

# Palan's 29 points guides Carrollton past West Central

by John Hough, Sports Writer  
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At various times this season a player on the Carrollton Hawks boys basketball team has taken over and decorated the stat sheet. On Friday night that player was Luke Palan, who exploded for 29 points as he propelled Carrollton over the West Central Cougars 57-49 in Winchester.

“That stretch in the third quarter he took over the game like a senior, four year player should, and I’m really proud of him,” Carrollton head coach Jeff Krumwiede said.

Whether it was him making pull-up jump-shots or accelerating to the basket for a layup, Palan made his presence known. He especially did this in the third quarter when he scored 12 points, eight of them on four consecutive possessions.

“He literally carried us when no one else could score when we were making mistakes. He hit those jump shots that he’s been inconsistent with all year long,” Krumwiede said. “When he’s on it opens up everything else and then he was able to get to the rim because they had to respect his jump shot.”

Aiding the Carrollton cause was Cody Leonard with 9 points and Cole Brannan with 7.

Leading scorer Luke Gillingham saw his first action since spraining his ankle against Pleasant Hill on Jan. 23. He finished with 5 points, hitting a three-pointer and making both of his free throw attempts. He played sporadically throughout the game.

“We weren’t sure what he was going to be able to do. I saw that he wasn’t confident and wasn’t moving with any fluidity at all,” Krumwiede said. “We started substituting offense for defense and eventually got him that shot. Those five points were big and now he will have a little more confidence.”

Trevor Cawthon who tallied 16 points led West Central’s attack. Luk Weder followed him with 14. As a team the Cougars made eight three-pointers.

Carrollton got out to a 7-0 lead and led 17-9 going into the second quarter. The Hawks expanded their lead to 27-15, but the Cougars, in particular Weder, caught fire with under two minutes to go until halftime. He nailed two three-pointers and a layup as the Cougars stormed back into the game with an 8-0 run to make it 27-23 at halftime.

“That first half we were giving them the ball inside. We were giving them easy looks,” Krumwiede said.

For over half of the third quarter both teams shot poorly and had long possessions that led to nothing. West Central cut the lead to 35-32 with under 2:30 to go in the quarter before Palan started to go off. The Hawks went on an 11-0 run that was capped by Gillingham's three-pointer, and they led 46-32 at the end of the third quarter.

Carrollton's biggest lead of the game was 15 early in the fourth quarter, but the Cougars would once again refuse to roll over easily as they cut the lead to 49-44 with 3:23 left in the game. But that would be as close as West Central would come.

"They did a lot of dribble drives to the basket and they had success drawing fouls, shooting three's, and you've got to tip your cap to coach Abell because he did a good job tonight and they gave us everything we could handle," Krumwiede said.

On Tuesday Carrollton (21-3) will travel to Jerseyville to face the Panthers at 7:30 p.m. in their annual late season contest. The Hawks fell to the Panthers 66-53 last season and haven't bested them since 2012.

"If we don't play better it's going to be a long night," Krumwiede said. "That is really a no lose situation for us because it's going to make us better one way or the other, but it's going to be tough."