

Xavier down, Wash looks to Linn-Mar

Written by Jim Ecker

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The 10th-ranked Washington Warriors took care of Xavier in a hurry Tuesday night. Now they can think about top-ranked Linn-Mar, their next opponent Friday night.

"I've been thinking about Linn-Mar this whole year," said Washington senior Josh Oglesby. "We're excited to play them and we're just excited they're still No.1 in the state.

"To be the best you've got to beat the best, and Friday night we get a chance to do that on our home court."

Washington ticked off 18 straight points in the first half Tuesday and cruised to a 55-39 victory over the Saints in a Mississippi Valley Conference game at Xavier.

You knew it might be a long night for the Saints when they got caught with six players on the floor in the first quarter, resulting in a technical foul. The Saints were held scoreless for more than eight minutes in the first half and trailed, 27-10, at intermission.

"When you have a bad first half against a really good team, it's going to be a long, long game," Xavier Coach Matt Jenkins said.

Oglesby tossed in 22 points for the Warriors and Wes Washpun added 16, including three dunks. Ben McDermott led Xavier with 13 points.

Washington (7-3, 5-1) opened a 22-point bulge, 34-12, in the third quarter and the outcome was never in doubt. Xavier (1-9, 1-5) chipped away and got within 14 points, 40-26, before fading again.

"I know Xavier didn't have the best record in the world, but we came out tonight and did our job," Oglesby said.

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Their job will get much harder Friday against Linn-Mar. "We're going to have to play with a lot of heart and a lot of effort," said Washpun, who will be matched against Linn-Mar point guard Marcus Paige in a battle of premier lefties.

Paige, a junior, committed to North Carolina last week. Washpun, a senior, is still looking for a college, and Friday the two friends will test their skills against each other.

"I'm pretty excited," Washpun said. "He's a really good player, obviously, going to North Carolina. It's always exciting to test my skills against him."

Oglesby and Washpun have not defeated Linn-Mar during their varsity careers. Time is running out, although the two teams meet again Feb. 11 at Linn-Mar and could meet in the postseason tournament.

"I think the biggest thing is for us to control Marcus," Oglesby said. "He's smooth, smart, can do whatever he wants, and I think Wes can contain him."

"I haven't beaten them yet," he said. "This is my senior year, and I think I've beaten every school in our conference except them, so it would be nice to beat Linn-Mar and go out with a win."

Washpun has been thinking a lot about the Lions, too, and not just since the end of Tuesday's game. "Since the beginning of the season, if not before," he said.

Paige and Washpun are similar players in many ways -- smart, extremely quick, excellent ballhandlers, terrific passers -- but Paige has shown a more consistent jump shot and Washpun has struggled at the foul line.

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"I think people will enjoy seeing those two great point guards out on the floor," Metzger said, "and having the opportunity to see them go at it in the same game is something you don't get all the time."

WASHINGTON (55): Carr 2 1-2 5, Washpun 7 2-4 16, Moa 1 0-0 3, Oglesby 8 4-4 22, Bredl 3 0-0 6, Hoekstra 1 1-4 3, Tann 0 0-1 0, Todd 0 0-0 0, Nash 0 0-0 0, Williams 0 0-0 0, Matteson 0 0-0 0. Totals 22 8-15 55.

XAVIER (39): McDermott 5 0-0 13, Hosch 2 0-0 4, Dunkirk 1 1-2 3, Clasen 1 0-0 3, Mattke 0 0-0 0, Mains 0 0-0 0, Ropp 2 0-0 6, Valentine 1 3-4 5, McLaughlin 1 0-0 2, Kokontis 0 0-0 0, Frazier 1 0-0 3. Totals 13 4-6 39.

Halftime -- Washington 27, Xavier 10. 3-point goals -- Washington 3 (Oglesby 2, Moa), Xavier 7 (McDermott 3, Ropp 2, Clasen, Frazier).