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Jase Howell surveys the Indians' defense. Photo by Sean Douglas

M-G grabs first in CIC standings

By Sean Douglas

The last time that the Madison-Grant Argylls defeated the Mississinewa Indians on the hardwood leading up to Friday night's contest was in 2012, when John Irwin was the head coach and M-G's core senior group were in elementary school.

But in the moments leading up to the opening tip, it was clear that this Argylls team was ready for the challenge. Despite a two-week layoff, their body language exuded confidence, and the team had one, singular goal in mind – to make a statement.

"It's been one of our target games all year," Madison-Grant point guard Grant Brown said. "We were looking forward to this game, earning some respect, and beating them."

Safe to say, the Argylls made their statement.

Behind a nearly flawless game plan, a first-quarter spark by Howell, the steady play of their upperclassmen, and a tremendous defensive effort, the Argylls defeated the Indians for the first time in eight years, putting themselves in the drivers' seat of the Central Indiana Conference with a 64-51 triumph.

With the win, the Argylls remained undefeated, improving to 4-0 on the season.

"I'm really proud of the way our kids competed coming off of a quarantine situation and getting a three-day prep," Madison-Grant Head Coach Kevin Cherry said. "I told them our first day back in the gym on Tuesday, 'Don't expect anybody to feel sorry for us, because they're not. We are going to have to go over there and execute and try to have a chance at the end to get a win over there.' We were fortunate enough tonight to get that done."

From the moment the contest started until the final horn sounded, the Argylls excelled

in every phase of the game.

On offense, the Argylls were in sync, making the correct reads, spreading the ball around, and most importantly, taking the right shots. For the game, Madison-Grant shot 21-of-39, good for 53.8 percent.

"Our kids are buying in," Cherry said. "We don't want good shots; we want great shots. If they are open, they are going to make them, so we don't need them to settle. They've bought into their roles, and I couldn't be happier."

The Argylls also kept a high-powered Mississinewa offense, who came into Friday night averaging nearly 65 points per game, in check, holding them 14 points below their average. Brown and shooting guard Kaden Howell were key factors in the Argylls' defensive success, keeping Mississinewa sharpshooter Landen Swanner contained. Swanner finished with 14 points, but only scored three points in the first three quarters.

"We were focused on him and Tai [McClung], not shutting them out, but holding them to one shot," Brown said. "We knew they were going to get going at some point, and our goal was just to hold them longer and longer into the game. That was what we did, and that is how we executed."

Lastly, the Argylls dominated the glass, out-rebounding the Indians by a 29-20 margin, including a 16-7 advantage after the first half. Their rebounding prowess led to multiple second chance opportunities on the offensive end, and they did an excellent job of holding Mississinewa to a plethora of "one-and-done" possessions.

The contest was close in its early stages, as the two teams battled to a 7-7 tie in the first five minutes. However, Jase Howell put the Argylls firmly in control, knocking down three triples in the first eight minutes

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Golden Eagles come up short against Lady Apaches

By Sean Douglas

The Oak Hill Golden Eagles certainly had their fair share of struggles in their bout against Wabash on Tuesday evening.

They only scored eight points in the first half, turned the ball over 14 times in the opening three quarters, which allowed the Apaches to score several easy baskets and build a double-digit advantage, and made just seven of their first 33 field goal attempts.

Despite this, the Golden Eagles continued to battle, showing grit and heart in a ferocious fourth quarter comeback that saw them trim an 18-point deficit down to a single point.

However, Oak Hill's early labors proved a little too much to overcome, as the Apaches held on to win by a final score of 44-41.

The contest started out even, as both teams traded a pair of baskets for an early 4-4 tie, but the Apaches' defense stiffened, holding the Golden Eagles off the scoreboard until their last possession – a Nikki Alston



Audrey Leak scored 11 points for the Golden Eagles in the fourth quarter, but the Golden Eagles could not complete their comeback against Wabash on Tuesday. Photo by Sean Douglas

triple. Behind a 13-3 run, and five Oak Hill giveaways, Wabash took a 13-7 lead after the first quarter.

The Golden Eagles' scoring woes continued in the second quarter. Oak Hill finished 0-for-9 from the field, and Carlee Biddle

scored the Golden Eagles' lone point of the stanza on a free throw with 19.7 seconds left.

The Apaches took advantage, scoring 13 points and forcing four more Oak Hill turnovers to take a 26-8

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New game plan helps Lady Indians

By Sean Douglas

With the multitude of offensive struggles that the Mississinewa Indians have already faced this year, Head Coach Laura Friday and the team have taken a new approach – attacking the basket rather than relying on outside shots.

While it has taken some time to implement, the fruits of the Indians' labors are beginning to yield positive results.

Behind a career-best performance from Mia Catey, strong outings from Alayna Webb and Karmen Swindall, and a 24-8 run in the second and third quarters, the Indians headed into their Christmas break on a high note, defeating the Madison-Grant Argylls 47-40 on Saturday morning.

"We started a little bit slow, but then we became more aggressive," Mis-

sinewa Head Coach Laura Friday said. "That's what we were trying to do the whole time – we wanted to be aggressive to the basket because our shots aren't falling right now, and we did that."

Catey was the catalyst, flying to the basket with ease throughout the afternoon and taking advantage of a smaller Argyll lineup. The junior guard scored a career-high 18 points in the contest, while adding 10 rebounds and four steals in a tremendous all-around effort.

Webb, normally one of Mississinewa's three-point specialists, has developed more of an inside game as well in the past few contests. She finished the contest with 13 points, and added two rebounds and a pair of steals.

"For them to stop relying on their outside shot is huge

for them," Friday said. "They are both good shooters, but this year is a little bit different. [They were] aggressive to the basket, [they took] the initiative to get in there, and they wanted the basketball. That's huge for us."

Swindall, while still a raw prospect as a post player, is continuing to grow into her role and is improving with each passing game. She collected seven points, including the final two free throws of the contest to put the game away for the Indians, while adding two steals and a block.

"We expect her, and we tell her all the time to get a double-double every night," Friday said. "She hasn't figured out the scoring part all the way yet, but she is improving every single day. She is just now starting to get back into the groove of

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