

Game Recap

Franklin at Oakwood

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Initial Notes:

Coming into this one we knew it was going to be an extremely close game. Oakwood is led by Darren Rubin, who is a potential SWO Player of the Year Candidate for Division 2. Franklin however brings to the table an extremely deep roster and a Coach in Brian Bales that makes sure his crew is ready and able to take on any opponent. Perhaps the biggest note for Franklin was that one of their star Guards, Will Emrick, came out in a boot as he has a stress fracture in his right foot (hoping to return 2nd or 3rd week in January). Oakwood is never an easy environment to coming into a win, let alone missing one of your best players.

Tip: Franklin was not going to be intimidated, They immediately came out in an aggressive 1-3-1 ½ Court Trap Zone. As Rubin brought the ball up, two defenders were in his face forcing Rubin and other Oakwood players to make overhead lob passes or awkward angle bounce passes, making it very difficult for the Jack's to find any space. The Wildcats paired that defensive strategy with a very aggressive pace, as Zack Minton recorded the 1st 8 points in the game. Oakwood continued to slowly adjust to the WildCat zone and got some offense going as Daniel Hu and Will Maxwell looked to attack and get to empty spots for clean looks. Franklin continued to push the pace and Kamry Fuller looked to drive the lane often, getting fouled a number of times. He and others struggled to hit FT's which would have allowed the Wildcats to get some separation early. As it was, those points that were left out there kept the scoring pace level, even though Oakwood was struggling offensively.

End of Q1:

Franklin 15

Oakwood 14

Heading into Q2 we saw much of the same. Both teams struggled in their own ways. Oakwood moved Rubin off the point and tried to get him the ball as he came off of screens and cuts. This worked to free him up for a couple shot attempts but the main

offense they got in the 2nd was from Daniel Hu and Will Maxwell. Hu attacked the zone for a few buckets as eyes were focused on Rubin. Rubin looked to pass ball down low when the defense closed out too aggressively and Maxwell was the recipient of that. Franklin got a quick lift from Tez Lattimore off the bench as he brought more speed, a driving mentality and great defense that forced Oakwood into some turnovers and ill advised passes. Lattimore drove consistently and got to the rim often but had a number of attempts that just wouldn't fall. Caden Johnson started to get involved on the boards and his efforts were rewarded with an Off. Rebound that led to a put back just before the buzzer sounded to help Franklin take back the led going into the locker room . Overall, it was a sloppy Q2 for both teams were they managed only 10 pts each.

Halftime:

Franklin 25

Oakwood 24

Coming out of half it was clear to see that both team had made adjustments and had keyed in on what was successful for them in the 1st Half. Oakwood continued to attack from the top with Hu and trying to find Rubin as he moved off-ball. They found Maxwell continuously down low and the Freshman got hot. Maxwell made a number of tough buckets under the basket through contact and even added a wide open 3 to top it off. Rubin got a few looks and knocked down his 3rd three of the game to help Oakwood keep pace headed into Q4. Franklin on the other hand stayed aggressive on D and Lattimore caused a number of turnovers while Caden Johnson was a machine down low and on the boards. Coach Bales made it clear that the Wildcats couldn't afford to miss FT's if they wanted to win the game. Johnson, Fuller and Lattimore knocked down a few FT to put the heat on Oakwood and their zone forced more turnovers from the Jacks.

End of Q3:

Franklin 43

Oakwood 43

The 4th quarter got underway with a big corner three from Noah Rich, followed by a steal, that was thrown ahead to Rich, where he laid it in the put the Wildcats up by 5 and force Oakwood into a quick timeout. Oakwood responded by running some good motion offense that freed Rubin up as he knocked down his 4th and 5th threes of the game. Hu added a few more in the lane as Oakwood looked to make a comeback to over take Franklin. The Wildcats just proved to be too much. Led by Johnson they kept Rubin and company just out of reach. The FT's that weren't falling in the first half were finally going down as the better Wildcat Shooters, Minton and Rich, got to the line. The

defense kept giving the Jack's problems as forced Rubin into a number of deep contested desperation threes. In the end, Franklin's size and disruptive 1-3-1 kept Oakwood off balance and turnover prone long enough for the final buzzer to sound.

Final:

Franklin 61

Oakwood 56

Ending Notes:

Franklin's tactic of the 1-3-1 zone was clearly a difference maker. Oakwood tried to attack at certain points throughout, mainly led by Hu. Timely 3's from Rubin and some take over mentality from Maxwell is what kept them in this game. What really hurt Oakwood in the end was the turnover margin (Oakwood 16, Franklin 8) and the lack of depth from the rest of their roster as Rubin, Hu and Maxwell combined for 46 of the 56 total points for Oakwood. We knew coming in that Franklin could only hope to limit Rubin as much as possible, while keeping just enough pressure on the rest of the team. Outside of desperation shots at the end of the game Rubin had a 5-8 clip from beyond the arc going and was clearly the best player on the court. He looked much more willing to pass and create for the rest of the team, whereas last year he may have tried to drive or force tough, contested shots. Maxwell has an incredibly bright future over the next 3 years, we will be keeping a close eye on him as he has the size, drive, and skill to become the next "take over" man for Oakwood.

Franklin on the other hand had 4 players in double digits (Johnson, Minton, Lattimore, Rich) with Fuller on the cusp with 9. Had they shot better from the FT line (60%) or better from beyond the arc (20%) then this wouldn't have been as close as it was. Emrick being out certainly contributed to those numbers and when he gets healthy, watch out! This Franklin team is extremely well coached and will be able to go 7+ deep into their roster with little to no fall off, no matter who is on the court. They get a big win to kick-off SWBL play and take a commanding step forward. The rematch at the end of the year will certainly be extremely interesting. We look forward to seeing the adjustments and growth of Oakwood over the course of the season and can't wait to see Emrick join back up with the rest of this tough Franklin squad.