

Ollinger mostly sits as Lions top Cougars

Written by Tom Fruehling

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Kennedy Coach Tony Vis had a bad feeling before tipoff at Linn-Mar Tuesday night, but he thought it would pass.

“We knew they were an outside-oriented team and like to shoot from out there,” Vis said of the Class 5A eighth-ranked Lions. “They were hot in the warmups and, obviously, it carried right on over into the game.”

Indeed, Linn-Mar canned seven of nine 3-point attempts in the first half alone (and 11 overall for a new school record) while running out to a 33-14 lead.

The Cougars (7-3) tried mightily to catch up but still came up short, 62-49.

Amanda Ollinger made a quiet debut for Linn-Mar, playing briefly in the third quarter and finishing with one steal. She transferred to Linn-Mar from Jefferson during the holiday break.

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Even without Ollinger's help, the Lions were too much for the Cougars.

"I thought from a certain point in the second quarter on, we played pretty well," said Vis. "The start was the key with that 19-point hole. It seemed like we were going to be stuck on five points all night."

While the weather outside was frightful, it was cozy warm in the gym for the home team.

The eighth-ranked Lions (7-1) made 58 percent of their field goals (23 of 40). And while they cooled off from long range (hitting on 11 of 25 for the night), they did top the school mark of 10 treys set by the 2009 team.

Linn-Mar Coach Jaime (Printy) Brandt was a senior on that squad but can't recall how many she sank. "Probably one," she shrugged.

Brandt was more impressed by how her young Lions roared out to the insurmountable lead over a talented Kennedy team.

"Our defense was just phenomenal," she noted of the lightning fast start that appeared to discombobulate the injury-ridden Cougars. "And the defensive execution carried into the offense. We shot the ball really well."

None was better than silky smooth freshman Kamryn Finley, a 5-foot-8 lefty sharpshooter who scored a career-high 19 points. She was seven of eight

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from the floor, including four of five from behind the arc.

A whirling dervish all night, she also chipped in with four steals and five rebounds.

“She played her butt off,” Brandt said. “She’s very confident. She not only shot the ball, but she was all over the floor.”

For her part, Finley said she fits right in as a rookie on the varsity unit.

“Our team chemistry is great,” she said, “and the other girls believe in me. I just try to come out and play my game to help the team.



“Tonight, we really moved the ball. Everybody got involved. It was a team win.”

Ollinger played a little over two minutes in the third quarter in her debut with the Lions.

“She’s only practiced three times,” Brandt pointed out about working her into the lineup. “It will

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be a process.”

KENNEDY (49) – Sydney Hayden 4 3-3 12, Lela Sellers 3 8-11 14, Abigail Hellweg 1 3-4 5, Linden Runels 2 0-0 6, Stephanie Botkin 5 0-0 11, Katelyn Dye 1 0-0 2, Ashley Hamilton 1 0-0 3, Brinley Milbrath 0 0-0 0, Hailey Dolphin 1 0-0 2. Totals 18 14-18 49.

LINN-MAR (62) – Lexi Frese 0 0-0 0, Brittney Lancial 1 3-4 6, Olivia Montague 4 0-0 12, Nikita Sharma 3 0-1 6, Kamryn Finley 7 1-3 19, Alie Akers 0 0-0 0, Megan Murphy 2 0-0 5, Claire Larson 2 0-0 5, Amanda Ollinger 0 0-0 0, Lannie Nietert 4 1-1 9. Totals 23 5-9 62.

Halftime – Linn-Mar 36, Kennedy 24. 3-point goals – Kennedy 5 (Runels 2, Hamilton 1, Botkin 1, Hayden 1), Linn-Mar 11 (Finley 4, Montague 4, Murphy 1, Lancial 1, Larson 1). Total fouls – Kennedy 17, Linn-Mar 12. Fouled out – none.