

Bohannon, Lions slam Senior

Written by Michael Schmidt

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DUBUQUE – Matt Bohannon is a pinpoint shooter.

It turns out the Linn-Mar senior guard can fly above the rim, too.

Bohannon's first slam of the year, a one-handed effort, with a minute remaining, punctuated the Class 4A No. 1 Lions' torrid second half in an 80-53 rout of Dubuque Senior Tuesday at Nora Gymnasium.

Bohannon stole the ball at half-court and ran down for his first dunk of the season, capping a 28-point night for the Northern Iowa recruit.

"You know I always get crap, because nobody thinks I can jump or anything," the 6-foot-4 Bohannon joked. "It was just something where I got my footwork down and went up with it."

Linn-Mar improved to 18-0 on the season. The Lions clinched a tie for the Mississippi Division title with a 13-0 league mark.

The Lions and the Rams traded blows in an entertaining, high-scoring first half, but it was Bohannon who spearheaded an epic third quarter.

Linn-Mar, which led 37-28 at halftime, went on an 11-0 run to start the quarter. Bohannon scored nine in the period and the Lions made their first five shots from the floor.

"I thought we turned up the pressure in the third quarter and starting going inside right away," Linn-Mar Coach Chris Robertson said. "Offensively and defensively, we were very sharp."

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"We knew (Senior) was going to come out and come after us. They had nothing to lose."

Linn-Mar outscored Senior, 26-8, in the third quarter. The Lions shot 11-of-15 from the field in the period.

Bohannon said it has been a while since he's played well over four quarters. He knows the calendar is getting closer to March and the end of his high school basketball career is near.

"I was talking to my parents and realized I only have five games guaranteed in my career," Bohannon said. "It's something I'm trying to enjoy, and that's what I did (Tuesday)."

Senior (9-8) landed a No. 2 seed in its substate draw when the pairings were announced Tuesday. The Rams start freshmen Seth Bonifas (center) and Kyle Haber (guard) to go with standout sophomore Josh Weeber.

Weeber finished with 14 points, while Haber added 11 and Bonifas 10.

Marcus Paige scored 15 points for Linn-Mar. Shane Benton chipped in 12 for the Lions.

Robertson said his team is anxious to get started in the postseason.

"We're getting to that point where you have to start playing well every night," he said. "We want to close out the conference. That's been one of our main goals all year to win the conference."

"Right now, we control our own destiny. With a senior group like we have, they are pretty excited about what could lie ahead."

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LINN-MAR (80): Shane Benton 4 4-4 12, Marcus Paige 6 2-2 15, Matt Bohannon 12 2-2 28, Ian McBrayer 3 0-0 6, Josh Montague 3 0-0 6, Michael Thul 2 1-1 5, Derik Gogg 0 0-0 0, Matthew Lassen 0 0-0 0, Mason Krusie 1 0-0 2, Nick Soyer 1 0-0 2, Braxton Lancial 1 0-0 3, Nick Gentzler 0 0-0 0, Andy Henry 1 0-0 2. Totals 34 9-9 80.

SENIOR (53): Connor Weitz 2 0-0 6, Kyle Haber 4 1-1 11, Josh Weeber 5 3-3 14, Connor Grant 2 3-4 7, Seth Bonifas 5 0-0 10, Mitch Duve 0 0-4 0, Jon Marshall 0 0-0 0, Kyle Holdridge 1 0-0 3, Alex Steines 0 0-0 0, Alec Kueter 0 0-0 0, Drew Anderson 1 0-0 2. Totals 20 7-12 53.

Halftime – Linn-Mar 37, Senior 28. 3-point goals – Linn-Mar 3 (Bohannon 2, Lancial), Senior 5 (Weitz 2, Haber 2, Holdridge). Total fouls – Linn-Mar 10; Senior 8. Fouled out – None.