Washington girls bump off Prairie

Written by Tom Fruehling Friday, 15 January 2016 23:48 - Last Updated Saturday, 16 January 2016 01:01



A packed house at the Washington gym Friday night got their money's worth in the opening game of a doubleheader as the Warrior girls went right down to the wire to edge Prairie, 67-60.

It was a foul-plagued affair with 41 whistles, but fast-paced from start to finish.

And it wasn't always pretty. Each team committed 20 turnovers. But it was exciting and entertaining the whole way.

"It was the kind of game you love to have on a Friday night," Washington coach Frank Howell said. "Part of a doubleheader with more life in the gym. And a close game between two evenly matched teams.

"Both teams played really hard. Whichever team was going to win was going to deserve it. I'm sure it was a fun one to watch."

That it was.

For one thing, the Warriors (8-6) relied mostly on crowd-pleasing 3-point shots. They took 31 of them (three more than their 2-point attempts). They made only nine from long range (for 29 percent), but they came at crucial times.

After an 11-11 first quarter, Prairie (5-7) went on a 10-0 terror with some long bombs of its

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own. Freshman Sarah Schmitt hit two straight from way out and then another that was barely inside the arc.

Washington came right back, though, with back-to-back layups by senior Anne Visser and sophomore Vanessa Eniola and then a trey by senior Payton Bruner.



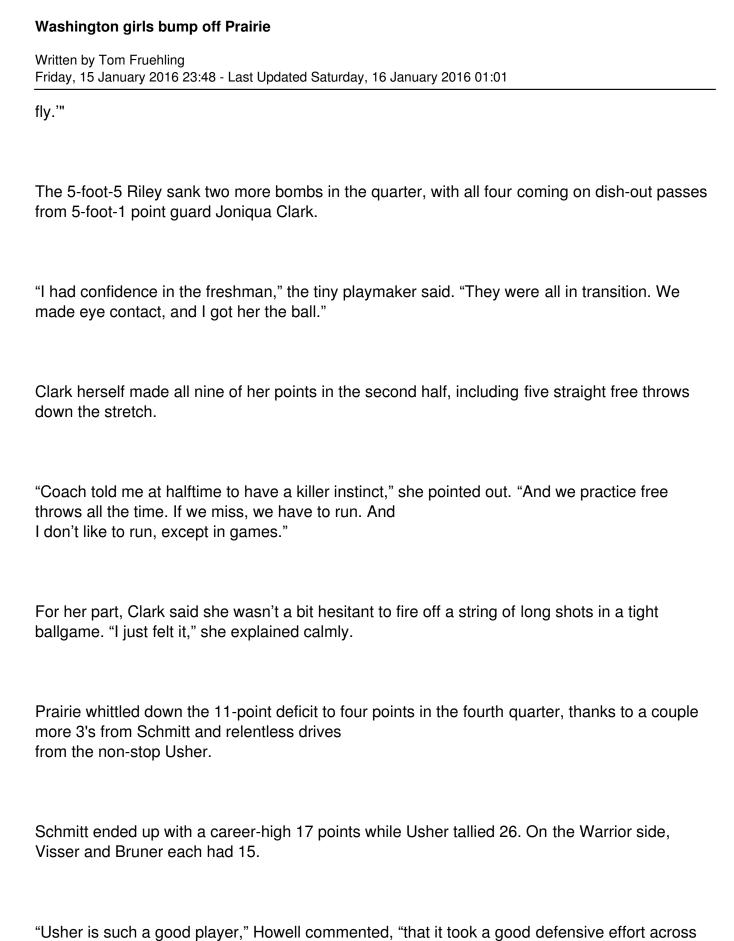
Following a Hawk tip-in by Olivia Usher, Bruner reeled off seven more points in a row on two free throws, a tip and another three. Suddenly, Washington had retaken the lead.

"Those long shots look a lot prettier when they fall," Howell noted.

There were more to come in the third quarter.

With her team sitting on a two-point lead, Warrior ninth-grader Caitlin Riley came off the bench to hit two long 3s and Visser added another for nine straight points in less than a minute.

"We needed that," Howell said. "We tell the girls, 'If you're going to make a mistake, make it an aggressive mistake. If you're open, let it



the board to try to contain her penetration."

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Prairie coach Josh Bentley was not displeased with his team's effort, despite the nail-biting loss.

"I thought we competed," he said. "We went after the loose balls and we rebounded pretty well.

"We just didn't do a good enough job identifying their shooters. And they had those two big runs in the second and third quarters.

"It's tough to overcome when you're trying to play catch-up."

PRAIRIE (60): Altenhofen 0 0-0 0, Schmitt 6 1-2 17, Usher 710-11 26, Person 3 1-4 7, Wagemester 3 2-7 8, Moenk 0 0-0 0, Kuch 1 0-0 2, Adams 0 0-0 0, Stoffer 0 0-0 0. Totals 20 14-24 60.

WASHINGTON (67): Clark 2 5-5 9, Visser 5 2-2 15, Bruner 53-5 15, Puk 1 2-4 4, Johnson 1 2-2 4, Carey 0 0-0 0, V. Eniola 3 0-0 6, B.Hoeger 1 0-0 2, O'Donnell 0 0-0 0, Riley 4 0-0 12, Mia 0 0-0 0. Totals 22 14-18 67.

Halftime – Prairie 29, Washington 29. 3-point goals – Prairie 6 (Schmitt 4, Usher 2), Washington 9 (Riley 4, Visser 3, Bruner 2).