

Titans Bring Home the Gold

O-G Dominates Canal Fulton 75-42 in Division II Final

Putnam County Sentinel – Charlie Warnimont – March 31, 2004

Dominating! That is about the best way to describe Ottawa-Glandorf's 27th basketball win of the 2003-04 season.

With a 2004 state championship trophy on the line, the Titans dominated Canal Fulton Northwest early and often as they cruised to a 75-42 win in the Division II title game at Ohio State's Value City Arena Saturday afternoon. A capacity crowd of 18,200 watched the game.

"We definitely played an outstanding basketball game. There's no doubt about that," Ottawa-Glandorf coach Dave Sweet said. "We played one of the most solid games, offensively and defensively, from start to finish."

O-G's dominating style allowed them to finish with a 27-1 record for the season and the school's first basketball state championship. The Titans finished the season with an 18 game winning streak.

Canal Fulton took home the silver trophy with a 25-2 record.

Ottawa-Glandorf started quick jumping out to a 13-6 lead with 55 seconds left in the opening quarter on a stick back by Jeremy Jones. The basket came after a lay up by Eric Pollitz and a breakaway dunk by Tim Pollitz with the Titans leading 7-6.

Down seven points after one quarter, the Indians scored the first basket of the second quarter, and then got a break when Tim Pollitz picked up his second foul of the game. Pollitz was forced to the bench with 6:48 left in the quarter and the Titans leading by five points.

Canal Fulton would trim the lead to three points at 17-14 before Eric Pollitz went on a personal 7-0 uprising that ended the Indians dreams of a state title.

Eric Pollitz opened his run by splitting a pair of free throws. Pollitz then drained a shot jump before connecting on a three pointer, pushing the lead to nine points with 3:50 left in the half.

"The big key was the second quarter," Sweet said. "We had Tim on the bench with foul trouble and we went into halftime with a 14 point lead because of the play of Eric Lammers, Craig Fortman and Matt Fought. The rest of the team just came in and contributed in great fashion. In particular, Eric Pollitz showed his leadership as well."

"Tim was out of the game, so I knew I had to step it up a little bit and keep our team going." Eric Pollitz said. "We wanted to keep it on the same page, keep running rebounding and find some one open on the breaks to finish the shots. Our players stepped up really well and as a team we played real well."

The Indians Vinnie Sette ended the run with a free throw before the Titans went on a 10-4 run to end the quarter.

Eric Lammers pushed the O-G lead to 10 points with a short jumper in the lane, and then followed that with two free throws. After a jumper by Northwest's Chuck Samsa, Craig Fortman matched it with a short jumper for O-G. Jaren Haslar came right back with two points for Canal Fulton before O-G scored the final four points of the quarter as Eric Pollitz scored off a short jumper and Fought beat the halftime buzzer with a lay up off a feed from Eric Pollitz.

"Our guys were stepping up coming off the bench. We were up 14 points, so I was pretty relaxed. I just had to be ready to play the second half," Tim Pollitz said of his second quarter rest.

While the titan's supporting cast stepped up in the first half, their defense also played an important part. The Indians hit only 9 of 22 first half field goal attempts and they were out rebounded 20-9. O-G hit 14 of 28 first half field goal attempts and was 4 of 7 at the line.

"The whole game we made them shoot shots they were not comfortable with," said Sweet. "We made them shoot over us and hounded the boards."

"Eric and Tim Pollitz, Matt Fought and Craig Fortman are four very good rebounders. We're a good rebounding team, but I didn't think we did a good job of that in the semi-final game (Thursday). In practice (Friday) that was a focus of ours. We had to get on the boards more aggressively, a lot harder that we did Thursday. We knew they were a physical team and we had to make sure we got after the ball."

For the game, the Titans held a 45-25 edge in rebounds as Eric Pollitz led the way with 15. Fought pulled down six rebounds, while Garrett Lauf and Fortman both had four rebounds.

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For the game, the Indians connected on just 15 of 51 (29 percent) shot attempts as they were 2 of 15 from three point range. On the other O-G shot 55.6 percent for the game as they drained 30 of 54 attempts.

After shooting 50 percent in the first half, the Titans raised that level to 61 percent in the second half, draining 16 of 26 shot attempts. The Titans percentage was helped out as they outscored the Indians 50-18 in the paint. What makes O-G's shooting percentage even harder to believe is that they did it against a 3-2 zone designed to take away the Pollitz twins.

"We have several players that are very, very versatile," Sweet said. "How many guys of their caliber (Tim and Eric) can do so many different things? They can post up or they can dribble penetrate. Nathan Hermiller, Craig Fortman and Eric Lammers also do a good job of that. We thought there were some gaps we could get into if they took it in there hard. We have guys that can do that and have done that throughout the season. And how many teams have a center (Tim) that can come out and handle the ball like he does."

With Tim Pollitz back in the lineup to start the third quarter, the Titans went right back to work scoring the first five points of the quarter as Fortman completed a three point play and Eric Pollitz scored.

Jared Haslar briefly stopped the run with an inside basket before an 8-2 run by the Titans doubled the Indians score at 46-23. Tim Pollitz had six of the points on inside moves, while Hermiller and Eric Pollitz added free throws. By the end of the third quarter, the Titans had their championship in the bag as they led 58-31.

Eric Pollitz led O-G with 21 points on 9 of 12 shooting with a three and he also had eight assists and three steals. Tim Pollitz finished with 18 points in 18 minutes of action on 7 of 13 shooting and he had three assists. Fought finished with 10 points and had three blocked shots. Craig Fortman had nine points and he also blocked a shot.

"Our focus all day was to run, make them shoot over the top of us, get the ball out and run the floor. I thought we did that very well," Sweet said.

Sette led the Indians with 12 points and four rebounds. Haslar had 10 points, while Mat Lewis had four points and four assists.

"All during the tournament, we've played with a lot of confidence and we've played some good competition to get here," said Canal Fulton coach Jim Lower. "Today we didn't do that. We didn't get it done and my hats off to them. You have games like that. You have a game plan and you have several things you want to do. If you don't have to change anything, you know you are playing well. We had to go through a whole lot of things. We had a hard time finding anything that was going well."

Ottawa-Glandorf 29-50 1-4 14-26 75

Hermiller 1-4 1-2 3. Lauf 1-4 2-2 4. E. Pollitz 9-12 2-2 21. Fortman 4-5 1-1 9. T. Pollitz 7-13 4-6 18. Beckman 0-1 0-0 0. Shalter 0-0 1-2 1. Fought 5-6 0-2 10. Kuhlman 0-0 0-2 0. Lammers 1-3 2-2 4. Selhorst 1-2 0-0 2. Pothast 0-2 0-0 0. Felkey 0-0 1-2 1. Laubenthal 0-0 0-0 0. Jones 1-2 0-1 1.

Canal Fulton 13-36 2-15 10-19 42

Haslar 4-12 0-0 10. Batera 2-5 0-0 4. Ma. Lewis 1-3 2-7 4. Sette 4-9 4-5 12. Samsa 3-8 0-0 6. Stacey 0-3 0-0 0. Wallace 0-2 0-0 0. McGarity 0-1 0-0 0. Evans 0-1 3-4 3. Mi. Lewis 0-0 1-2 1. DeGuta 0-0 0-0 0. Moore 1-4 0-0 2. White 0-1 0-0 0. Sams 0-1 0-1 0. Vasco 0-1 0-0 0.

Ottawa-Glandorf	15	18	25	17	75
Canal Fulton	8	11	12	11	42

Attendance: 18,200