

## **Prairie clipped by No. 4 Rams, 52-34**

Written by Guy Martino

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Turning the ball over often and getting substantially outrebounded doesn't usually translate into a victory.

Especially when it comes against the No. 4 team in the state.

Prairie committed 18 turnovers and was outrebounded 28-12 by Dubuque Senior as the highly ranked Rams beat the Prairie Hawks, 52-34, Friday night at the Prairie gym.

The Rams unleashed their imposing front line and pounded both the offensive and defensive glass all night. Seth Bonifas (6-foot-9), Kyle Haber (6-7) and Josh Weeber (6-6) collected more than six rebounds apiece, resulting in numerous putbacks and second-chance scoring opportunities.

Weeber had his way on the offensive end, leading all scorers with 16 points.

"We are still without a couple players, but their size was definitely a factor," said Prairie Coach James Moses. "They showed tonight why they are ranked in the top five in the state."

Even though they were getting handled down low, Prairie was never really out of the game. Prairie's scrappy defense and opportunistic scoring kept the Hawks within striking distance for three and a half quarters.

They even owned the lead for a substantial portion of the second quarter when bench player Mitch Lorenz came in for the Hawks and scored seven quick points, putting them up 21-17. But that lead was only temporary as Senior immediately righted the ship and took a 27-22 lead into halftime.

For the majority of the game, Prairie sat in a 2-3 zone to try and gum up the inside for Dubuque

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Senior's big men. Often times it worked, as they forced Senior to commit 12 turnovers. The only problem for the Hawks was that they were even more generous with the ball, turning it over 18 times.

"I thought we did play hard, but we were a little bit impatient in our halfcourt set and getting into our offense," said Moses. "Dubuque Senior did a good job keeping the lanes tight and congested, and we didn't counter with much of anything."

Prairie (1-4) pulled within 37-29 with under six minutes to play in the game, but then proceeded to dribble the ball out of bounds, an unfortunately common theme for the night. The turnovers came at bad times and ended up deleting any momentum they had conjured up.

"We weren't getting to the basket, we weren't getting to the free throw line, and we didn't take advantage of some of our fast-break opportunities," said Moses. "I think we were a little bit impatient.

"This game shows our inexperience a little bit, and also shows that we need to take our time."

DUBUQUE SENIOR (52): Bonifas 2 2-4 6, Haber 6 0-4 13, Legrand 1 2-4 4, McDonnell 4 0-0 8, Holdridge 0 2-4 2, Weeber 6 3-4 16, Reeves 0 3-4 3, Hammel 0 0-0 0. Totals 19 12-24 52.

PRAIRIE (34): Harper 3 0-2 6, Smith 2 0-0 6, Hanna 2 1-2 6, Kuchemann 0 0-0 0, Butz 2 1-2 6, Meeker 0 0-1 0, Simpson 0 0-0 0, Lorenz 2 2-2 7, Mims 1 0-0 3, Betchel 0 0-0 0. Totals 12 4-9 34.

Halftime - Senior 27, Prairie 22. 3-point goals- Dubuque Senior 2 (Haber 1, Weeber 1), Prairie 6 (Smith 2, Hanna, Butz, Mims, Lorenz