

SPORTS

Byrnes sweeps by LDHS

By Nick Herman
Sports Editor

The Laurens Raiders' varsity basketball teams hit the road Tuesday night for a return trip to Byrnes, but the terrain proved to be a little too rough for the Raiders as both the girls and boys suffered defeats in Duncan. Laurens' girls gave up 12 straight points in the first quarter and were never able to get their game going, falling 72-37 to the Rebels in the first game of the doubleheader. The boys followed with a spirited fourth-quarter comeback that saw them trim an 18-point lead to six, but the Rebels held off the rally and ended up winning 74-64. Laurens was back on the court Friday when it hosted Emerald.

Byrnes 74, Laurens boys 64: With his team's 18-point lead slipping away in the fourth quarter, Byrnes star forward Josh Moore came through with a 10 of his 17 points in the final 2 minutes, 52 seconds to help the Rebels hold off the Raiders' comeback hopes.

Moore is a fleet-footed big man who can handle the ball at the top of the key and create his own shot off the dribble. His combination of size and hands were too tough to stop in the game for the Raiders.

"Josh is a proven basketball player. He's all-region. He's been through it," Laurens Head Coach

Ryan Walker said. "He's obviously their best player. Their best player made plays, and we couldn't get a stop."

Moore had a pair of three-point plays in the fourth quarter to help Byrnes after Laurens had run off 12 straight points in a little more than 3 minutes to close within 60-54 - including one that came off an inbound pass where Moore snuck behind the defense on the baseline and got an open layup and the foul.

Laurens, which fell behind 23-10 in the opening quarter, scrambled back in the second quarter with the help of two players. Christian Anderson scored eight of his 13 points in the quarter, while teammate Carson Todd had seven of his nine in the second quarter as Laurens closed within 32-29 at the half.

Asked what the difference was that helped Laurens get back into the game in the second quarter, Walker said he wished he knew because he'd hit the button at the start of the game.

As for Anderson, Walker noted his guard has to get on what he described as a more even playing level. But when he plays his best, as he did in the second quarter, Anderson is very effective.

"Christian can really shoot the basketball," Walker said. "He's hard to guard. He can handle the ball."

Byrnes, after Laurens closed within 36-33 in the third quarter, appeared to put the game away



TOPS IN THEIR CLASSES — Laurens County Speedway season champions Ray Storay, Mason Mack, Chris Patterson, Casey Lawson, Larry Teal and Billy Rushton all pose with their championship trophies during last Saturday's season-ending banquet at The Ridge at Laurens. The 2018 racing season will begin on March 24.

Photo Courtesy Jy Grubb/LCS

when it ran off 10-straight points to go back up by 13. The Byrnes lead eventually reached 18 early in the fourth quarter before Laurens attempted its comeback.

Josh Greene had 12 points to follow up Anderson's performance, while Dee Foster scored 11.

Laurens 13 16 13 22 — 64
Byrnes 23 9 24 18 — 74

Byrnes 72, Laurens girls 37: Laurens Head Coach Yoneko Allen was direct in her descrip-

tion of her team's performance against the Rebels, using such terms as "in a fog," "lackluster" and "not focused."

Or, to put it more succinctly, the Raiders were put in position to have some success and didn't take it.

"It's frustrating because they know what to do; they've been taught what to do," Allen said. "It's frustrating when we don't execute. And it's frustrating when we don't give the effort. That I will not tolerate."

Laurens got the early lead on a basket from Kenaja Burnside, but from there the bottom slowly fell out. Byrnes ran off the next 12 straight points, in about 2 minutes, and eventually led 22-8 after the first quarter. The momentum kept rolling into the second quarter, too, as Byrnes eventually led by as much as 39-14 before Ashanti Conway hit a late 3-pointer to finish off the scoring before halftime.

Laurens players in the game were the basics, missing 9 of 17

free throws and missing countless layups where they players routinely were rushing their shots. Turnovers, which have been a typical bugaboo for the Raiders, were not as bad against the Rebels as Laurens gave the ball up 23 times - but Byrnes turned those giveaways into 18 points.

Cali Heisey led the Raiders with 11 points, including a pair of 3-pointers and was the lone Raider to reach double figures.

Laurens 8 9 7 13 — 37
Byrnes 22 17 16 17 — 72

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