

Trojans win showdown over Warriors

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The boys basketball season is starting to look a lot like last fall's football season at Livonia Clarenceville.

The Trojans won their eighth straight Tuesday with a pivotal 59-50 road win at Lutheran High Westland in a battle of Metro Conference unbeaten.

Clarenceville is 9-4 overall and 5-0 in the Metro. Another win Friday at Macomb Lutheran North would set up a showdown Feb. 8 at home against Hamtramck (7-3, 4-0), the conference's only other unbeaten.

Scott Wion, who helped the Trojans to a 9-1 football record and first-ever state playoff berth last fall, flexed his muscles again against the Warriors. The 6-foot-4, 240-pound center finished with a game-high 20 points to go along with 11 rebounds.

"Scott's off to a slow start this year because of football, but he's getting back in shape, and starting to play with a lot of enthusiasm," Clarenceville coach Bill Dyer said. "Coming out of football, I think it took an awhile to get going as a team. But

BASKETBALL

because of their success in football, these guys, especially the seniors, have a lot of pride and they think can compete. It's been a big plus."

The Trojans beat Lutheran Westland (8-4, 4-1) without key sophomore Tim Shaw, the 2,000-yard ground gainer. The 6-2 Shaw, the team's best leaper and starting forward, sat out the game with a sprained ankle after injuring it last Friday against Harper Woods.

"You don't think I was a little nervous going into this game without Tim because he's probably our best defensive player and he's a great guy in the gym," Dyer said. "But Joe Koenig (right wing) started and played fantastic. He gave us a huge lift. We missed Tim's size, but we really didn't miss a beat and we were able to do the things we normally do. Joe's been around for two years and he knows what he's going on."

Point-guard Corey McKendry contributed 14 points, including eight of 10 free throws in the final quarter to help quell a late

Lutheran Westland run. Forward Rick Burack chipped in with 11.

"For being depleted, Clarenceville did a nice job," Lutheran Westland coach Dan Ramthun said. "They play well together. They mix up their defenses pretty well between man and zone, and we really didn't respond well to it."

The Warriors led 10-8 after one quarter, but Clarenceville took a 22-18 halftime lead thanks to a last-second basket by Rob Fillinger.

The third quarter was all Clarenceville.

The Warriors led 10-9 at the start of the third quarter, thanks to a pair of field goals and two free throws on route to a 17-9 run for a 30-22 advantage.

"More than anything we told our kids to keep playing hard," Dyer said. "We mixed things up defensively. This is a great group of kids because they think they can play defense."

Although stymied by poor shooting (9 for 28) and turnovers (17) through three quarters, Lutheran Westland refused to fold.

The Warriors pulled to within four, 46-41, with 3:08 remaining

on a three-pointer by Luko Knaten.

But Wion slipped inside for two easy points and McKendry and McEndry each made to free throws to stop Warriors' rally.

"We got to the point where we had to go man-to-man, look for traps and steals, you've got to gamble," Ramthun said. "I admired the way our guys cut it to four."

"The last three games we've gotten behind at the half and you can't do that against Clarenceville. They also hit their free throws."

Star guard Charlie Heest, the Warriors' leading scorer, tallied 12 of his 16 in the final quarter. He was five of 16 from the floor. Nate Minken, a 6-7 junior center, also scored 16.

But the inside battle was won by Wion, the Trojans' tight end and linebacker.

"He's good," Ramthun said. "We'd collapse our zone around him and he still finds a way to get it in there. We didn't play him real well."

Dyer hopes another footballer is ready for Friday.

"Tim is a tough kid; I think he'll be back on Friday," he said.

SWIMMING RESULTS

1. Jim Davis (Livonia) 57.43
2. Andrew Sipior (Westland CC) 57.93
3. Eric Tressel (Southfield) 58.31
4. Matt Kowalski (Farmington) 58.49
5. David Heppel (Farmington) 58.62
6. Rob Czerniawski (Farmington) 58.80
7. Adam Czerniawski (Farmington) 58.80

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