

Slow start dooms J-Hawks

Written by Jake Koolbeck

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KEOKUK — A slow start by Jefferson along with an aggressive press from Keokuk gave the Chiefs a big lead early and they rode it to a 48-42 win over the J-Hawks Saturday afternoon (Dec. 4).

For J-Hawk fans the first quarter was far from pretty. Keokuk came out in an aggressive press and forced the J-Hawks (2-2) into many early turnovers. The Chiefs' defense held the J-Hawks to just two points in the first quarter and they jumped to a 14-2 lead.

"We had to be more aggressive," Jefferson assistant coach Chad Tompkins said. "Sometimes we took shots outside of the offense."

The J-Hawks fought back and won the next three quarters, 40-34. But it wasn't enough to overcome the slow start.

The J-Hawks didn't do anything special after the first quarter, they just executed better. Jefferson heated up in the second quarter shooting 67 percent and cut the deficit to 25-16 by halftime.

"They started to make more shots," Tompkins said. "We became more aggressive going to the basket."

The J-Hawks continued to close the gap in the third quarter and eventually got within seven points after a basket by sophomore Taylor Jacobson. The Chiefs answered right back, though, extending the lead back to 11 on a 3-pointer by senior Shelsey Stanley.

The J-Hawks made another small run in the fourth to make it interesting but they were unable to overcome the poor first quarter.

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Jefferson shot 41 percent from the floor and 57 percent from the line. Keokuk shot 44 percent from the floor and 65 percent from the line. Jacobson and senior Britteny Steffeny led the J-Hawks with 11 points each. Stanley led the Chiefs with 19 and senior Erin Uhimeyer pitched in 10.

Jefferson goes to Linn-Mar for a tough Mississippi Valley Conference game Tuesday night. Tompkins said this game may have prepared them for Linn-Mar and future conference games.

“Anytime that you are young I believe it helps to have tough road games early because it better equips you for the future,” he said. “We know what works and what doesn’t. Hopefully, the girls can assess what they need to work on.”

The J-Hawks JV let a close one slip away in overtime, 62-58. After coming back to take a two-point lead, a costly foul away from the basket with under 5 seconds left allowed Keokuk to send it into overtime. Sophomore Maddie Koolbeck led the J-Hawks with a double-double, 24 points and 10 rebounds. Freshmen Madison Bleitz and Kielely Brathewaite added double-doubles of their own with 11 points and 10 rebounds each.