

Black & Gold

Tuscola Lady Warriors top Warrensburg-Latham 52-42

By Daniel L. Chamness
Early in the game, the girl's game between Tuscola and the Warrensburg-Latham Cardinals looked like a blowout.

But, the Lady Warrior players did not believe that it would end that way. Neither did the Lady Cardinals. Tuscola, who led 12-3 at the first break and by double digits, 25-12, at intermission watched their lead dwindle to just two points, 38-36, when Ema Dutcher hit a pair of free throws with 4:34 to play.

"We battled back all the time," said Alyssa Riley, Warrensburg-Latham's head coach. "We need to put four quarters together. I have to have four quarters from my athletes if we are going to win games."

Maybe it was the fact that

the Lady Cardinals had gotten that close, but within 90 seconds the Lady Warriors had hit the gas and sped away thanks to Taylor Musgrave and her keen eye from beyond the arc. The senior drained a pair of three-pointers from the right wing.

"Those were big as any three pointers I have ever had the pleasure of witnessing," said Tim Kohlbecker, Tuscola's head coach. "Taylor has not always been a great three point shooter, but she just keeps plugging along. I hope she keeps shooting them and gets more and more confidence."

With 4:05 to play, the senior hit her first one. She then hit a second one at the 3:10 mark. That was followed by a free throw by junior guard Ella

Boyer. At that point the Warriors were up by nine points, 45-36.

"I knew when I shot it the first one was going in," said Musgrave of the pair of three pointers. "It looked pretty good right away. The second one, I was not sure about. We knew they had a height advantage and we had to keep them in front of us and be really intense and crash the boards."

While the Cardinals would get within six in the final 1:15 on a Morgan Jones bucket, but it would get no closer.

In the final minute of play, Tuscola hit 66 percent, 4-of-6 of their charity tosses. Sydney Moss hit two free throws with 46 seconds left on the clock and she added one more with :27.4 left to play. Sophia

Kremitzki added another at :17.7 to give the Warriors a 52-42 victory.

After leading 12-3 at the end of the first quarter, the Warriors stretched their lead to double figures for the first time when Kremitzki nailed a bucket. Musgrave and Kremitzki scored the final points of the first half with Musgrave scoring at the 1:37 mark and Kremitzki scored with a layup at the :22 mark.

"It was a great game for us," said Moss. "We played with quite a bit of energy. We had some down points, but we were always battling. They had some great girls inside. Tall girls, that were lanky with a good reach. It was tough to play against a team with a wingspan like that."



TUSCOLA JUNIOR Izzy Wilcox (23) defends against Warrensburg-Latham player Ema Dutcher during a game last week. The Warriors won the contest and will host the Central Illinois Conference Tournament this Saturday. Photo by Daniel L. Chamness.



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