

Warhawks' Rally Falls Short Against Pioneers

A late game-tying three-pointer took the UWW-UW Platteville basketball game to overtime Wednesday night, but the Warhawks couldn't finish the comeback and fell to the Pioneers, 75-78.

The Warhawks got off to a competitive start, shooting 48% from the field and 36% from beyond the arc. The Platteville Pioneers, on the other hand, seemed to make everything they threw up. The team was hitting 53% of their shots from the field and were sinking their downtown shots at 42%.

Boston Johnson, shooting guard for the Pioneers, seemed to be the most explosive player in the first half of the WIAC matchup. Johnson went 4-6 from the field, made both his free throws, and had four defensive rebounds. He was also on the court for 19 of the 20 minutes of the first half.

Johnson's opposing competition was UWW forward Trinson White, who also played a tremendous first half for the Warhawks. Trinson went 5-7 from the field and hit one three-pointer in the first half. The Warhawks kept the game close throughout, their only deficit being down 11. In the later stage of the contest, missed free throws seemed to be the main culprit for Whitewater's loss.

The Pioneers succeeded in living up to the reason they are ranked 2nd in the nation in free throws; UWP only missed one free throw the entire game, a percentage of 94% (16-17). UWW missed five (68%).

Despite the lack of offensive pressure, the Warhawks managed to stay in the game and force overtime. Senior guard Haki Stampley hit a 3-pointer with eight seconds left to take the game to extra minutes. "We had a flat-screen drawn up at the top, and it was going to go to Trinson [White]," said Stampley when asked about the final play. "I moved out, and they found me, and I just hit it."

The 22-footer seemed to give UWW some momentum, but Platteville continued to nail their free throws, capitalize on turnovers and second opportunities, and closed out the game to win by three. "It really came down to who wanted it more at the end," said Stampley. The senior carried the team in the second half, scoring 15 points and, of course, taking it to overtime, but he felt the Pioneers had more heart in the end. "We have a really good team. If we just come together and play hard, I think we can play really well and do some great things." The Warhawks will play on Saturday against the number two team in the Conference UW-River Falls at 5 p.m.