

Redbirds Open Season With Back-To-Back Wins For First Time In Five Years

by Bradley Piros, Reporter
November 23 2023 10:57 AM



ALTON – The Alton High boys basketball team continued to play in its BSN Sports Tip-Off Tournament hosted at AHS Wednesday night.

For the first time since the 2018-19 season, the Redbirds opened up with a 2-0 record.

After a 65-50 win over Waterloo on Monday, the Redbirds followed that performance up with a 72-26 win over Lift for Life Academy's JV team.

“That is a first,” Alton head coach Dylan Dudley said. “Knock on wood, hopefully, we’ll experience a lot of firsts. I’m proud of our kids.”

The varsity Hawks were supposed to be in the tournament, but backed out at the last second, sending their JV team in their place.

It didn’t matter, a win is a win for Dudley.

“We’ll take the wins,” he said. “When you’re in essence rebuilding a program, you need the wins. But I think it’s important to teach our kids how to play the right way. We’re not playing against the opponent; we’re playing against ourselves and the game.”

In a game that Alton was always supposed to win, they led 20-7 after the first quarter and 38-15 at the half.

Just like in the home opener against the Bulldogs, Alton was hot from three-point land.

The Redbirds sunk 13 threes Wednesday night and they came from everywhere. Seven different players scored from deep for the Redbirds. 12 different players scored points on the night.

“It’s really important, especially as we go on in our conference,” Dudley said about his team’s numbers game. “There are no off nights in our conference. I say this to the kids all the time; we can’t just line up and play five-on-five against people. We can’t make it a half-court game.”

“We don’t have the size, we don’t necessarily have the maturity, the senior strength in essence, so we’ve got to use our strength in numbers,” Dudley continued. “We’re going to play multiple guys; we’re going to ride the hot hand. We have plenty of guys that can make shots, we just have to continue to get better defensively.”

The hot hand was once again Semaj Stampley. After a 21-point performance against Waterloo, he put up another 16 points against Lift for Life.

Ka’Nye Lacey scored 10 points while Ian Kambarian and Hassani Elliot each added seven. Kameron Burnett, Sean Tyus, and Chris Atkins each scored six points.

Dudley has been pleased with his team’s offense and their ability to move the ball.

“Last game, we got the ball to the paint 19 times. We scored 15 times and missed two wide-open threes. So, basically, we shot the shot that we wanted to shoot 17 out of 19 times,” he said.

“Last game we made 24 baskets and had 17 assists. We can make shots because we’re unselfish and we pass the ball. The kids are buying into our philosophy. They’re fun to watch because they play the right way, and they try to do the right things. They’re willing to work and willing to be the change.”

The Redbirds will be back at home on Friday, Nov. 24 when they host Jennings.