

Jersey boys stay with Cahokia throughout game Friday in Jersey Tourney, but fall just short

by Brent Feeney, Sports Writer
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JERSEYVILLE – Jersey certainly hung with Cahokia in Friday night's Jersey Tournament game at Havens Gym.

But **Panther coach Stote Reeder** put it simply. “In the end, when you're playing Cahokia, you've got to take care of the ball and you've got to rebound, and we didn't do either well enough.”

It led to a 51-42 Comanche win over the Panthers that sent Jersey to 6-13 on the season; Cahokia improved to 10-7 with one game left for both teams in the tournament.

“We talked in the locker room for competing for 24 minutes to give us a chance to win in the last eight, and we did that,” Reeder said. “And then they come out and go 5-0 on us (a five-point Comanche run to open the final quarter after a seven-point run to open the third period) and both of them on offensive rebounds.

“Then we cut it to three (at 45-42 after a **Jacob Ridenhour** NBA-range three with 2:42 left) and they get two offensive rebounds on free throws. They never stop and you give Cahokia all the credit for that. Our guys probably should have done better on that.”

The Comanches were a difficult team to play against, Reeder thought. “They're hard to play against and they intimidated us a little bit; they blocked a few shots, they got their hands on some balls early, and we were intimidated,” Reeder said. “That's the one thing I just told them; if there's anything to learn from this, it's to never be intimidated by another group of 16- and 17-year-olds.

“If they can learn from that, hopefully we can see them again in the regional.”

“It was a great game,” said **Comanche coach Darien Nash**. “We knew those guys, on their home court, were going to play well, and if we didn't turn our defense up; it could had gone either way.

“We played good defense tonight; the defense turned it up and we turned it that way; that's what turned the game around.”

Kurt Hall and Ridenhour each had 15 points for the Panthers; Hall's effort caught Reeder's attention. “It was good to see Kurt hit some shots; he's been in a real bad slump and he's been down on himself,” Reeder said. “It was nice to see him get his shot back; he was aggressive with the ball too, so that was also nice.

“He's just a sophomore and we put a lot of weight on his shoulders early in the season; that's probably my fault to do that to a sophomore, but he's only going to get better for it.”

Blake Wittman added six points for Jersey; the Comanches were led by **Thomas Bell's** 14 points, with Jakorey Davis and Richard Robinson each scoring eight and Derrick Aaron adding seven.

Both teams are in action Saturday night, with Cahokia taking on Collinsville at 6 p.m. and the Panthers meeting Quincy Notre Dame at 7:30 p.m.



