

Kortokrax Wins 500th

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Seasoning versus experience. It's about the best way you can describe the Kalida-Toledo Christian District semi-final game.

Kalida, the well seasoned tournament team, against Toledo Christian, a team which has only had a varsity basketball team for three years and a team making their first trip down the 'Road to Columbus'.

Their inexperience against a team like the Wildcats showed as they were soundly beaten 75-33. The win gave Kalida a 19-3 record and coach Kortokrax his 500th career coaching win.

In his 30 years of coaching the veteran of three Putnam County schools (Fort Jennings, Ottoville and Kalida) has a record of 500-173. More importantly he has the opportunity for win number 501.

"The 500 wins is an individual thing," said Kortokrax. They all didn't come that easy. I don't think 501 will. I don't want the season to end Saturday. I hope I can say and do the right things because 501 is very important to me and this team."

Kortokrax became only the tenth coach in Ohio High School history to win 500 games. He is only the third active coach in Ohio with 500 wins.

He graduated from Ottoville High School and after two years of coaching at Fort Jennings, coached at Ottoville where he compiled a 200-82 mark. In 1975 he took over at Kalida where he has compiled a 274-73 record with eight Putnam County League titles.

Despite lacking tournament experience Toledo Christian hung tough with the Wildcats. With over five minutes left in the second quarter, Toledo trailed only 20-15. But Kalida with so many well seasoned players available went to work and blew the game out of hand with a 29-0 run.

"It was a green club versus a seasoned club," said Toledo Christian coach Tim Jordan. "They were much more physical than we were. We tried to put one and a half men on (Brian) Vorst and one had a half man on (Al) Gerding. But they were two powerful young men. Not many Division IV schools have that kind of size."

Gerding though may have been the Kalida key. He scored the Wildcat's first eight points of the quarter to keep Kalida in front. Then Vorst added six points and Keith Nartker had nine points as he hit three three-pointers, including one from 40 feet as the buzzer sounded.

Kalida had a 41-15 halftime lead but added eight quick points to start the third quarter. They were aided in this run by four turnovers on the Eagles. Jeff Thompson broke the long dry spell with a basket as he had all of his team's points in the third eight minutes.

For the game, Toledo Christian was charged with 27 turnovers and were 12 of 37 from the field (32 percent). Only in the final quarter as Kalida substituted freely did the Eagles get a quarter in double digits.

Kalida was 23 of 71 (32 percent) from two-point range and 6 of 9 from three-point range. They committed only ten turnovers, but held a 48-25 rebounding edge.

Nartker paced the Kalida attack with 17 points, hitting five three-pointers. Gerding added 16 points while Vorst and Dan Wurth each had 10 points. Gerding pulled in 10 rebounds and Vorst had nine.

Jeff Thompson had 9 points and four rebounds for TC.

"We don't have five Jimmy Jackson's on the team," said Kortokrax. "Actually they are very ordinary. If they work, they can make some good things happen."

Toledo Christian 12-37 1-3 6-11 33

Uliczny 0-0-0-0. Robinson 3-0-0-6. Je.Thompson 3-0-3-9. Miser 1-0-0-2. Treadwell 0-0-0-0. Hubbard 1-0-2-4. Schreder 0-1-0-3. Zell 2-0-0-4. Smith 1-0-1-3. Ja.Thompson 1-0-0-2. Cunning 0-0-0-0. Fether 0-0-0-0.

Kalida 23-71 6-9 11-19 75

Recker 1-0-0-2. Bonifas 0-1-2-5. Nartker 1-5-0-17. Siefker 3-0-0-6. Birkemeier 1-0-0-2. Wurth 4-0-2-10. Remlinger 1-0-1-3. Vorst 5-0-0-10. Gerding 6-0-4-16. B.Warnecke 1-0-1-3. N. Warnecke 0-0-1-1. Knueve 0-0-0-0.

Toledo	6	9	7	11	33
Kalida	12	29	21	13	75

At the time, it was thought that this was Coach Kortokrax's 500th win during his 30th season of coaching and 15th at Kalida. The actual 500th win came the next game against Miller City when Kalida won 64-43. The Wildcats were 21-4 in 1989, losing to Lima Central Catholic in the Regional Finals. Dick was named the PCL Coach of the Year in 1989 at Kalida for the 5th time and 10th time overall.