

# Ads withstand Wayne's run to advance

**By Derek Brightwell**  
Contributing Writer

Danville had to survive a late surge by Wayne County to make it out of the 12th Region's first round on Thursday night with a 70-60 win.

The Ads came out firing on all cylinders in the final game of the first round.

They jumped all over the Cardinals in the first quarter, taking a 17-8 lead at the break. Darrian Bell had already grabbed six rebounds and Aden Slone had seven points.

In the second quarter, the Ads went blow for blow with the Cardinals to keep their lead relatively intact, 32-24 at the break.

But in the third quarter, Wayne started to run.

"We knew they'd make a run. That (Thomas) Spencer kid is probably as good an athlete as there is in the region," Danville coach Ed McKinney said. "I was proud of the way we hung in there. We missed a lot of shots. You're not going to stop runs with great defense every time — when you get to the region, everybody's pretty good. You've got to stop runs on offense and we just missed too many — we missed some shots we normally make."

The lead had completely evaporated after the Cardinals hit a three to cut it to a four point game, got a block for a fast break layup and then converted an alley oop to force Danville to take a timeout as the Wayne student section erupted.

Ethan Cooper's three gave the Ads the lead again heading into the break. Danville was wounded, but McKinney was fine with where they were.

"We're up three at the quarter after they made the run," he said. "I saw where we were the underdog coming in — we weren't picked to win — so if you tell me we're up three going into the fourth quarter, I'd take it."

The fourth quarter was a blitzkrieg. The two teams traded blows and ended up scoring a combined 50 points in the final eight minutes.

"It's all about possessions. If you're up eight against a team like that, you know it's going to be close," McKinney said. "You've won an inordinate amount of possessions and they're probably going to win some. You've just got to grind and hope you have enough to win one more possession than they do."

Slone deftly ran the offense in a high pressure situation and Trey Dawson led the scoring charge to finish the game with 19 points. Dante Hayden — who finished with 13 points — overcame a tough night shooting with quality defense and hit a big three to give the Ads the final momentum swing.

"We didn't panic. Aden made a lot of great passes and didn't panic," McKinney said. "Trey did a nice job driving and Dante stayed in it defensively even though



**Damion Givens-Ford drives past the Wayne County defender to score in the Admirals win against the Cardinals in the first round of the 12th tournament Thursday, March 5.**

his shot wasn't going down. He made a couple of big ones there, including that last one. Move on and survive — it's like the old saying."

With four minutes left in the game, Bell picked up fouls on two consecutive possessions to put him at four for the game. McKinney said that there was some discussion of taking him out to prevent losing him for the rest of the game, but it was too late in the game to do that.

"It's at the four minute mark and that's probably when you'd put him back in. It's crunch time and you've got to stick with him and hope he doesn't foul," he said. "A lot of people will say take it at him, but that's hard to do in high school — you start playing different. They're probably not going to do that. But he

just did a good job not fouling."

Another senior — Damion Givens-Ford came alive in the first half and finished the game with 11 points and came up with some big plays on the defensive end.

"Damion really played well. He did a nice job and I'm proud of him," McKinney said. "Since the last week of the season and into the district tournament, he's really played well. He's done some good things — caught some tough passes in there, blocked a couple and hit some threes. He's been a big difference for us. Jalen Dunn and Nick (Price-Hancock) are both good players and we need to get them in, but if Damion's rolling like that, we'll just stick with him."

Despite letting a 14 point lead slip away, McKinney is focused more on the resolve his team showed to get