

Saints boys trimmed by Iowa City West

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IOWA CITY – Iowa City West’s sophomore duo of Dondre Alexander and Jeremy Morgan combined for 26 points Friday night as the Trojans outmuscled Cedar Rapids Xavier, 56-51, in a Mississippi Valley Conference game in Iowa City.

West took advantage of two consecutive turnovers by the Saints late in the fourth quarter that resulted in two field goals and a 52-48 lead with less than a minute remaining.

“There were about two or three possessions where we lost contact with their shooters and they made us pay for it,” said Xavier Coach Matt Jenkins.

Ryan Mains led the Saints with nine points and four rebounds. Mack Matke added seven points off the bench, including a key 3-pointer that put Xavier within one point with two minutes remaining.

West’s physicality and ability to break Xavier’s 1-3-1 zone with a combination of good outside shooting and high-low post play ended any chance of a Saints comeback.

“There were times down the stretch where we had opportunities to finish with contact and we didn’t. When you play a physical team you (have) to be up for it. We weren’t,” said Jenkins.

The loss dropped the Saints to 4-11 overall and 3-7 in the MVC. The Trojans improved to 10-4 overall and 6-4 in the Valley.

Since Xavier lost to West by 27 points a month ago, Jenkins was somewhat pleased with the result and believes the future is bright for his team.

“We’re right where we need to be. We made a 20-point improvement tonight and our guys are right where we want to be,” he said. “Our guys are becoming a team. They’re talking more on

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defense and we have a good feel for what teams do and how we can react and kind of dictate what they're doing."