

# O'Fallon Bench Leads Team Back Against Redbirds In SWC Battle

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O'FALLON - O'Fallon head girls basketball coach Nick Knolman singled out his bench with high praise for coming through and giving the Panthers a much-needed spark in a comeback against the Alton Redbirds on Thursday night in O'Fallon.

O'Fallon came back to within one point late in the game until the Redbirds pulled the game out 55-50.

"Our bench was great tonight," Coach Knolman said. "I thought Jedha Williams, a sophomore, and Danielle Newman, a senior, came in off the bench, I thought they gave us great minutes. They were playing well, so I gave them some extended minutes.

"But it didn't matter who I put in the game, that they were playing hard for me, they were battling and doing anything I asked to win this basketball game."

Knolman agreed that the Redbirds bent, but didn't break, and held on when they had to to take the win.

"They bend, but they didn't break, right?" Knolman said. "So, kudos to them, because we had an opportunity to take the lead there, and I think the momentum would have

swung our way. But Kiyoko's just so cool, calm and collected out there that she hits that stepback three and kind of almost put the game away, kind of all that air gets deflated out of you when she hit that.

The Redbirds' Kiyoko Proctor made a clutch shot late in the contest to secure the game. Knolman said she is fantastic on the court and extremely difficult to stop.

"She's just a heck of a player, and they've got good girls and a good program over there."

The Panthers go to 7-2 and next play against University City, Mo., in the McKendree Shootout on Saturday at 2 p.m., then are at Cardinal Ritter College Prep Catholic in midtown St. Louis, Tuesday at 7 p.m., then hosting Collinsville Dec. 14 at 7:30 p.m.