

Return Engagement

By Sonny Fulks – for SWDAB.com

By trade Ft. Loramie's Karl Raterman is a math teacher, and not surprisingly you could almost see him calculating the future in his coaching mind following the Redskins' second Division IV title win in as many years on Friday night at UD Arena.

The Redskins eliminated a talented Seven Hills team from Cincinnati, 58-37, to set up a return engagement for Raterman and his Redskins in next week's regional round of the tournament.

"We had to work for it," said the ever-cautious Raterman, in assessing the Redskins' impressive performance at both ends of the court. "Seven Hills can play, there's no doubt about that. They're physical, they're athletic and they made us play as fast as we've played all year. This was a good win to prepare us for next week."

Raterman got a superb floor game and 19 points from guard Cody Albers, and 14 more from University of Findlay-bound center, Mark Frilling, to claim Loramie's 17th win of the season and a chance for some regional redemption next week at Trent Arena.

"We played there last year against a very good Lockland team, and hopefully that experience will benefit us," added Raterman. "We should be more comfortable this year and there should be less of an intimidation factor. At least I'd like to think so."

In Friday's second Division IV final, Lehman Catholic once again had its hopes for a district title crushed...emphatically...by the Jefferson Broncos and forward Cody Latimer. Latimer was devastating on both ends of the court, scoring 19 points, to lead Jefferson past the Cavaliers, 76-41. Center Adreian Payne, a recruit to play next season at Michigan State, added 14, as the Broncos avenged a 42-7 loss to Lehman during football season.

"I actually didn't think about that football game," smiled Latimer afterwards, clutching to his district champion medal. "But winning tonight feels pretty good when I think about it now."

"Tonight was a pretty tall order for us...no pun intended," mused Cavs' coach Bruce Vanover, referring to Jefferson's overwhelming height advantage. "But you know, we had a pretty good year when you consider the number of kids who played JV last year and contributed so much to the kind of team we became this season."

The Cavaliers struggled early to score, got into foul trouble against the bigger Broncos, and simply could not overcome Jefferson's advantage of size and quickness.

"It would have helped if we could have made some shots early, for confidence," added Vanover. "We didn't box out well, either, and you have to do that against a team with that size. Bottom line, it's been 28 years since Lehman's gotten out of the district round and tonight was a reminder of the level of play it takes to win a district title."

Another perennial district winner, Lockland, will seek a return engagement of its own after punching a ticket for next week's regional round in the final game of the evening, a 23-point win over Franklin Monroe, 59-36. Lockland's Frankie Young scored 22 points to lead all scorers as the Panthers won their third district title in the last four years.

District tournament play wraps up on Saturday with the Division I pairings, beginning at 11 AM. In addition, members of the Southwest District Athletic Board will recognize **Mr. Chick Ludwig** and **Mr. Jack Pohl** on Saturday afternoon...as the Southwest's 2010 recipients of the **Ohio High School Athletic Association's Media Award**. This award was initiated by the State office a number of years ago to honor distinguished members of the media. Each District (six in the state) is asked to honor two individuals on an annual basis. Honorees are to have given ten or more years of service in covering high school athletics.