Rosenthal helps Warriors nip Prairie

Written by Tom Fruehling
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With 7.3 seconds left Friday night at home and his team ahead of Prairie, 43-41, Washington senior David Rosenthal was sent to the foul line for two shots.

Just nine seconds before that, he'd made one free throw and missed the second.

"This time," said Warrior Coach Adam Sanchez during a timeout, "Rosey's gonna knocked down both of 'em ... unless there's a breeze."

The big lefty then went out and swished both shots.

"I told Coach, 'No breeze tonight'," Rosenthal said later. "I felt real confident. And when I knocked 'em in, I was feeling really good."

Even a four-point lead against Prairie's Mr. Clutch, Jace Hanna, isn't a cinch, however.

Sure enough, the go-to Hawk tossed in a long jump shot while falling down. And, with 0.9 on the clock after a Warrior free throw by Jake Kramer, Hanna hit the backboard with a full-court heave.

"I froze when he got the ball," said Sanchez after escaping with the 46-43 win. "He's a great player."

Hanna beat Washington earlier this season on a 3-pointer at the buzzer in overtime, but this time ran out of tricks.

For the Warriors (3-14, 3-9 MVC), the hard-fought victory gives them a two-game win streak

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following Tuesday's victory against Dubuque Hempstead. They have regular-season contests left at home with Kennedy and at Jefferson.

"This was a great win tonight," said the first-year Washington coach. "We'll take any one we can get. For us, it's all part of learning how to win games."

The Warriors did not win any games last season.

Rosenthal, who made seven of 10 free throws and led all scorers with 15 points, said the team has struggled this year with winning close games. "We've lost several by less than five points by not being able to close out," he said.

"We came out a little flat tonight. But we made some adjustments at halftime and really picked it up."

Prairie (5-12, 4-8 MVC) jumped in front 14-3 but managed only a two-point lead at the half on a 3-pointer by sophomore sub Michael Mims.

Kramer's buzzer-beater trey at the end of three quarters tied it at 33-all. From then on, it was a dogfight.

The Warriors grabbed a 42-36 lead with 1:27 left on two pressure free throws by reserve big man Heath Clark. But Prairie came right back with five straight from the foul line by Ty Mougin to make it 42-41.

Missed opportunities by both teams from the charity stripe in the final minute put the game on Rosenthal's wide shoulders, and he delivered. "It got kind of frantic toward the end," he said. "But we never quit believing.

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"We don't have a superstar on this team. We've got 15 guys who battle their butts off. So this was a team win."

PRAIRIE (43): Ty Mougin 2 5-5 10, Demetrius Harper 5 0-0 10, Jace Hanna 3 0-3 6, Bryce Meeker 1 0-0 2, Thomas Eilers 3 0-0 8, Michael Mims 1 0-0 3, Dylan Kuchemann 0 0-2 0, Tyler Butz 0 0-0 0, JoJo Simpson 2 0-0 4. Totals 17 5-10 43.

WASHINGTON (46): Austin Bergstrom 0 0-0 0, Brock Butterfield 1 0-1 3, David Rosenthal 4 7-10 15, Peter Holmes 6 1-3 13, Jason Oney 1 0-0 3, Montaves Anderson 0 0-0 0, Razadon Taylor 1 1-2 4, Nehemiah Newman 0 0-0 0, Jake Kramer 2 1-2 6, Heath Clark 0 2-3 2. Totals 15 12-21 46.

Halftime – Prairie 23, Washington 21. 3-point goals - Prairie 4 (Eilers 2, Mougin 1, Mims 1), Washington 4 (Butterfield 1, Taylor 1, Oney 1, Kramer 1). Fouled out – Harper.