

# Carrollton captures tourney championship with win over Beardstown

by John Hough, Sports Writer  
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No Luke Gillingham for the game and no Luke Palan for most of the first half, no problem. The Carrollton Hawks defeated the Beardstown Tigers 48-42 and claimed the Beardstown Tournament title on Saturday night.

“It was a sloppy game, part of that was because both teams played pretty good defense and made things difficult,” Carrollton head coach Jeff Krumwiede said. “It wasn’t the prettiest game in the world but we can win ugly. We pride ourselves on being able to win ugly. I thought we did a nice job of overcoming a lot of obstacles tonight.”

Cody Leonard stepped up in a big way once again as he led all scorers with 23 points and was a menace all night in the paint.

“It was a hard fought game till the end and we ended up doing what we needed to do,” Leonard said. “I’m going to try and stay at this level of intensity and keep bringing it for the rest of the season.”

“He decided this week that he was going to be the man among boys around the rim in that area that he dominates from block to block,” Krumwiede said.

Carrollton busted out of the gate with a 10-1 run to start the game as Jacob Smith connected on two straight three-pointers during that span. He would finish with 13 points.

Halfway through the first quarter Palan picked up his second foul and didn’t see the floor again until the third quarter.

“When the center of our offense is on the bench for most of the first half it makes it tough for us to score, no doubt about it,” Krumwiede said.

The Tigers cut the lead to four points as it was 10-6 going into the second quarter, but the Hawks responded.

Carrollton opened the quarter by going on an 11-0 run and led 25-17 at halftime. Leonard scored 13 of the Hawks 15 points during the second frame.

“I felt like I needed to step up my game a little bit and get some points for us. It ended up working out,” Leonard said.

Undeterred, Beardstown came out of the locker room as the more assertive team to score by driving to the basket and trying to get fouled.

“Their offense is based on dribble, drive, attack. They’re constantly pitching and driving and trying to get some sort of contact and they do a nice job of that,” Krumwiede said. “We were able to survive and control the glass.”

The Tigers outscored the Hawks 8-6 in the third quarter, but Carrollton took two possessions that spanned over two minutes of passing and dribbling the ball outside of the perimeter that killed the clock.

It was 36-29 Carrollton at the start of the fourth quarter.

With under a minute to go Beardstown cut the Hawks lead to four points, but that's when things turned sloppy. Although the Hawks had two straight turnovers, the Tigers couldn't capitalize because they had two turnovers of their own and missed several shots. Carrollton held on by making their free throws down the stretch to ice the game.

The Hawks have been stressing the importance of getting to the free throw line all season long and how that alters the outcome of a game. Carrollton shot 13-17 from the charity stripe and the Tigers were 9-13.

“That's the battle we haven't been winning. We were winning games but still losing that battle,” Krumwiede said. “In all three of our losses we were badly outscored at the foul line. It's something that's really turned around during this tournament.”

Junior shooting guard Luke Gillingham, who is averaging 16 points per game, is still out with a sprained ankle, but Krumwiede hopes that he will be back on the court this coming week.

“These guys have learned to play without him for four games and now we have to get him back in there next week to play with him again,” Krumwiede said.

Carrollton (19-3) will make the short trip east to meet their rivals, the Greenfield Tigers (12-9), on Tuesday at 7:30 PM.