3-pointers and 12 of 16 from the free throw line.

Winker said the fourth-quarter blitz was rooted in hard-nosed defensive play. "We really focus on our defense," the steady junior said. "And we stepped it up down the stretch."

"Our offense comes from our defense. When we started getting those stops, we started getting our shots."

Fouls were also a factor. Washington had 32 on the night, and Xavier took advantage as it made its comeback push at the start of the fourth quarter.

"We knew they were in foul trouble," Winker pointed out. "So we attacked the basket and ended up with free throws."

The Warriors made seven more field goals in the game but were outscored at the free throw line, 25-8. Washington Coach Adam Sanchez said the disparity was not the difference in the game.

"They made the big shots when they had to," he said. "We didn't lose the game, they won it. They were just better than us down the stretch."

Luehrsmann said that after losing some hard-luck games lately, the win over Washington

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should be a confidence booster.

“We haven't been at our best the last few games,” he said. “But we challenged them to get aggressive in the fourth quarter tonight, and they came through. We needed this win.”

Arrington led the Warriors with 12 points. Jacob Kramer scored 11.

WASHINGTON (58): Razadon Taylor 2 0-1 4, Reid Snitker 3 1-2 7, Jacob Kramer 4 2-3 11, Maurice Arrington 5 2-2 12, Jared Printy 2 1-2 6, Montaves Anderson 2 1-3 5, Drew Hoeger 0 0-0 0, Keegan Moore 2 1-2 5, C.J. Nelson 2 0-0 6, Julian Good-Jones 1 0-0 2. Totals 23 8-15 58.

XAVIER (63): Adam McDermott 3 12-16 21, Mitchell Burger 1 3-4 6, Calvin Winker 5 5-8 16, Matt Nelson 3 2-2 8, Frank Hill 0 0-0 0, Andrew Bisenius 2 2-3 7, Connor Ramlo 2 1-4 5, Joe Welch 0 0-0 0. Totals 16 25-37 63.

Halftime – Washington 34, Xavier 30. 3-point goals – Washington 4 (Nelson 2, Kramer 1, Printy 1), Xavier 6 (McDermott 3, Burger 1, Winker 1, Buisenius 1). Total fouls – Washington 32, Xavier 16. Fouled out – Anderson, Moore.