



Taylorville drains 15 three-pointers on Redbirds senior night

by John Hough, Sports Writer
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GODFREY - The Alton Redbirds celebrated their senior night, but the visiting Taylorville Tornadoes connected on a lot of threes to pull out a 73-56 win over host Alton.

The Tornadoes drilled a jaw-dropping 15-of-18 three-pointers against the Redbirds.

“ did a nice job of putting us in some bad spots and didn’t have a whole lot tonight,” Alton head coach Eric Smith said. “If you don’t guard it makes it pretty easy to stand out there and make shots.”

The Redbirds were led by Kevin Caldwell who poured in 19 points, 14 came in the second half. Josh Rivers followed with 13, and Darrell Smith chipped in eight.

Jace Bergschneider scored a game-high 26 points and drained seven triples. Jordan Moats was right behind with 24. Jack Livingston and Caleb Rothemeyer each tallied eight points.

“That’s the best we’ve shot this season,” Taylorville head coach Ryan Brown said. “I’m not gonna kid anybody there. We’ve been waiting for one of these big shooting games. When you got the personnel you got, you gotta be able to hit some shots.”

“We’re a little undersized and nothing flashy for athleticism. It’s not very often you come into practice, and we’re not hoisting up threes. We thought we’d get one of these and it took over 20 games to get one where we were just hot finally.”

The Tornadoes ran out to a 7-0 start. Bergschneider, in particular, set the tone for the evening by raining in five triples in the first quarter and scored 17 in total. Taylorville was 6-of-6 from three-point range and led 29-11 going into the second quarter.

The Tornadoes wouldn’t ever cool off on converting their treys, but the Redbirds would come back.

Alton went on a massive run of their own outscoring Taylorville 21-9 and cut the deficit to 38-32. However, the Tornadoes would score connect on two straight triples to get a 44-32 lead at halftime.

In the third quarter, Taylorville started to stretch the lead while Alton began to lose energy after playing high-pressure defense in the second quarter as an attempt to get back into the game.





“You gotta expend so much energy to do that. We scrambled around turned the game ugly for a little while, but we’re not gonna be able to do that for 16-to-32 minutes. It didn’t end up in our favor.”

The Redbirds trailed 60-46 as the fourth quarter started and cut the lead down to ten at 62-52, but that’s as close as they got. The Tornados never shot any three’s and exemplified wonderfully extended possessions with great ball movement that led to baskets.

“Our guys played with great poise and had seven turnovers, so we were to withstand the heat and keep them spread out, run some clock,” Brown said. “We’ve been able to do that a couple of games in a row where we’re trying to slow things down.”

Caldwell, Brandon Droste, Jacoby Jones, Jamal Jones, and Darrell Smith are seniors and played their last games at Alton High School. Despite ending it on a sour note, they’ve done well overall with a winning record through four seasons.

“ had a pretty good run. They spent a lot of time and effort trying to do things for our program,” Smith said. “We appreciate everything that they’ve done, and hopefully they’ve shown the kids underneath them how they need to handle themselves.”







