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Flora's 15-0 start has Wave looking for changes

By Brian Nielsen, Sports Editor
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EFFINGHAM -- Before contemplating the details, Brooks Inman could tell you this:

"There will be some changes in the starting lineup," Mattoon's boys' basketball coach said. "I just don't know exactly what yet."

That was just minutes after Flora had completed a 71-47 rout over the Green Wave in the game between two teams that were 0-2 in the Effingham St. Anthony Thanksgiving Tournament.

Actually, those lineup changes might have been evident when reserves scored Mattoon's first seven points of the game.

Those came after Flora had built a 15-0 lead.

"We've come out flat in three games now," Inman said. "We must be doing something wrong before the game."

This was the Wave's worst start yet and most perplexing performance as it was less competitive against Flora than against Breese Central and Charleston teams that had beaten the Wolves earlier this week.

Wave sophomore Kristopher Heller broke up Flora's shutout with a basket and free three with 2:25 left in the first quarter.

That got him started on his way to a team-high 13 points while another player off Mattoon's bench Desmond McDonald added 12 in a bid for a starting spot when Mattoon faces Taylorville in today's 3 p.m. seventh-place game, the first of four finals scheduled at St. Anthony's Enlow Center.

"The bench guys got a chance to play tonight," Inman said. "We saw some good things from the young guys. Some guys have earned a chance to start."

They still could not top the sophomore duo of Flora.

Paul Knapp by himself outscored Mattoon in the first half when his 17 points led the Wolves to a 39-14 advantage. Knapp finished 8-for-9 from the field, including 3-for-3 from 3-point range, for 17 points while classmate Nick Painter added 13 points plus a game-high seven rebounds.

"They put on a shooting clinic," Inman said in a game in which flora hit 15 of 23 first half shots and finished .528 from the field. "That's something we have to address."

Another chance comes this afternoon.

"It's a long season," Inman said. "We'll play 20-some games and we're only at No. 3. We'll see if we have the character and heart to get better or we just back down."

Taylorville lost to Vandalia 47-26 in Friday's second game to set up the seventh-place final.

Contact Brian Nielsen at bnielsen@jg-tc.com or 238-6856.

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MATTOON (0-3)

Player FG FT Reb F TP

Carlen 1-2 0-0 1 0 3

Zavarella 1-6 2-4 4 1 4

McDonald 5-9 2-4 4 0 12

M. Heller 1-8 2-2 0 1 4

Wolfe 0-2 0-1 1 1 0

K. Heller 3-7 7-7 2 0 13

Miller 1-4 0-0 2 1 2

Arthur 0-1 0-0 2 2 0

Butch 1-1 0-0 0 3 2

Milligan 0-1 2-2 1 2 2

Daily 2-3 0-0 1 1 5

Team 2

Totals 15-44 15-20 20 12 47

FLORA (1-2)

Player FG FT Reb F TP

Taylor 5-5 0-0 2 0 11

Durre 0-0 0-0 1 0 0

Earlywine 1-1 2-3 0 1 4

Bush-King 2-3 1-2 0 2 5

Greenwood 2-2 3-4 4 0 7

Orel 1-2 0-0 0 0 2

Knapp 8-9 0-0 4 3 19

Painter 5-12 0-0 7 1 13

Thompson 0-2 0-0 2 0 0

Lewis 1-1 0-0 3 3 3

Krutsinger 3-6 1-1 5 0 7

Team 1

Totals 28-53 7-10 29 10 71

Mattoon 7 8 8 24 - 47

Flora 22 17 24 16 - 71

3-point shots: Mattoon 2-12 (Carlen 1-2, M. Heller 0-3, Wolfe 0-1, K. Heller 0-1, Miller 0-3, Daily 1-2); Flora (Taylor 1-1, Orel 0-1, Knapp 3-3, Painter 3-6). Shooting percentages: Mattoon .341; Flora .528. Turnovers: Mattoon 16; Flora 18.

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