

Sophomore sparkplug helps Jersey overcome deficit against Marquette

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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IHSA CLASS 3A JERSEY REGIONAL SEMIFINALS



JERSEY 39, MARQUETTE 26: Sophomore Jake Ridenhour was a sparkplug off the bench and helped push the Panthers past Marquette 39-26 Wednesday night in the IHSA Class 3A Jersey Regional semifinals.

An 11-2 third-quarter run fueled a come-from-behind second half for Jersey as the fourth-seeded Panthers got a shock result by eliminating top-seeded Marquette 39-26.

The Panthers, who went to 17-14 on the season with the win, moved to Friday night's 7 p.m. final against third-seeded Civic Memorial, who ousted two-seed Highland. The Explorers were eliminated with an 18-12 mark.

Both teams had a sluggish first half – the Explorers led only 13-7 at the break – but Jersey caught fire in the third term and led 18-15 at the last break.

Jersey coach Stote Reeder said he thought his team was "passive" in the first half, but in the second half they came ready to play.

"Our defense was awesome in the second half," he said. "We are glad to be here (the championship game). We knew that the fourth seed, whoever it was, would be upset about it. In hindsight, now I am pretty glad coaches gave us that fourth seed. Our kids never gave up and a lot of teams that go 1-6 to close out season would do that. They just kept practicing hard and that is the reason we are here today."



Zac Ridenhour led the Panthers with 10 points, with Jake Varble adding nine and Luke Shively seven. Marquette's only scorers were Jacob Fischer with 14, Max Goepel with eight and Shandon Boone with four. Jake Ridenhour tossed in six key points in the second half and also was a strong contributor defensively.

"Jake got a chewing the other night when he gave up a three, and he came back and made one of the biggest defensive plays of the game when he stole the ball," Reeder said of a key takeaway late in the contest. "All we ever talk about is learning from our mistakes. Jake learned something and he grew up a little bit tonight. It was awesome to watch."

Jake Ridenhour said he tries to work with the others as a team and it was great to come away with a win.

"It's not just one person," he said. "I do think I played aggressively and we worked as a team. I have good chemistry with Zac (his brother).



Reeder praised his seniors and juniors on the bench for their contributions during practice.

"There are five seniors and two juniors who don't play very much, but you should see them practice," he said. "We preach family and they are vocal on the bench just like the coaches."

In the fourth period, Jersey went up 24-20, 27-20, 29-22, and then 33-24 before the game ended at 39-26. Reeder said he was also pleased with how his team shot free throws at the end of the game.

Marquette coach Steve Medford said his team shot only 23 percent (seven of 30) and when that happens it is almost impossible to walk away with a win.

"I am going to tip my hat to my kids," he said. "I love my guys and I love our seniors. Unfortunately we just didn't make enough baskets."

[Brent Feeney also contributed to this story.](#)