

Staunton races past defenseless Fort Defiance 106 - 80

The Staunton Storm stormed past the Fort Defiance Indians on January 18 in the Paul Hatcher Gym, 106 – 80. Each team came into the game with a 3 – 0 record in the Shenandoah District but Staunton took advantage of numerous turnovers, poor shooting, and lack of defense on Fort's part to blast the Indians in a game that was postponed for two consecutive nights due to inclement weather. The game was close for the first 15 minutes of play but with the Storm hanging onto a 38 – 37 lead with one minute to go in the first half, the home team scored eight unanswered points to take a commanding 46 – 37 lead at halftime. Then they trumped that run with a 38 point third quarter to put the game out of reach. With the win, Staunton's record is now 7 – 6, 4 – 0 while Fort Defiance dropped to 6 – 7, 3 – 1.

In the first quarter, neither team shot well and the lead changed hands numerous times. Carter Fink opened the scoring on an assist from Gio Armendariz Cruz to give Fort a 2 – 0 lead. After Staunton took a 3 – 2 lead on a field goal and foul shot, Carter again scored on a put back to make it 4 – 3. Staunton answered with a layup then Jasigh Ransome and Evan Braun each hit three pointers to give Fort a 10 – 5 lead with 2:14 to go in the quarter. Staunton scored on its next two possessions to get within one but Del Ray Jones hit a three pointer to give Fort a 13 – 9 lead. Unfortunately for the Indians, the Storm would score the next eight points to take a 17 – 13 lead at the end of the first quarter.

Neither of Fort's two leading scorers, Gio and Sam Garber, scored in the first quarter but Sam finally connected on a three to start the second quarter. After a Staunton deuce, Tripp Hanger hit one of two free throws to make the score 19 – 17 in favor of SHS with 7:04 to go in the period. Staunton got a field goal to push their lead to four but Tripp answered with two consecutive threes, giving FDHS a 23 – 21 lead with 4:41 to go. Sam's bucket gave Fort a 25 – 21 advantage. After a Staunton field goal, Carter Fink again scored in the paint then took a nice pass from Del Ray and scored again, giving Fort a 29 – 25 lead. Staunton then made a nine point run, taking the lead at 30 – 29 with 2:40 to go then extending the lead to 34 – 29 with 2:06 to go. They would continue to lead the rest of the game. Gio finally got on the board with a deuce to make it 34 – 31. After a Staunton score, Del Ray popped in two more three pointers sandwiched around a Staunton basket to make the score 38 – 37 with a minute to go. As they did in the first quarter, Staunton then scored eight consecutive points, aided by some bad turnovers by the Fort guards, to take a 46 – 37 lead at the half. Not helping Fort's cause in the half was that they made only one of seven free throws attempted.

Fort's defense was nowhere to be found in the third quarter. Staunton easily broke Fort's press, got defensive rebounds and found that Fort had no one back to defend, and forced the Indians into numerous turnovers as they put 38 points on the board in the quarter, none of which came on three pointers. Fort got a two pointer and a free throw from Gio, a three plus two free throws by Tripp, a basket in the paint by Carter Berry, two triples and four free throws from Sam, and a free throw from Jasigh, Carter Fink, and Jasigh to make the score 84 – 60 after three quarters. Ordinarily, 23 points in a quarter would be fine but not when you give up 38.

Fort got the lead down to 19 a few times in the fourth quarter but the game was clearly out of reach by that time. Sam made 3 three pointers in the quarter. Fort also got three baskets by Carter Berry, one by Austin Metz, one by Gus Gutshall, and a free throw by Rhylan Martin. Staunton scored 100 with 1:03 to go then added two three pointers to make the final score Staunton 106, Fort Defiance 80.

Sam led the Indians with 24 points but he did not have a good night shooting. Gio had his worst night of the season and only managed 5 points. Tripp had 12, Carter Fink 9, Del Ray 9, and Carter Berry 8 for the Indians. As it has been all season, the Indians play throughout the game was very selfish with players looking for their own shots instead of for the open teammate. Meanwhile, Staunton ran and passed and played tight defense all night to humble the Indians. Fort Defiance was without Bradley Hebb and Jalen Alexander for the game.

Fort's free throw shooting is abysmal. Tonight it was 12 of 27. For the season they are making only 51% of their foul shots. But do the players shoot any free throws during warm ups or at halftime? No, all they do the entire time is shoot from beyond the arc.

Grandfather's note: As usual, Gus played much less than his teammates. In the second quarter he played a grand total of 20 seconds. He had a nice put back in the fourth quarter and snared a rebound earlier in the game. Thanks to his teammates' selfish style of play, the only way he ever touches the ball is if he gets a rebound. I sat among other players' parents tonight who were as disgusted as I am with the style of play the boys are being taught to play. What I observe is that it seems to be quite OK to make frequent turnovers, miss the majority of your shots, and play no defense as long as you can launch a three point shot without having to pass the ball. It is hard to watch and remain calm.

Fort's Box Score:

Name	2 Pt Goals	3 Pt Goals	Free Throws	Total
Gio Armendariz Cruz	2	0	1-4	5
Bradley Hebb	0	0	0-0	0
Jasigh Ransome	0	1	2-4	5
Carter Fink	4	0	1-3	9
Trey Miller	0	0	0-0	0
Sam Garber	1	6	4-4	24
Austin Metz	1	0	0-2	2
Evan Braun	0	1	0-0	3
Rhylan Martin	0	0	1-2	1
Del Ray Jones	0	3	0-0	9
Tripp Hanger	0	3	3-6	12
Jalen Alexander	0	0	0-0	0
Gus Gutshall	1	0	0-0	2
Carter Berry	4	0	0-2	8
TOTAL	13	14	12-27	80

The following short article appeared in the Staunton News Leader:

Staunton head coach Terrell Mickens recorded his 100th career victory for the Storm in his team's 106-80 win over Fort Defiance Thursday.

Durrell Hamilton led six Staunton players in double figures with 24 points in the win. Manny Chapman added 15 points, while Ky'Ree Scott finished with 14 and Michael Reed had 12 in the victory. Staunton's Joaquin Bell and Jack Jones both had 10.

Staunton is now 7-6 overall and 4-0 in the district. Fort is now 6-7 and 3-1 in district play.

Sam Garber led Fort Defiance with 24 points in the loss. Tripp Hanger had 12 for Fort.