

BOYS HIGH SCHOOL BASKETBALL, FAIRVIEW 66, WESTLAKE 60



Photo by Sean Faska

Fairview's Collin Meany (12) finished with 17 points, while Westlake's Deontae Redding (2) had 17.

Fairview holds off late Westlake comeback attempt, 66-60

By **BRIAN LOVE**

A tough job for a coach is to get the team ready at the right time.

Too early in the season might not be good for post-season play. Toward the end of the season is the ideal time.

Fairview Park Coach Ryan Berry seems to have his team headed in the right direction as the Warriors went on the road last Friday to take a hard-fought 66-60 win over Westlake.

"As coaches, we have to find a way to get them better," Berry said. "I'm disappointed with myself that we weren't where we needed to be to start the season. That's totally on me. But they responded and they're doubling down on that work to make up for my lack of preparation for them. So they're bailing me out now."

Westlake has its work cut out for it this week. After playing at Elyria Catholic on Tuesday, the Demons play host to Rocky River at 1:30 p.m. Friday at Rocket Mortgage Arena. Meanwhile, Fairview, which played Rocky River on Tuesday, will travel to Bay for a 7:30 p.m. game Friday.

Fairview (6-5, 5-2 in the Great Lakes Conference) opened a 57-46 lead at the beginning of the final quarter against the Demons (7-5, 4-3) before the host team began to come back with a 14-6 run. The run started when the Warriors went into a spread-out offense to run some time off the clock.

"These games are never easy," Berry said. "I wasn't trying a full stall. I was trying to get some guys in place for the traps they were doing. There was a little miscommunication. That falls on me directly."

Derek Occhipinti led the way in the run, scoring 6 points with Deontae Redding adding 5 points. A reverse layup by Occhipinti cut the lead to 63-60 with just 1:04 left.

Westlake had an opportunity to tie the

game with 36 seconds left, but a 3-pointer was missed.

J.R. Beato gave the Warriors some breathing room with a free throw with 32.5 seconds left, then capped the scoring with a dunk, following a missed shot by the Demons, as time was running out.

The dunk was satisfying to Beato, who said the teams were engaged in some verbal jousting during the contest.

"I had to get it," Beato said. "One of their players was doing a lot of talking. I had to silence him."

Beato finished with 12 points, but Colin Meany led the team with 17. Jacob Rehor chipped in 15 and Collin Lucas had 10. Westley Fletcher, Jr., had 7, Will Allen had 3 and Sal Rizzo added 2.

Meanwhile, Redding came off the bench for 24 points, followed by Will Ostrowski with 11 and Chris Brown with 10. Occhipinti had 9 and Anthony Fernandez had 3.

It looked as if Fairview was about to take complete control of the game to start the final quarter. After a 3-pointer by Redding, Warriors held the Demons scoreless for 2:35, while a Meany-led offense scored 11 points to open the 57-46 lead.

The game had few fouls called in the first half, but the second half was called tighter. Occhipinti got in foul trouble with 5:44 left in the third quarter, while Ostrowski picked up his fourth with 4:41 left in the game before fouling out with 32.5 seconds left. Fairview's Meany picked up his fourth with 5:50 left in the game.

"Conventional wisdom says you sit them," Berry said. "But with some kids you just give them a breather so they can regroup mentally. They're frustrated. And none of them ever foul on the fourth foul."

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