

Defending champ Olpe rolls into Class 1A-I boys title game; Eagles lasso Macksville, 68-38

DODGE CITY – When Chris Schmidt and his Olpe Eagles left town earlier in the week for the Class 1A-I State Tournament, the last words he said at the school's send-off pep rally was quite simple.

"I want to hear the words Green Machine three more times," he said Friday afternoon at United Wireless Arena after his defending champion Eagles dismantled the Macksville Mustangs and rode them off into the consolation sunset with a resounding 68-38 semifinal rollover. "I've heard it twice. We've got one more to go, and we take nothing for granted."

The Mustangs now await the outcome of the late Friday semifinal between Solomon and South Gray. If it's the Rebels of South Gray, it will be a rematch of last year's state title game when the Eagles upended the Rebels 54-47.

In the Eagles' typical fashion, the Green Machine was a little rusty at the game's outset, leading just 12-9 after one quarter and midway through the second, was sputtering with an 18-16 lead.

And then, in what seemed like a lightning-strike moment, the Eagles tore off a 16-1 run over the final 4:01 to go in at intermission, saddling the Mustangs with a 32-17 deficit.

"It just took a little while to get our bearings and figure out some things they were doing," Schmidt said. "Once we got more flow on offense we got going."

The third quarter went right back into the stables with neither team able to do much offensively, each team getting six points to make it 38-23 going into the final eight minutes.

There would be no final rally by the Mustangs as the Eagles opened up their engine into fourth and maybe fifth gear, scoring 30 points to finish off the 30-point victory.

Statistically, the Eagles shined in places not typical of most teams. They finished with 14 steals (4 each by Blake Redeker and Derek Hoelting), and 20 assists off 28 made baskets (Damon Redeker accounting for nine of those). On the defensive

end, the Eagles forced the Mustangs into 23 turnovers while accounting for only nine on their end of the floor.

“We really find a way to use our defense to start our offense,” Schmidt said. “These are unselfish kids and they enjoy playing together. They work hard and it’s good to see that pay off for them.”

In typical Olpe style, too, they had three players in double figures with Truman Bailey leading the way with 19 points, including 3-of-7 behind the arc. Hoelting added in a double-double with 15 points and a game-high 14 rebounds while Blake Redeker contributed 11 points. Damon Redeker’s stat line read – 8 points, 8 rebounds, 9 assists, 4 steals.

For Macksville, which saw its record drop to 22-3, Rogelio Ibarra was high with nine points. Lance Lickiss had 11 rebounds to lead the way. The Mustangs will play the South Gray-Solomon loser in the 12 p.m. consolation game for third place.

Schmidt, who also coaches the Olpe 11-man football team, hedged a little in talking about the potential history that his team could match on Saturday.

“I really lean on our senior leadership to handle a lot of things, and they come through so many times and in so many different ways,” Schmidt said. “They have a great understanding of where their teammates are on the court.”

The Eagles have won consecutive Class 1A 11-man football titles in 2020 and 2021 and with last year’s basketball title in hand, a repeat would give them a double-double, matched only by Hanover’s similar accomplishment in 8-Player football and 1A basketball in 2008-09 and 2009-10. The Hanover football crowns came in 8-Player II division.

“I haven’t said a word to them,” Schmidt said. “It’s not something we talk about, but this is a special group and it would be great for them.”

OLPE 68, MACKSVILLE 38

Macksville 9 8 6 15 -- 38

Olpe 12 20 6 30 -- 68

Macksville (22-3) – R. Ibarra 3-9 2-4 9, Lickiss 3-6 1-2 7, Mndez 0-1 0-0 0, Gomez 0-6 6-8 6, Barron 3-5 1-2 8, Kuckelman 0-1 1-3 1, A. Ibarra 0-1 0-0 0, Esparza 2-5 2-2 7, Triana 0-1 0-0 0. Totals 11-35 13-21 38.

Olpe (24-1) – B. Redeker 5-8 1-2 11, Dexter Hoelting 1-1 0-0 3, Bailey 8-15 0-1 19, Derek Hoelting 4-12 7-9 15, D. Redeker 4-12 0-0 8, Heins 0-1 0-2 0, B. Skalsky 3-5 0-1 6, T. Skalsky 2-3 0-0 4, Foraker 1-5 0-1 2. Totals 28-63 8-16 68.

3-point goals—Macksville 3-9 (R. Ibarra 1-4, Lickiss 0-1, Barron 1-2, A. Ibarra 0-1, Esparza 1-1), Olpe 4-13 (B. Redker 0-1, Dexter Hoelting 1-1, Bailey 3-7, Derek Hoelting 0-1, D. Redeker 0-2, Foraker 0-1). Rebounds—Macksville 34 (Lickiss 11), Olpe 37 (Derek Hoelting 14). Assists—Macksville 7 (Kuckelman 3), Olpe 20 (D. Redeker 9). Fouls—Macksville 16, Olpe 16. Fouled out—None.