

Huffman Scores 27, Golenor Knocks Down Key Three As Shells Win Rivalry Game At EAWR 65-46

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WOOD RIVER - Gavin Huffman led Roxana with 27 points, but a Jacob Golenor three in the third quarter when East Alton-Wood River had a rally going helped make the difference as the Shells won their backyard rivalry game over the Oilers 65-46 Tuesday evening at EAWR Memorial Gym.

Both teams enjoyed successful runs at last week's Metro-East Lutheran Thanksgiving Turkey Tip-Off Tournament, with the Shells winning three of four, and EAWR splitting their four games, and both teams played well in on Tuesday.

Roxana head boys basketball coach Mark Briggs said he thought his boys gave a great effort against rival East Alton-Wood River.

"We didn't shoot it well, but found other ways to score," Coach Briggs said. "Our guards took the ball to the rack and got them in foul trouble early. I was extremely pleased with how we executed down the stretch. Gavin Huffman had a double-double and took over the game in the second half!"

"We looked really good," said first-year Oiler coach Steve Flowers. "We trailed 11-7 after the first quarter, we got into some foul trouble in the second quarter, and Roxana made a lot of their free throws and outscored us by 10 in the second. We were down 16, but we were able to cut it to 10 at halftime, and it was a huge momentum swing."

The Oilers managed to get to within seven in the third quarter and looked to cut the lead even more, but a missed assignment allowed Golenor to get loose and hit a key three-pointer that put the Shell advantage back to 10, and was a big turning point in the game.

"That was the dagger right there," Flowers said.

But the Oiler head coach was very proud of his team's effort in executing the game plan that he and his assistant coaches, Kevin Gockel, Dusten Unverzagt and Terry Peek, came up with.

"We came up with a good game plan, and for 28 minutes, we executed it," Flowers said. "But there, for four or six minutes, Roxana really put it to us. But other than that, we were right there with them. Take out that second quarter, and who knows what happens?"

Besides Huffman's 27 points, both Golenor and Parris White had 10 points each for the Shells, while Andrew Beckman and Braeden Wells each had six points, and Austin Martin scored four. The EAWR scoring statistics were unavailable at press time.

The Oilers did reach their goal of splitting at the Metro-East tournament, and Flowers feels that his team is improving by the day, but also knows there's still plenty of work ahead on the horizon.

"We're happy with the two wins, but we don't want to settle for that," Flowers said. "The kids are starting to buy in, and we're going to keep getting better. We've got a big stretch of games that should be very competitive, and our goal is to be over .500 come Christmastime."

The Oilers, who are now 2-3 on the season, will be playing in the Carlinville Holiday Tournament, but before that, play at Carlinville on Friday night in a 7 p.m. tip-off, then are at Maryville Christian Saturday afternoon at 12:30 p.m. Included in the stretch are games against Staunton, St. Louis Medicine and Bioscience Charter, Nokomis, Red Bud and Father McGivney Catholic,

"We've got two more games this week," Flowers said, "and two games right after that, and we're expecting the kids to get better. But we've got to bring it every day in practice."

The Shells, meanwhile, improve to 4-1 to start the season, and hit the road for three straight, starting Friday at Carrollton, then on Dec. 10 at Columbia, and Dec. 13 at Hillsboro, before returning to Larry Milazzo Gym on Dec. 17 against Triad. The Shells then play at Vandalia Dec. 20 before entering the Holiday tournament season. All games in the stretch begin at 7:30 p.m.

[Dan Brannan also contributed to this story.](#)