



Cougars blast Rockets for Bill Lamp boys title

- KEVIN LANDIS Daily American Correspondent
- Photo by – Travis Fausey

ROCKWOOD — Noah Pyles scored 29 points to lead North Star past the Rockwood Rockets, 82-43 to claim the boys championship of the Bill Lamp Memorial Tournament and securing the MVP award in the process Saturday.

The Cougars started out fast with an opening bucket by Pyles on the first possession of the game. Rockwood got a put-back basket by Eli Foy to tie it back up before North Star went on a 17-0 to break the game wide open. A trio of Cougars had big opening quarter with Andy Zuchelli who also made the All-Tournament team chipped in 13 points, Pyles had 11 including a three pointer and Luke Schrock also netted six in the opening frame making it a 30-9 ballgame at the end first.

Cougars head coach Randy Schrock was pleased with his team's aggression and fast start.

"We wanted to put pressure on them to try and create turnovers and I thought we did that pretty well. All in all I'm pretty happy with the start," he said.

North Star kept the pressure on to start the second with their man to man defense creating fast break opportunities and when the Rockets stopped the drive, a kick out to an open player often ended up with open looks at the basket. Zuchelli drained two three-pointers in the opening minutes of the quarter. Rockwood's Troy Emert, who led the Rockets with 22 points, answered with two threes of his own, but once again the Cougars got steal after steal to create easy layup opportunities.

With the score 46-19 with just over two minutes left in the quarter Rockwood's head coach John Emert called a timeout to settle his troops. It worked as the Rockets held

the Cougars to only one shot for the rest of the half, but the damage was done and his team headed to the locker room with a 31-point deficit.

“There obviously a very good team. We just can’t match up with that height. Not only are they tall, they play very good defense.” Emert said. “We had a starter hurt from last night and that hurt us tonight.”

The second half started out the same as the first with the Cougar trio of Zuchelli, Pyles, and Schrock each scoring baskets in the opening minutes before coach Schrock went to the bench and got his younger players some much needed experience the rest of the way.

Both teams worked the substitution table often getting all the players into the game and the Cougars finished off the game with most of the starters only seeing brief relief appearances the rest of the way.

Coach Schrock talked about his All-Tournament players.

“We go as Zuchelli goes out front,” he said. “As the point guard he runs the offense well and has a nice shot, and with Noah inside we have a big physical guy who can also come outside and hit the three as well.”

Coach Schrock wants to enjoy this one, but the Cougars have a tough week ahead.

“We have Shade and Berlin this week and we are going to find out real quick what we got,” he said.

In the consolation game, Blacklick Valley defeated Salisbury, 71-36.

Blacklick's Jude Gdula led all-scorers with 21 points. Corey Simmons had 14 points and Landon Altimus contributed 10 points.

Logan Short scored 11 points and Chase Jones pulled down 12 rebounds for the Elks.

In the late game Friday, Rockwood defeated Salisbury, 57-42.

Troy Emert led the Rockets with 24 points. Rhett Pletcher had 17 points.

Connor Hutzell led the Elks with 15 points. Logan Short added 14 points.

North Star: Pyles 13 0 29, Zuchelli 10 1 23, Schrock 7 0 15, Lane 3 0 6, Stevens 2 0 5, Biery 2 0 4. Totals: 30 1-3 82.