

Redbirds Split Centralia Holiday Tournament - Fall To Chatham Glenwood In Fifth-Place Game

by Bradley Piros, Reporter
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CENTRALIA - The Alton Redbirds fell in the fifth-place game of the Centralia Holiday Tournament Saturday evening.

Alton was defeated by Chatham Glenwood by a score of 40-33. The Redbirds finished the tournament with a 2-2 record and now sit at 9-6 on the season overall.

Alton had previously beat the Titans in the final of the Redbirds Tip-Off Classic earlier this season by a score of 49-25.

Redbirds head coach Dylan Dudley wasn't too worried about that.

"I'm just a little lost for words when it comes to our lack of energy, our effort, our enthusiasm. That's what concerns me," he said.

"I'm not concerned about making shots, taking care of the ball, or the basketball side of things. I'm just a little dumb founded by our body language, our lack of attention to detail, and our enthusiasm."

Saturday was a low-scoring affair, just like the first time the two teams met. It was also a game that Alton trailed the entire way.

The Titans were the first to score, but Alton tied at 2-2 and again at 4-4. Kobe Taylor and Ka'Nye Lacey scored back-to-back baskets to cut Chatham's lead down to 9-8, but the Titans led 12-8 after the first quarter.

It wasn't a typical, three-point shooting night for the Redbirds. They went the entire first half without a three and trailed 20-12 heading into the locker room.

Alton was 3-of-25 from beyond the arc. The Redbirds continued to trail 32-22 after three quarters.

Alton cut the lead down to five at 38-33 in the dying minutes, but never got any momentum throughout the game.

The game against Chatham tipped off at 4:30 p.m. It followed an 8:30 a.m. game the same morning when the Redbirds beat Champaign Central 51-47.

Dudley liked what he saw in that game, but not so much against Chatham.

"I knew the 8:30 game was going to be tough," he said. "I knew it was going to be tough for us, tough for Champaign Central. I think we responded in some parts of that game to find a way to win."

"But in this game, it was like we were just stuck in mud, like we were a step behind," Dudley continued. "It's hard to play from behind, especially against Chatham who likes to slow it down."

It was a rollercoaster of a tournament as Alton went win, loss, win, loss.

"I hope this isn't a trend that continues the whole season," Dudley said about the up-and-down results. "I told the boys in there, in a lot of ways I'm disappointed because I don't think we played well at all in four games."

"I'm proud that they found a way to win the first game, but we just did not handle a win, heading into another game. We just didn't handle it well. Our mentality, our effort, our energy was not good. And it's something that we're going to look at and it starts with me. We've got to be better."

The Redbirds beat MHEA, Tenn. 59-55 in the opening round, followed by a 43-31 loss to Evanston in the quarterfinals the next day.

Against Chatham, Semaj Stamplay was the game's only double-digit scorer with 12 points. Hassani Elliot scored five points while Lacey and Taylor each scored four.

Given everything that happened, Dudley is still glad his team made the hour and half trip to compete in this tournament.

"As long as I'm head coach, we'll come back here," he said. "This place has treated us unbelievably well. The atmosphere here, the people, it's all first-class. Our boys enjoy the experience."

Alton kicks off the new year with away games against Althoff Catholic (10-5) and Collinsville (16-0) before returning home to host Edwardsville (10-5) on Friday, Jan. 12.