

Granite City Controls Game Against Alton Boys, Wins 80-51

by Brandon Harris

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GRANITE CITY – Fresh off a nail-biting victory over the Waterloo Bulldogs, the Granite City Warriors welcomed the Alton Redbirds to their home stadium Friday night. The Warriors controlled the game from start to finish. The home team never trailed in the game and would finish 80-51.

Head Coach, Gerard Moore, had a humble answer when asked how it felt to move to 14-12 with such a convincing win, “We have been playing well. They (The Redbirds) were shorthanded today, which may have hurt them a little bit. In high school, if you are missing one of your guys, it can affect the whole chemistry of the team.” With Granite City having a healthy roster, their chemistry was noticeable.

“We got all our bodies together and healthy,” Moore said. “We have cut back on our practice to keep the guys fresh. We are only going about an hour a day, doing a lot of shooting to make sure we are in rhythm, they understand the offense more, they understand our defensive principle, so we are playing a lot better than we have.”

Whatever coach Moore is doing with his players, their shooting skills are paying dividends. With the Warriors going 8/12 on free throws and scoring ten three-pointers, it was too much for the Redbirds to keep with one of Granite City's best shooting games of the year.

"When you have guys shooting it at a high level, every play we draw up becomes easier and looks better," Moore said.

Marc-Kell Longstreet and Mark Yarbrough had especially stellar games for the home team finishing with 28 and 20 points. Alton's Bryon Stampley had a standout game for the Redbirds. Stampley would finish with two three-pointers and a total of 21 points.



Individual player scores are as follows:

Granite City:

Mark Yarbrough – 20 points

Marc-Kell Longstreet – 28 points

Trevon Bond – 3 points

Tyrek Thomas – 8 points

Mario Brown – 10 points

Tyrese Grose – 11 points

Alton:

Bryon Stampley – 21 points

Jeremiah Van Zandt – 6 points

Ihzel Brown – 8 points

Hall – 6 points

Adrian Elliot – 10 points

Coach Moore has confidence that the Alton Redbirds 2021-2022 season record is not an indicator of their future. “That coach over there in Alton has done a good job. It is a matter of time before they get back on their feet and they start being a powerhouse again.”

As for his team, “We are thankful that we are playing well at the end of the season,” Moore said. “We have a tough one tomorrow. We go to Carbondale and get a win. Next week we play De Smet at De Smet, and we host Gateway here next Thursday. We have a tough road coming up here & we will try to pull out one or two wins.”

One of the aspects of this Warriors' victory was their fan support. The stands were packed with supportive friends' families while the bands attempted to play hype songs louder than the cheers. Coach Moore is grateful for the attendance and the support.

“There has not been a lot of success here at Granite. I brought back coach Roustio - he was the one that helped me get hired here, asked him to come to help me, and he has done a tremendous job. To see us having some success, the student section cheering for us because we are playing well, and winning some games is an awesome feeling. I'm so thankful we get to enjoy this together. They have been with us through this fight, when we have not won, when we were not very good, when we were struggling to compete, and now that we can compete with anybody, it feels great.”

With their seasons wrapping up, both the Warriors and the Redbirds each have five games left in their season. Both teams play tomorrow, Saturday the 5th. The Warriors travel to Carbondale to take on the Terriers while the Redbirds stay home and welcome the MICDS Rams for their game at 7:30 p.m.