

Roxana snags narrow 50-48 victory against Southwestern

by Madelaine Gerard, Staff Writer
February 9 2016 11:21 PM



SEE VIDEO OF ROXANA-SOUTHWESTERN BELOW:

ROXANA - This Tuesday evening, the **Roxana High School Shells** and the **Southwestern High School Piasa Birds** boys basketball teams gave spectators quite a game.

After a tough 32 minutes filled with nonstop action and neck and neck scoring, the Shells ultimately defeated the Piasa Birds **50-48** at the final buzzer.

Roxana Head Coach **Mark Briggs** commended Southwestern's effort throughout the game and how the competition has become sort of a rivalry within the **South Central Conference**.

"Both teams have won a lot in the past few years and it creates kind of a rivalry, friction or whatever the kids get up for each other," he said. "You have to credit Southwestern for what they brought tonight, because that's a young team. If you fast forward this team to a year from now, they will have 18 or 19 wins at this point in the season. They played at a high level and did a lot of nice things."

Southwestern Head Coach **Jason Darr** also enjoys the rivalry that exists between Biggs' team and his own team, noting that their kids play on the same baseball team in the summer time.

Darr was also quite impressed with the way **Trace Gentry** performed for Roxana and how well they dealt with the 6-foot-6 defender and shooter that is **Collin Baumgartner**.

"It was a really great game, especially on the defensive end," Darr said. "They kind of got us out of what we do for a little bit. I thought our big man played well and their big man played well. Gentry played well and he just shot it over some pretty good defenders. Collin did pretty well at the paint and brought in 24 for the night."



An early foul on sophomore **Ben Lewis** allowed the Piasa Birds to add two free points before his classmate **Caden Heyen** spotted an opening for a three-point shot. For one of the only times in the game as a whole, Southwestern held a 5-point lead against Roxana.

Quickly to rebuttal was senior **Chance Foss** with a three-point bucket. Shortly after, **Zach Haas and Blake Vandiver** followed up with two more points each to give the Shells the lead at 7-5.

The score was tied by the first of many shots by junior **Collin Baumgartner** for Southwestern. He was also able to nab one from the foul line to take the lead at 8-7 by that single point.

The lead was short-lived and a basket by Vandiver put the Shells in the lead. This back-and-forth continued into the end of the quarter until the score was tied **13-13** at the buzzer.

This back-and-forth continued into the second after a basket by Baumgartner was quickly retaliated after one by Vandiver. Sophomore **Caleb Robinson** got on the board for the Piasa Birds with a three-pointer. Baskets by **Zach Golenor** and Haas were enough to push Roxana into the lead once again.

A three-pointer by **Trace Gentry** pushed the score to 22-18 in Roxana's favor. After a two-point rebuttal by Baumgartner, Gentry knocked in yet another basket. The back-and-forth continued once more until another three-point shot by Gentry brought the score to 27-22, yet another five-point difference.

Before the buzzer indicated the halftime break, Robinson was able to lock down his second and final basket for his team to bring the score to **27-24**.

In the third, Roxana continued to hold the lead while Southwestern was forced to play a little bit of catch up. Although the score difference was minimal, the Shells held the command the majority of the period until a basket by **Zach Seymour** brought the Piasa Birds into the lead by one point with a score of 33-22. Baumgartner pushed the lead further with after nailing a basket for two.



Unfortunately for the Birds, the Shells had Gentry on their side who had been producing a number of three-pointers this game; this play was no exception and he tied the score at 35.

The back and forth continued yet again where the teams tied at 37 and finally at **39** to end the third.

The Shells snagged the lead once again after a two-point shot was landed by Gentry. A foul on Haas earned him one point and Golenor knocked in a basket himself. The score was then 44-39, once again at a five-point difference.

A three-pointer by Seymour began Southwestern's final push to even out the score. With help from two baskets from Baumgartner and fouls on Seymour, the Piasa Birds became tied with the Shells at 48 after a basket from Vandiver.

With just a little over 15 seconds left on the clock, Foss pushed the Shells over the edge to take the lead one final time and eventually allowed his team to take the victory on their home court with a score of **50-48**.

Trace Gentry lead the Shells in points with a total of 21 produced throughout all four periods. Following him with nine points was Zach Golenor. Blake Vandiver knocked in eight points between the first, second and third periods. Chance Foss contributed seven points to the scoreboard within the same periods of play. Zach Haas locked down five points.

Bringing in a staggering 24 points for the Piasa Birds was Collin Baumgartner. Following him with 10 points over three periods of play was Zach Seymour. Ben Lewis knocked in six points over the first and third periods. Caleb Robinson knocked in five points in the second and Caden Heyen produced three points.