

Boys basketball

Amherst capitalizes on East mistakes, picks up key road win

by PATRICK J. NAGY
Reporter

Williamsville East has a lot what if questions after its 54-51 ECIC Division II home loss last Tuesday against Amherst.

Down 49-43 early in the fourth quarter, the Flames went on an 8-0 run to take a 51-49 lead with 3:10 remaining.

That's when the Flames went up in smoke.

East center Brian Wallden (21 points) tipped an Amherst pass around mid-court and missed an attempted two-handed dunk instead of taking the easy layup. On East's next possession, Andy Heim missed an uncontested layup. He later fouled out trying to stop the Tigers' Cordell Freeman from laying in the game-tying basket. Andre Hakeem, who stole the ball, fed Freeman who scored and hit the ensuing free throw to put Amherst ahead, 52-51, with 26.4 seconds

left. Viron Hale tacked on two crucial free throws to seal the Amherst win.

"I was just running the court and I saw Andre running with the ball and I knew he was going to give it to me for the layup," said Freeman, who finished with 26 points, three three's, and nine rebounds.

"We didn't play smart," said East coach Dennis Belote. "We only turned the ball over 12 times so it's more of our mistakes. I think the kids are pressing two hard. Amherst made their shots at the right time and we missed our shots at the wrong time."

The win moved Amherst to 5-1 in league play and 7-4 overall. The loss dropped East at the time to 6-6, 3-3. The Flames won, 63-47, at West Seneca East on Friday to move to 4-3 in league play, 7-6 overall.

Amherst and East each won a quarter in a sloppy first half (East, 13-11, after first quarter; Amherst, 25-23, at halftime). The Tigers turned up its defensive man-to-man

intensity midway through the third quarter to take a 45-41 lead, with 12 points coming from Freeman.

"That's typical of him," said Amherst coach Mike Chatelle. "He's capable of taking over and drawing a defense when he takes a shot. He's very talented, sees the court well and is tough to stop by the basket."

Freeman was one of only four Tigers who scored. Troy Martin scored 12, Will Gowen added 10, including two first half three's and Hale finished with a career-high six with six rebounds. Chatelle also liked the minutes from Peter Caffarelli and Matt Krajna.

Wallden shot 10-of-20 from the floor and finished with 20 rebounds, six blocks and one steal.

Heim had 14 points, six rebounds and three assists. Justin Andreozzi added 10 points.

East jumped out to a 10-0 lead and never looked back against West Seneca East.

The Flames were up, 13-4, after the first quarter, 34-19, at halftime, and 50-32, after three.

"I think we played pretty good defense," said Belote. "Plus the kids just wanted to win. They were tired of having a couple of losses."

Belote also said his team played looser as evident by its seven three-pointers and 14-of-20 from the foul line. They also only committed eight turnovers.

All 11 East players who dressed scored. Rick Silvestri led with 12 points. Wallden added 10 points, 15 rebounds and five blocks. Heim scored 10 points and dished out six assists. Mike Ferguson added nine points.

East hosts Hamburg at 7:30 p.m. on Friday.

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North answers challenge against Jamestown

by PATRICK J. NAGY
Reporter

Chuck Swierski challenged his Williamsville North basketball team on Friday and they passed with flying colors.

The Spartans led ECIC Division I powerhouse Jamestown from start to finish in a 76-65 home win. North lost, 69-41, in the first meeting on Dec. 6.

"I told the seniors, 'you have a month left in your high school careers. How do you want to be remembered?'" said Swierski. "And Ryan Young played great, Alex Calderon played smart and Zach Boron came off the bench and played well."

Young finished with 19 points, 14 rebounds, three steals, and three blocks. Calderon had five. Boron scored 10.

The Spartans opened with a 7-0 run and led, 19-7, after the first quarter. North extended the score to 37-16 at halftime and 49-30 after three quarters.

Jamestown closed the deficit to six in the fourth on the shoulders of Dominique Kendrick, who scored 21 of his 39 points in the quarter. Kendrick hit a school-record 11 three-pointers, breaking his own record of eight he set earlier in the week.

"The only person I could put in the same category is (Niagara Falls') Johnny Flynn from last year (against us)," said Swierski. "Ten of his three's he made we were in his face."

The Red Raiders also fouled North 25 times in the fourth to stop the clock. The Spartans made 17 attempts. They

finished 18-of-30 overall.

John Piaggione added 19 points for North. Steve Barth added 14.

"No matter who I put in, they played great," said Swierski. "Our shooters were shooting, our big guys were rebounding, blocking shots inside and scoring. Everyone did everything they were asked. It was a consummate team effort. We were the better team that night"

As well as his team played against Jamestown, Swierski felt they played poor in a 69-67 double overtime home loss to Orchard Park on Saturday.

The game was originally held on Jan. 11 but was suspended at 35-35 with 1:49 to play in the third quarter after Orchard Park guards Andy Buyea and Jim Brewer collided going for an offensive rebound. Both were taken to ECMC with concussions and released.

"I think mentally we were not ready to play as a group," said Swierski.

The game wasn't decided until OP's Pete Evaldi hit a three from the corner with 12 seconds left. North had a couple scoring chances at the buzzer but could not convert.

The game was tied at 40-40 after the third quarter and 52-52 at regulation. Alex Ullrich (13 points) hit a six-foot jumper to tie it at, 60-60, after the first overtime. North was up 66-60 with two minutes left in the second overtime.

"I thought we had problems guarding people, especially their guards," said Swierski. "Whenever we had a chance to put it away, we could not do it."

Alex Barth led North with a career-high 20 points. Young

scored 16 points, 11 rebounds and six steals.

Greg Michael had 22 to lead OP. Kyle Perla added 16 in the second part of the game.

North opened the week with a 57-50 road win at Lancaster last Tuesday.

The play of the game took place with 1:30 remaining. Down by four, Lancaster was looking for a bucket inside and Steve Barth came from the weak side, stole the pass and was fouled. Two free throws later, North was up six.

The Spartans led, 19-12, after the first quarter and outscored the Redskins, 19-9, in the second quarter, to go up, 38-21, at halftime. Reserves Joe Greenwald (eight points - two three's, mid-range jumper) and John Ticco (5-of-5 free throws) contributed for North in the second quarter. The Spartans led, 49-34, after three.

Calderon hit four three's in a career-high 16 points. Steve Barth scored seven of his 10 in the fourth. Young added nine points and a bunch of rebounds, said Swierski.

North (7-7, 3-5) plays at 7:30 p.m. Friday at Frontier. If North is going to get things rolling on a consistent basis, they have to play a full four quarters. Swierski said his team is 12-2 at halftime.

"I don't know why we tense up but it seems when it comes down to crunch time, we don't flow with the same confidence in the rest of game," said Swierski. "I don't know if it's a characteristic of being young or inexperienced."

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South puts on shooting clinic, avenges only league loss

by PATRICK J. NAGY
Reporter

Williamsville South ran the same offense it had been running all season at Hamburg last Friday. The biggest difference was execution.

South shot a school-record 27-of-39 (69.2 percent) from two-point range in a 78-56 drubbing of Hamburg to avenge a 56-51 home loss on Dec. 7. The old school record was 67.5 percent in a game against Springville in 2004-05.

"It was the best offensive execution I've had in a long time," said South coach Al Monaco. "We got out and executed our half-court game. I was impressed by the way our kids played that night."

Frankie Pieri (29 points) shot 14-of-14 from two-point range, breaking Mark Ward's 10-of-10 performance in the 99-00 campaign against Lew-Port. Pieri also attempted and missed his first career three-pointer. He also grabbed nine rebounds.

Adrian Wood was 8-of-9 from two-point range and finished with 23 points. He also hauled in seven rebounds.

South also distributed 27 assists, which is two shy of the school record. Scott Steimer made a career-high 10 to go with two points. Wood dished out seven. Point guard Mark Coppola had six assists, three steals and four points.

"To get that many assists means we were really breaking down their defense for layups," said Monaco.

Hamburg opened with a 4-0 run but it was all South after that. Led by Wood's 11, the Billies took a 24-14 lead after the first quarter, extended it to 42-26 at halftime and were up, 70-41, after three quarters.

Spencer McIntyre added three three's for nine points, two in the first half, along with four rebounds and three steals.

South (7-6, 6-1), winners of its last six ECIC Division II games and seven of its last nine, travel to Amherst (6-6, 5-1) for a huge league game at 7:30 p.m. on Thursday. South won the earlier meeting, 74-49. South hosts Bishop-Timon St. Jude at 7:30 p.m. on Friday.

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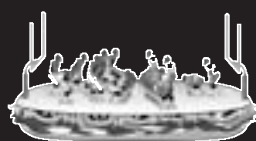
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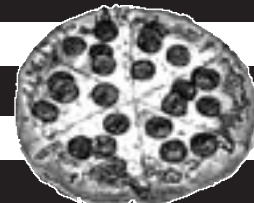
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