

'Unfortunate' game for Marion at state

Written by Jim Ecker

Tuesday, 08 March 2011 19:36 - Last Updated Thursday, 10 March 2011 12:20



DES MOINES -- Burn the boxscores. Shred the videotape. Tell YouTube to take a hike.

Do the Marion Indians a favor. Pretend Tuesday's game against No.1 Waverly-Shell Rock in the Class 3A state basketball tournament never took place.

Please, for Marion's sake, destroy the evidence.

The Indians went 13 embarrassing minutes without a field goal during one long, miserable, insufferable stretch. They shot 20 percent for the game, a woeful 8 for 40. Kasey Semler committed eight turnovers. Dusty Albaugh did not make a basket.

Yes, bury those boxscores.

Waverly-Shell Rock shellacked Marion, 68-36, in the first round of the Class 3A state tournament at Wells Fargo Arena, and there's no pretty way to describe it.

"It was unfortunate," said Semler.

The game began well for the Indians. They grabbed an early 13-4 lead and looked comfortable on the big stage. They looked relaxed, confident and capable. "We were kind of hoping to catch them on a bad day," said Albaugh. "At the beginning, I thought that was possible."

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The game turned in a hurry.

Waverly-Shell Rock (25-0) showed why it's undefeated and ranked No.1 in the state in Class 3A, and the Go-Hawks showed how they were able to beat Class 4A teams like Cedar Falls, Waterloo West, Xavier and Waterloo East this season.

"Probably the hardest thing for us -- and the best thing for them -- was their size and how many guys they've got," said Albaugh. "I mean, you send in 11 guys who are 6-foot-3 and above, that helps, and they can all run the floor.

"We kind of got tired and they brought in another five guys and rested their starting five. That's what killed us."

Semler made a basket with 4:02 left in the first quarter to give the Indians an 11-4 lead. Mark that down, because it was the last basket they made for quite some time.

Incredibly, Marion did not make a single field goal in the entire second quarter. They made four free throws, but no baskets, so that means the Indians did not make a basket for the final 12 minutes, 2 seconds of the first half.

The drought lasted another 57 seconds in the third quarter before Dan Van Gorp made a field goal, so altogether the Indians went 12 minutes, 59 seconds between baskets.

Remarkably, Marion trailed only 28-20 at the time, staying alive with mirrors and free throws, but it didn't last.

Waverly-Shell Rock outscored the Indians 19-7 in the third quarter to grab a 44-24 lead and poured it on with a 24-point fourth quarter.

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"We talked about a few things in the locker room at halftime," said Waverly guard Connor Coleman, who scored 14 points. "We said we need to come out with a little more tenacity and come out and get in people's shorts. I think that showed in the second half."

Semler, one of the leading scorers in Marion school history, was 2-for-11 from the floor and 0-for-5 on 3-pointers. He scored 12 points, with eight points coming at the foul line. He was one of the state's leading scorers this season at 22 per game.

Albaugh, who went 11 for 22 on 3-pointers in Marion's first three playoff games, was 0-for-6 from the floor and 0-for-4 on 3-pointers. He made four free throws for four points.

The Indians shot 3 for 19 in the first half, then went 5 for 21 in the second half. They were 1-for-13 on 3-pointers, with Tyler Fisher getting the only one. They committed 19 turnovers (with only three assists).

It was a struggle, from the mid-point of the first quarter to the bitter end. Marion played poorly, but Coach Mike Manderscheid praised his club's effort and saluted Waverly-Shell Rock.

"I was impressed," he said. "I knew their depth would be a problem, and I think that eventually wore on us and we got a little bit tired. They've got great posts, and they have good perimeter guards."

Here are some more ugly stats: Waverly-Shell Rock drubbed Marion in bench points (35-2), points in the paint (32-6), points off turnovers (21-8), second-chance points (14-7) and fast-break points (8-0).

"If we play like we played in the second half, it's going to be tough for anybody to come out and play with us," said Coleman.

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Waverly-Shell Rock will play in the Class 3A semifinals Thursday night.

Waverly-Shell Rock emptied its bench with 2:25 left in the game with a 57-34 lead. Manderscheid responded and yanked all five of his starters, bringing Semler, Albaugh, Van Gorp, Fisher and Dylan Cronk to the bench for the final time. All five are seniors, and they helped the Indians compile a 17-8 record this season.

Semler covered his face with a towel.

"It was weird, that it's over," he said. "I still have basketball ahead of me, I know that. But it's weird, growing up watching high school basketball all my life, and now it's over. It's really mind-blowing."

Semler is being pursued by Division II, Division III, NAIA and junior college basketball teams, so he'll play somewhere next season. Albaugh is still trying to decide whether he wants to play football or basketball in college, but he'll get a chance whatever he decides.

However, they'll never play basketball for the Marion Indians again.

Semler took one last look into the crowd at the end of the game and appreciated what he saw. Marion sold 650 tickets at the high school and brought seven fan buses to Des Moines.

"It's awesome to look up in the stands and see that many people up there, knowing they all support you and have your back," he said.

MARION (36): Dusty Albaugh 0 4-8 4, Tyler Fisher 1 1-2 4, Dylan Cronk 2 2-2 6, Kasey Semler 2 8-10 12, Dan Van Gorp 2 4-4 8, Cale Cannoy 0 0-0 0, Tre Kinney 0 0-0 0, Mitch Wagner 1 0-0 2, Jared Huhndorf 0 0-0 0, Mark Stone 0 0-1 0, Josh Davila 0 0-0 0, Austin Hardman 0 0-0 0, Tyler Hedtke 0 0-0 0, Isaac Frazier 0 0-0 0, Jake McDonald 0 0-0 0. Totals 8 19-27 36.

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WAVERLY-SHELL ROCK (68): Jordan David 1 0-0 3, Derek Reusche 0 0-0 0, Connor Coleman 4 5-5 14, Brandon Hoefler 2 2-2 6, Luke Wright 4 2-3 10, Klinton Carlson 6 0-0 14, Eric Larson 0 0-0 0, Tyler Willis 2 0-1 5, Jackson Litterer 2 0-0 4, Dan Stensland 0 0-0 0, Blake Wilson 1 2-2 4, Matt Mummelthei 0 0-1 0, Jesse Hendrickson 4 0-2 8, Brett McCalla 0 0-0 0, Alex Moerer 0 0-0 0. Totals 26 5-9 68.

Halftime -- Waverly-Shell Rock 25, Marion 17. 3-point goals -- Marion 1 (Fisher), Waverly-Shell Rock 5 (Carlson 2, David, Coleman, Willis).