

Kresin big in third place victory at conference tourney

By Lenny Sementi

It wasn't quite where they wanted to end up when Tuscola's boys' basketball team entered the week-long Central Illinois Conference Tournament, but a 2-1 record and third place hardware left more than a few smiles on their faces. The Warriors rebounded from a 54-32 semi-final loss to state ranked Central A&M with a 43-35 victory over a surging St. Teresa squad Saturday, Feb. 2.

One of those grins was on the face of senior Cade Kresin. Most people probably only noticed his second half offense, but the Warrior swingman was a pivotal piece of the Warriors defense slowing down St. Teresa's high scoring post Austin Fitzpatrick. Kresin delivered six points on a perfect 3 for 3 from the field, four in the second half, including a bucket in the waning seconds of the contest that ultimately sealed the deal on the victory.

"Cade played arguably his best game of the year on Friday," stated head Coach Justin Bozarth. "We talk all the time about thriving in your role, and Cade definitely did that, he was fantastic defensively guarding their best player in man to man and even in zone forcing him into difficult contested shots."

Jalen Quinn had a pair of blocks also to go with his game high 20 points. The freshman was good on 6 of 12 from the floor, including 3 of 7 from outside the arc while donating eight rebounds, two steals and four assists to the cause. Despite two straight low scoring outings by the Warriors, Quinn was fifth on the scoring average list out of eight teams at the end of the tournament adding 19.7 points per game in the three-game swing.

"Jalen was really good scoring the basketball this week. As he's grown comfortable in varsity games, we are starting to see his three-

point shooting ability as well. You can see the growth in his offense," commented the coach. "He's developing a floater to use over taller/more physical defenders as opposed to trying to get all the way to the rim on those types of guys, as he tried earlier in the year. What we are most pleased with in his offensive game is the trust he's establishing with his teammates. As he's drawing extra defenders, he's making the next pass and trusting his teammates' ability to shoot and score the basketball."

His partner in crime outside was junior Jacob Kibler. Kibler hit 3 of 4 threes on his way to nine points. Will Little also tickled the bottom of the net from long range and delivered four assists in the game. Two of those assists came in the first when Little found both Quinn and Kibler after an extra pass for threes. Both players hit a pair in the frame helping the Warriors to a four-point, 12-8 lead after one. The Bulldogs responded with a deep game of their own late in the second charging in front by one at the break, 21-20, despite two buckets by Warrior big man Brayden VonLanken in the paint in the frame.

Bozarth tweaked the defense during halftime, and the Warriors executed it to perfection giving up just eight points in the third and forcing them into a 3 for 12 effort from the field in the stanza and four turnovers. Kibler and Quinn each hit threes in the frame, and Kresin came up big twice in the lane giving the Warriors a four-point lead after three 31-27. They would never trail again thanks to a 10-point outburst from Quinn in the final seven and a half minutes of the game, which included a 5-of-7 effort from the charity stripe late in the skirmish.

Quinn brought the entire crowd to its feet on a press break as he dribbled the length of the court, weaving through bodies, before finishing off a 360-gravity-defying layup while getting fouled.



File Photo: Douglas Cottle

Warrior Cade Kresin during CIC basketball action with the Warrensburg-Latham Cardinals. The Cardinals edged the Warriors 63-59 on Friday, Jan. 18.

Kresin put the cherry on top of the victory a few ticks later with an offensive put back moving the Warriors to 14-9 overall on the season as they

head into the final two weeks of the regular season. Tuscola will square off with the Bulldogs again Tuesday, Feb. 5 in Decatur before traveling

to Meridian on Thursday, Feb. 7 and Altamont on Saturday, Feb. 9 for the CIC vs National Trail Conference shootout.

Warriors half right in tournament

By Lenny Sementi

After beating a strong Meridian squad in the opening round of the Central Illinois Conference tournament Justin Bozarth's boys' basketball team earned the right at a second shot at state ranked Central A&M in the semi-finals. And, at the half Bozarth and his boys in black were right where they planned to be-in a low-scoring, physical defensive showdown. The Raiders, however, had other aspirations, and in the second half they executed two runs to open a tight contest with a 35-point outburst in the final 16 minutes to secure their spot in the league tourney championship.

"We overcame an early deficit and were forced the pace of the game in the first half," Bozarth said. "It was tied with under four to play in the half, and we gave up just 19 points, which is where we wanted to be. Even well into

the third we were right with them. They took advantage of a few mistakes late and got out and ran, and you just can't let them do that."

Jalen Quinn led the way for Bozarth on offense by scoring 11 points on 4 of 11 from the field, hitting twice from three-point land. He also grabbed five rebounds in the game and swiped three steals twice, going coast-to-coast for scores. Next up were Jacob Kibler and Will Little who ended the night with 8 and 7 points, respectively.

Little hit a pair from the field early and a three late and also led the team in rebounds from his guard position. Kibler hit a three, as well, grabbed three rebounds and came away with two steals.

Little drove baseline two minutes into the game for Tuscola's first bucket then hit a runner two possessions later before the Raiders were

ultimately spelling doom for the Warriors. Little drained a three with under six to play, making it interesting, but another run by the Raiders ended the suspense. Tuscola fell to the third place contest where they played St. Teresa. Bozarth's team moves to 13-9 overall on the year with the 1-1 in the tourney.



File Photo: Douglas Cottle

Warrior Jalen Quinn during CIC basketball action with the Warrensburg-Latham Cardinals. The Cardinals edged the Warriors 63-59.

TUSCOLA (76)

	fg-fga	ft-fta	3-3a	reb	a	s	pf	tp
VonLanken	5-7	3-4	1-2	3	1	0	2	14
Little	0-6	0-2	0-3	1	2	1	2	0
Kresin	0-0	0-0	0-4	1	0	0	0	0
Kibler	5-9	4-8	0-2	9	3	1	3	14
Quinn	11-18	4-4	0-1	10	3	5	3	26
Dixon	5-6	2-2	7	1	0	0	0	5
Hardwick	1-2	0-0	1-2	0	0	0	0	3
Cunningham	2-2	0-0	1-1	1	0	0	0	5
Totals	29-50	13-20	1-1	1	0	0	0	55
FG%	58%	FT%	65%	3-FG%	38%	Turnovers	-17	

MERIDIAN (73)

Ga. Meisenhelter	1-7	1-2	3-4	1	0	0	0	5
Jones	9-12	3-4	2-3	23	GR Meisenhelter	7-10	2-3	0
Barnes	4-11	0-0	0-0	8	Day	4-9	0-0	0-0-8
Smith	1-3	0-0	0-0	0	4-9	0-0	0-0	0-0-8
Reb.	15	TO-13	TO-13	TO-13	FG-20-47	(43%)	FT-19-27	(70%)
TO-13					3FG-13			
Meridian	17	17	24	15	-	73		
Tuscola	15	26	13	22	-	76		

Statistics order: fg-fga, ft-fta, 3fg-3ga-pts

TUSCOLA (32)

	fg-fga	ft-fta	3-3a	reb	a	s	pf	tp
VonLanken	0-6	0-0	0-1	1	2	0	0	5
Little	3-8	0-0	1-3	7	0	2	4	7
Kresin	1-2	0-0	0-0	3	0	2	1	8
Kibler	3-8	1-2	1-3	3	1	2	1	8
Quinn	4-11	1-2	2-3	5	1	3	3	11
Dixon	0-5	1-2	0-2	3	0	1	0	1
Hardwick	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0	0	0	0
Cunningham	0-1	0-2	0-1	3	0	0	0	0
Williams	1-1	0-0	1-1	0	0	0	0	0
Wyninger	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0	0	0	0
Chester	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0	0	0	0
Horton	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0	0	0	0
Totals	12-42	3-8	5-14	25	5	9	9	32
FG%	29%	FT%	38%	3-FG%	36%	Turnovers	-14	

CENTRAL A&M (54)

Parade	5-7	1-1	1-2-12	5-14	5-6	1-4-16		
Andricks	9-15	0-0	1-18	A. Sloan	0-0	0-0	0-0	
Hutchins	2-2	1-2	0-0-5	Burgener	0-0	0-0	0-0	
Fenton	0-0	0-0	0-0-0	R. Sloan	1-1	0-0	0-0	
Koester	0-4	0-0	0-3-0	FG-14-43	(33%)	FT-7-9	(78%)	3FG-3-13
Reb.	17	TO-13	TO-13	TO-13				
Central A&M	7	12	15	20	-	54		
Tuscola	7	7	11	7	-	32		

Statistics order: fg-fga, ft-fta, 3fg-3ga-pts

TUSCOLA (43)

	fg-fga	ft-fta	3-3a	reb	a	s	pf	tp
VonLanken	2-5	1-2	0-0	1	0	0	2	5
Little	1-3	0-0	1-2	0	3	2	2	3
Kresin	3-3	0-0	0-0	3	0	1	1	6
Kibler	3-7	0-0	3-4	3	0	1	4	9
Quinn	6-12	5-7	3-7	8	4	2	1	20
Dixon	0-0	0-0	0-0	1	0	1	1	1
Hardwick	0-1	0-0	0-1	0	0	0	0	0
Cunningham	0-0	0-1	0-1	0				