

Jan. 6 Boys Basketball



As Nick LaBelle (25) and the rest of Steinert's team discovered tonight, Lenwood Squire (21) would be too tough to guard as he tallied 22 points, including the game-winners (Photo by Mike Dill/purchase photos at www.michaeldillphotography.com).

A Hamilton Squire stands above the masses as Hornets top Spartans

By Rich Fisher

Fish4Scores.com

Jan. 6: Steinert convincingly won the part of the game that didn't include Lenwood Squire.

Fortunately for Hamilton West's boys' basketball team, Squire made sure he was involved for most of the night.

The senior forward had 22 points and seven rebounds, and hit the go-ahead free throw with 1.9 seconds left in Hamilton's 34-32 victory at the Spartans Arena tonight.

Squire scored 10 of Hamilton's first 16 points before picking up his second foul early in the second quarter. He left with West holding a 16-11 lead and the Spartans (2-4) scored 11 straight for a 22-16 halftime advantage.

Squire admitted he was concerned about getting back in a rhythm after the long break.

"I was a little worried," he said. "I was sitting there, my legs were getting tight. I didn't know if I could stay hot in the second half."

Especially after going back in and picking up his third foul with 4:46 left. But Hamilton led 26-19

at the time and coach Jason Malloy had to risk it.

“Once he left in the first half we didn’t score after that,” the first-year coach said. “When he picked up his third in the third quarter I told him he’s a senior, he has to be smart. I couldn’t take him out and he was able to play D and get rebounds without fouling.”

Steinert stretched the lead to 28-19 but was already in the midst of a woeful offensive performance that saw the Spartans go 12:32 without a field goal. They would score just four points and took four shots over the game’s final 11:43.

Hamilton went from zone to man in the fourth quarter and the results were profitable.

“Once we went man, my guys busted their butt for me,” Malloy said. “I may have to play man a little more now.”

“I was surprised how well we did,” Squire said. “We switch back and forth with zone and man, but we looked pretty good in man.”

A bucket by Willie Leach late in the third quarter began an 11-0 run for the Hornets, who scored the first nine points of the fourth quarter for a 30-28 lead.

Freshman Tyleer Wrenn, who was a defensive menace down the stretch, scored on a fast break off a pass from Brandon George for the go-ahead bucket.

“Wrenn is great,” Malloy said. “He’s only a freshman but after seven games now he’s starting to play more and more like a seasoned veteran. He works his butt off in practice every day and it showed today on the court.”

Steinert responded on a lay-up by Ryan LaMarca, Hamilton came back with a bucket from Squire and Jarrett Varanyak answered for Steinert to tie it at 32-32.

That was the third and final shot the Spartans (2-4) took in the quarter, as they committed 10 of their 20 turnovers during that time.

Hamilton (2-5) called timeout with 48.8 seconds remaining, then wound the clock down before finding Squire in the deep left corner. His shot went over everything but James Locklear was called for a foul, setting up three shots.

Squire felt nervous at the line but, after missing the first shot, he drained the second.

“I just knew he would make that second shot,” Malloy said. “That’s what I need from my seniors. Between him, Willie and Bret (Stroman) controlling things out there, it was a great effort from every guy that went into the game.”

It wasn’t over yet, however. After Squire missed his third shot, Locklear rebounded and called timeout with 1.4 seconds remaining. With Leach guarding the inbounds pass from the baseline, he forced a high pass that went off a light fixture hanging from the roof.

Steinert then called a timeout it didn’t have, resulting in a technical foul. Squire made one of two to seal the contest.

“We needed this real bad,” said Malloy, whose team snapped a three-game losing streak. “We didn’t play well at all in the Christmas Tournament. Tuesday night (against Hightstown) was a game I thought we had and let it slip away.

“These kids are great in that they don’t dwell on anything, they look to the next game. But I think we really needed this one. We have three games next week so this was big.”

Squire, who had nine fourth-quarter points, couldn’t agree more.

“We needed this a lot for momentum for the rest of our games,” he said. “We lost a lot of close

games this year. This should give us a lot of momentum. We can build on this.”

Steinert got 13 points, five rebounds and four blocked shots from Locklear, while LaMarca had seven points and Nick LaBelle grabbed six rebounds.

Nottingham gives Notre Dame all it can handle before falling in OT

“Irish” Mike Walsh was hoping to drink from a victory cup tonight but couldn’t seem to find one after Notre Dame defeated Nottingham, 51-48 in overtime.

Still, it was a gritty effort by the Northstars (2-5), who gave Notre Dame (7-2) all they had.

But the Irish tied it on Isaiah Johnson’s bucket with seconds remaining, and Steve Harris’s lay-up put ND up for good with 58 seconds left in OT. Harris, a Hamilton Township resident, had nine points, 16 rebounds and five blocked shots.

“I’m definitely not happy with a loss,” said Walsh, who got 15 points from sophomore Kevin Alexis. “But I am extremely proud of our effort.

“We broke through our intensity threshold and played varsity caliber basketball against a good Notre Dame team. Decision-making was our downfall tonight. That will get better...and we will get better.”