

Carrollton runs away from Western in Winchester Tourney matchup

by John Hough, Sports Writer
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After a slow start the Carrollton Hawks ran away from the Western Wildcats 57-31 in the first round of the Winchester Invitational Tournament on Saturday night.

“We really struggled within our base offense to score today,” Carrollton head coach Jeff Krumwiede said. “A lot of our points came off of our defense which helped.”

Luke Gillingham paced the Hawks with 14 points. Fellow guard Jacob Smith chipped in 12, and Chase McAdams had his second highest scoring night of the season with 10.

“We’re always trying to push it and always trying get a lot of possessions.”

Both teams shot poorly in the first quarter and the Hawks led after the frame 8-6, but Carrollton’s defense came to the rescue. They created points by running and gunning as soon as they pulled down a rebound. The score was 29-12 at halftime and the Hawks kept at it as they outscored the Wildcats 17-9 in the third quarter. During that time Carrollton executed a solid alley-hoop lay-up to Cody Leonard.

“We ran a couple of set plays to start the second half and they worked like a charm,” Krumwiede said.

The No. 2-seeded Hawks will look to end their four-year drought of never getting past the quarterfinals of the tournament, as they will take on the No. 7 North Greene Spartans (8-3) at 8:30 p.m. on Tuesday.

“All of our seniors have been through it and this is the third one that they’ve had a direct hand in,” Krumwiede said. “We need to say that this is the year.”

North Greene finds way to grind out victory

Out-shot, out-rebounded, and no Connor Vincent for most of the second half was a big problem for the No. 7- seeded North Greene Spartans. Nevertheless they found a way to grind out a victory over the No. 15 Rushville-Industry Rockets 43-39 in the first round of the Winchester Invitational Tournament on Saturday night. The win improves the Spartans record to 8-3.

North Greene head coach Brett Barry doesn’t care how they did it.

“Survive and advance just like the NCAA Tournament,” Barry said.

Andrew Davis was the leading scorer for the Spartans with 15 points. Junior Manning Plater, who scored his 1,000th point in the first quarter, led the way for Rushville with 16 points. Plater certainly had the Spartans attention for the whole game.

“He’s a scorer,” Barry said. “We did a lot of different things to take care of him.”

North Greene got out to a 7-0 lead, the largest of the game. But the Rockets went on a 7-2 run to close out the first quarter and from there on out it was a deadlocked showdown. The Spartans trailed by as many as five points in the second quarter, but cut the deficit to one by halftime at 22-21. That is when they made critical defensive re-adjustments. They went into a 1-2-2 defensive setup in the second half to mainly barricade Plater and dare the Rocket guards to shoot.

“I’m extremely impressed with the resiliency,” Barry said.

Rebounding was an obstacle for the athletic, but small, Spartans.

“We didn’t rebound well,” Barry said. “This is a team that presents a lot of matchup situations, which is very difficult for us.”

The game picked up quickly with under three minutes to go when NG’s Davis started heating up and Plater hit open shots and other Rockets got second chance points. With 40 seconds to go Vincent, who sustained a wrist injury earlier in the game, knocked down a baseline floater to give the Spartans a 41-39 lead. It proved to be the game-winning shot. The Spartans got a steal with eight seconds to go to ice the game.

“I was so proud of the defensive stand at the end,” Barry said. “They didn’t reach, they didn’t pull themselves out of the play, they did exactly what they needed to do to stop them.”

North Greene will play the No.7 Carrollton Hawks (11-2) in the tournament’s quarterfinals Tuesday at 8:30 p.m.