

## **Lions turn back pesky Warriors, 63-45**

Written by Metro Sports Report  
Saturday, 14 January 2012 00:13 -

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For three quarters Friday night, Cedar Rapids Washington looked nothing like a team in search of its first win.

In the fourth quarter, Linn-Mar looked very much like the fifth-ranked Class 4A team in Iowa.

The Lions held a precarious 41-35 lead entering the fourth quarter, but took command behind all-state point guard Marcus Paige and pulled away for a 63-45 victory at Linn-Mar.

Paige finished with a game-high 24 points, but it wasn't a vintage performance from the North Carolina signee. He struggled with his shot through three quarters. In the fourth, he netted 13 points, including all seven of his free throw attempts.

With Paige off his game a bit, the Lions (8-2, 4-2) got a boost off their bench. Sophomore center Jon Schlotterback scored 10 points while junior Matt Meier added nine in a quick flurry that saw him hit back-to-back 3-pointers near the end of the third quarter and a conventional three-point play early in the fourth.

"It was one of those games where we just plodded through things for three quarters," said Linn-Mar Coach Chris Robertson. "I thought Jon was real good in there. And Matt Meier is really starting to give us something off the bench.

"He hit those back-to-back 3s and then the three-point play in the fourth quarter and that seemed to get Marcus going as well."

Meier's basket and free throw capped a 7-0 start to the fourth quarter, pushing Linn-Mar's margin to 13. That forced Washington to chase and eventually foul the Lions. Linn-Mar converted each of its 10 free throw attempts in the final eight minutes.

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"We had a few breakdowns," said Washington Coach Brad Metzger. "You can't have that against a team like Linn-Mar. They spent way too much time at the free throw line and that hurts you when you pretty much have to play error-free against them."

The Warriors (0-9, 0-7) worked their offense well in the first half, but a 9-0 Linn-Mar run to start the second quarter gave the Lions a cushion and they took a 30-23 lead at the break.

Washington drew back to within 35-32 before Meier's 3-point run began. The Warriors suffered a blow late in the third period when junior forward Peter Holmes was hit over the eye, opening a cut. He was unable to return, but still led the Warriors with 11 points.

Robertson said he wasn't surprised by Washington's performance.

"Washington has a great tradition," he said. "Brad does a great job with their program and we knew they weren't going to back down from us. I thought they outplayed us in the first half and in parts of the second half as well."

Even though his team now sits at 0-9, Metzger is far from discouraged.

"They've got a lot to be proud of," he said. "They're improving. They're caring. They're trying. That's all we can ask for. The kids are getting better."

And that first win isn't far off in Metzger's eyes. "We're close, real close," he said.

WASHINGTON (45): David Tann 1 0-2 2, Cybryan Moa 3 1-2 9, Peter Holmes 4 3-4 11, Jason Oney 4 0-0 9, Sean Bredl 4 1-2 9, Paul Nash 0 0-0 0, David Rosenthal 2 0-0 5, Austin Bergstrom 0 0-1 0, Sam Bil 0 0-2 0. Totals 18 5-11 45.

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LINN-MAR (63): Zach Martins 1 1-2 4, Marcus Paige 7 9-13 24, Jimmy Roth 2 6-7 10, Andy Henry 1 2-3 4, Derik Gogg 0 0-0 0, Nate Dick 1 0-0 2, Jon Schlotterback 2 6-8 10, Matt Meier 3 1-1 9, Jacob Hutchins 0 0-0 0, Kyle Mortensen 0 0-0 0, Aaron Sloterdijk 0 0-0 0, Taylor Richardson 0 0-0 0. Totals 17 25-34 63.

Halftime - Linn-Mar 30, Washington 23. 3-point goals - Washington 4 (Moa 2, Oney 1, Rosenthal 1), Linn-Mar 4 (Meier 2, Paige 1, Martins 1). Fouled out - Moa. Technical fouls - Roth (slapping backboard).