

Bohannon nets 30 as No. 6 Lions roll along

Written by Mike Condon

Friday, 27 February 2015 21:51 - Last Updated Friday, 27 February 2015 22:11

When it comes to defensive schemes, Linn-Mar's slick tandem of Jordan Bohannon and Nic Uhlir have seen just about all of them.

The Lion sharpshooters got a variety of defensive looks from Waterloo West in Friday night's Class 4A substate semifinal at Linn-Mar.

None of them proved successful.

Bohannon torched the Wahawks for 30 points, including six 3-point baskets, and Uhlir finished with 17 as the No. 6 Lions (18-4) rolled to a 66-45 victory.

That sets up the much-anticipated rematch with Kennedy in the substate final Tuesday at 8 p.m. at the U.S. Cellular Center. The Cougars advanced with a 71-55 win over Cedar Falls in their substate semifinal at Kennedy.

West dropped a 60-50 decision to the Lions in the regular-season finale last Thursday in Waterloo as both teams stuck to the basics in anticipation of Friday's tournament contest.

"The game up there last Thursday was so vanilla," said Lions Coach Chris Robertson. "Both teams just played all 'man' pretty much.

"From what we had seen, we anticipated some zone, a little box and one or a triangle and two," he continued. "It was nice having a long week so we could take our time and work on some of those things."

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The Wahawks (8-15) were able to keep the game close for a time. They trailed 16-13 with 4:12 remaining in the first half before the Lions cranked up the defense and the offense got going. Linn-Mar closed the half on a 12-2 run, keyed by a pair of Bohannon treys to lead 28-15 at the break.

"We came out slow against them (last Thursday) and we really wanted to push the ball tonight," Bohannon said. "We really did a good job of working the ball around for a good shot tonight, much better than we did the last game."

West's offense came alive in the second half. Senior Lincoln Conrey, who will play at Northern Iowa next year, scored 17 of his team-high 19 after halftime. Even with Conrey getting his offense going, the Wahawks weren't able to close the gap.

Forced to turn up the defensive pressure, West tried a physical approach, pressing Bohannon and Uhlir hard in an attempt to get back into the game.

"We are used to it," Uhlir said. "We see it a lot in AAU. Every team plays like that so we're used to a physical game."

The Lions took advantage of the fouls, hitting 13-of-14 for the game.

"I'm used to people throwing box and ones on me or double and triple-teaming me," Bohannon said. "My teammates did a really great job screening my guy and I screened for them so somebody was going to be open. Working together as a team really helps a lot."

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The focus had already begun to shift to Kennedy. The Lions won the regular-season match-up, 74-61, on Jan. 6 at Kennedy and the two teams have had some memorable games recently in the postseason.

"We haven't watched much of them since we played them, but they are obviously playing well," Robertson said of the Cougars. "They've had a great year, just one game off us record-wise. Our guys respect them and we'll be ready to play."

Bohannon, the last of four brothers to play for the Lions, has seen his share of intense games. He knows what Tuesday is all about.

"It's another big game," he said. "We just have to treat it like we've treated every single game this year. It's another opportunity for us. We got them last time at their place and hopefully do it again."

Or as Uhlir put it simply when asked about the game: "Can't wait."

WATERLOO WEST (45): Conrey 9 0-1 19, Funchess 0 0-0 0, Pepin 2 0-0 4, Samardzic 1 0-0 2, Moore 1 1-1 3, Harris-Anderson 4 3-4 12, Schultz 2 1-1 5, Caddell 0 0-0 0, Cooper 0 0-0 0. Totals: 19 5-7 45.

LINN-MAR (66): Uhlir 5 6-7 17, Murphy 0 0-0 0, Noble 1 0-0 2, Bohannon 9 6-6 30, Klostermann 2 0-0 4, Tichy 0 0-0 0, Halupnik 0 0-0 0, Schmidt 2 1-1 5, Brandt 2 0-0 5, Sylvester 1 0-0 3, Bundy 0 0-0 0, Willenborg 0 0-0 0, Dixon 0 0-0 0, Evans 0 0-0 0, Hand 0 0-0 0. Totals 22 13-14 66.

Halftime – Linn-Mar 28, Waterloo West 15. 3-point goals – Linn-Mar 9 (Uhlir, Bohannon 6, Brandt, Sylvester), Waterloo West 2 (Conrey, Harris-Anderson). Total fouls: West 15, Linn-Mar 11. Fouled out: Schultz. Technical fouls: none