



Daily Record

Lawrence County, Illinois

Online edition

Thursday, February 05, 2009

Indians reach LIC Tourney finals

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LAWRENCEVILLE - Now comes the hard part for Lawrenceville High School's basketball team.

The Indians posted their eighth consecutive victory Tuesday night, stopping visiting Flora in the semifinals of the Little Illini Conference Tournament, 47-26. Their reward is a date with undefeated Marshall (20-0) in Saturday's 2:30 p.m. championship game at Casey. Flora (10-13) will play Cumberland for third place at 11:30 a.m.

While the Indians shot just 31 percent from the floor - hitting 15 of 49 shots - Flora's 26-point output was the fewest for a LHS opponent this season. The previous best was in a 70-35 win over Hutsonville on Jan. 16.

"Defensively, it was a great game, I thought," said LHS coach Jason Green, after his team improved to 15-5. "It was probably one of our best defensive games of the year. To hold a team like Flora to 26 points takes a heck of an effort."

Much like in the Indians' 56-36 win over the Wolves on Jan. 20, Lawrenceville pulled away late. Lawrenceville limited the Wolves to 13 points in each half, but was especially stingy in the fourth quarter, as Flora's only two points came on free throws.

Lawrenceville trailed early, by scores of 2-0 and 5-3. However, Nathan Waldroup put the Indians ahead to stay with a 3-pointer midway through the opening quarter, and LHS led 8-5 at the stop. Flora closed to within a single point once in the second period, but the Indians stretched the lead to 23-13 at halftime and 35-24 after three quarters.

Waldroup tallied a game-high 17 points to pace the Indians, hitting four 3-pointers along the way. He scored 12 of his points in the opening half. Ryan Klein, back in the starting lineup and playing for the first time without the mask to protect a broken nose suffered on Jan. 17, added 13 points, including seven in the final period. Nick Potts, back in a reserve role, added 10 points and led all players with 12 rebounds.

"All around, it was a good team effort," said Green. "We didn't shoot the ball very well, but you play defense the way we did tonight, shooting 30 percent doesn't hurt you as much."

Freshman Paul Knapp topped the Wolves with 14 points. Only two other Flora players scored, and the Indians held high-scoring Jeremy Wallace - who was 0 for 12 from the floor - without a point.

All of the remaining LIC Tournament games will take place Saturday at Casey. In the opening game at 10 a.m. Red Hill and Cumberland will play for third place in the girls tournament. After Flora and Cumberland play for third in the boys tournament at 11:30, Flora and Cumberland will play for the girls championship at 1 p.m.

Lawrenceville 47,

Flora 26

LAWRENCEVILLE (47)

Waldroup (f) 6-12 1-2 17, Klein (f) 5-9 2-3 13, N. Potts 3-12 4-12 10, J. Potts (g) 1-4 2-2 5, Manley (g) 0-3 1-2 1, McKinney 0-1 1-2 1, Kelly (c) 0-5 0-0 0, Kitchell 0-2 0-0 0, Sweeten 0-0 0-0 0, Leighty 0-0 0-2 0, McCullough 0-0 0-0 0, Benson 0-1 0-0 0, Seed 0-0 0-0 0, Kraft 0-0 0-0 0, Goins 0-0 0-0 0. Totals 15-49 11-25 47.

FLORA (26)

Knapp (g) 4-10 4-4 14, Krutsinger (c) 3-7 0-0 7, Orel (f) 2-5 1-2 5, Wallace (g) 0-12 0-0 0, Edwards (f) 0-5 0-0 0, Lewis 0-1 0-0 0, Greenwood 0-1 0-0 0, Durre 0-1 0-0 0, Taylor 0-0 0-0 0, Earleywine 0-0 0-0 0, Thompson 0-1 0-0 0. Totals 9-43 5-6 26.

3-point field shooting: Flora 3-16 (Wallace 0-6, Edwards 0-1, Knapp 2-7, Krutsinger 1-1, Lewis 0-1), Lawrenceville 6-16 (J. Potts 1-3, Kelly 0-2, Waldroup 4-7, Kitchell 0-1, Klein 1-3). Rebounds: Flora 24 (Orel 7), Lawrenceville 39 (N. Potts 12, Waldroup 8, Manley 7). Turnovers: Flora 14, Lawrenceville 11. Fouls: Flora 21, Lawrenceville 12. Fouled out: Orel (4:25 in fourth).

Flora 5 8 11 2 - 26

Lawrenceville 8 15 12 12 - 47

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