

J-Hawks net special win in 2 OTs

Written by Jim Ecker

Friday, 28 January 2011 23:44 - Last Updated Monday, 31 January 2011 01:31

The heroes for the Cedar Rapids Jefferson basketball team posed for a picture Friday night after the J-Hawks topped Washington, 58-50, in double-overtime.

There was Jarrod Uthoff, who joined Jefferson's 1,000-point club with another big outing. There was Tyler Meiborg, who played a key role for the J-Hawks with his scoring and leadership. And there was 6-year-old Max Meiborg, Tyler's nephew, who is a cancer survivor and a courageous young boy.

Max was one of the honorary ballboys for this special Coaches vs. Cancer affair, and he was extremely proud of his uncle and Uthoff after Jefferson's victory.

The feelings were mutual.

"He smiled at me. That's nice to see," said Tyler Meiborg, who scored 13 points and assumed point-guard duties for the sixth-ranked J-Hawks with Taylor Olson injured.

"Max is a tough kid," Tyler said. "I wrote his name and the date he went into remission on my shoes: March 25th, 2010. It reminds me that even if I have a bad game, I'm not going through what he went through, especially at such a young age."

Max Meiborg, now in kindergarten at Coolidge School, had a brain tumor removed when he was 2. He underwent 18 months of chemotherapy and a month of radiation treatments, but he was all smiles Friday night at the packed Jefferson gym.

The J-Hawks (12-2, 8-2) gave Max and everyone else plenty to cheer about during the dramatic Mississippi Valley Conference game. It was tied, 38-38, after four quarters. It was still tied, 46-46, after one overtime, then Uthoff scored seven of his game-high 24 points in the second overtime to lift the hosts.

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"It was intense," said Uthoff. "Not many games do you get to play like this. It's pretty special when you do."

Uthoff raised his career total to 1,011 points, climbing to third place in school history behind Jackson Jones (1,304 from 1994-98) and Bryant Kucera (1,138 from 2003-06). Incidentally, the former J-Hawk who is sixth on the all-time list is Tory Meiborg, Max's father and Tyler's brother who scored 934 points from 1990-93.

Josh Oglesby (23 points) and Wes Washpun (20) tried to pull it out for Washington, but the rest of their teammates collected only seven points for the Warriors (9-5, 7-3) in 40 minutes of basketball.

Uthoff guarded Oglesby for good chunks of the game, matching future Big Ten players against each other. Uthoff (Wisconsin) and Oglesby (Iowa) will see each other again in Madison and Iowa City, but this night belonged to basketball fans in Cedar Rapids.

"He's a tough player to guard," said Uthoff. "He uses screens very well." Both players rose to the occasion. "It's fun playing against a great player," said Oglesby.

Washington trailed, 53-48, with 25 seconds left in double-overtime when Oglesby misfired on a 3-pointer. Washington Coach Brad Metzger thought Oglesby had been fouled and was called for a technical foul, compounded because Jefferson's Ky Kramer was fouled on the rebound.

Kramer made both of his foul shots, then Uthoff went 1-for-2 on the technical free throws to make it 56-48. The J-Hawks kept the ball and Uthoff made two more foul shots with 19.4 seconds left, making it a five-point possession and a 58-48 cushion.

If Oglesby had made the 3-pointer or been awarded three free throws, it could have been 53-51 with 20 seconds left. Instead, it became 58-48 and the game was over.

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"I thought we showed great resilience," said Jefferson Coach Stu Ordman after the hard-fought victory. "It's a very difficult adjustment for us to play without Taylor Olson. He's such a magician with the ball."

Olson hurt his back Tuesday against Dubuque Wahlert. He played in pain in the first half Friday, then watched the rest of the contest with an ice-pack taped to his abdomen.

Meiborg, normally an off-guard, switched to the point for all of the second half and both overtimes. His performance delighted his nephew and coach.

"I'm very proud of him and happy for him," said Ordman. "He'll have this forever, but I'm hoping he can use this to energize himself in everything that he does."

Kramer scored 11 points for the J-Hawks. Jefferson cashed 16 of 20 free throws (80 percent), compared with 16 of 27 for the Warriors (59.3 percent).

Washington did not make a single field goal in the first quarter and trailed after eight minutes, 9-3, with all three points coming on free throws.

The Jefferson and Washington students raised \$2,600 for the American Cancer Society with fundraisers.

WASHINGTON (50): Carr 0 0-0 0, Washpun 5 9-14 20, Oglesby 8 4-6 23, Moa 1 1-1 3, Bredl 1 2-6 4, Todd 0 0-0 0, Tann 0 0-0 0, Hoekstra 0 0-0 0. Totals 15 16-27 50.

JEFFERSON (58): Meiborg 5 2-4 13, Kramer 3 2-2 11, Olson 0 0-0 0, Saunders 2 2-2 7, Uthoff 6 9-10 24, Brown 0 0-0 0, Denny 1 1-2 3, Hemphill 0 0-0 0. Totals 17 16-20 58.

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Halftime -- Jefferson 18, Washington 13. Regulation -- Jefferson 38, Washington 38. First overtime -- Jefferson 46, Washington 46. 3-point goals -- Washington 4 (Oglesby 3, Washpun 1), Jefferson 8 (Kramer 3, Uthoff 3, Meiborg 1, Saunders 1). Fouled out -- Carr, Bredl. Technical foul -- Washington Coach Brad Metzger.