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East Kentwood (Kentwood) @ Rockford (Rockford) - Boys Basketball

East Kentwood vs. Rockford - Game Preview & News

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(/school/kentwood-east-kentwood/boysbasketball/)
(12-0-0)

55

1/25/2013
6 p.m.

Rockford (/school/rockford-rockford/boysbasketball/)
(8-4-0)

49

Rockford High School, Rockford, MI

East Kentwood shuts down Rockford late, wins in MLive.com's Grand Rapids Area Basketball Game of the Week

Steve Kaminski | skaminsk@mlive.com, January 25, 2013 8:14 p.m.

ROCKFORD - Mention the East Kentwood basketball team, and images of speedy guards, fast breaks and sweet 3-point shots quickly come to mind.

The reason the Falcons are 12-0 after beating Rockford 55-49 during Friday night's MLive.com Grand Rapids Area Basketball Game of the Week, though, is because of the play of their defense.

East Kentwood, ranked No. 4 in Class A, closed out the Rams in a key OK Red Conference battle with a 13-4 run in the fourth quarter. In fact, the Falcons didn't allow a field goal over the game's final 7:28, surrendering only four free throws.

"It was a gutty performance on the road against a team that has been hot. They have won seven in a row," East Kentwood coach Jeff Anama said of Rockford. "I am really proud of the way that (we) played defensively. It wasn't easy, but we got some stops in the fourth quarter when it mattered.

"We score 62 points a game and give up 49. When we don't play well on offense, our defense has been there. Last year, we played Rockford games in the 30s and the 40s. (Friday) was a little bit higher, but defense has been our staple, and the quickness of our guards keeps the pressure on."

The Rams and Falcons shared the OK Red title with Hudsonville a year ago. Friday's game marked the fifth in the past seven that the margin of victory between the two teams was six points or less.



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Rockford senior Zachary Finkbeiner shoots against East Kentwood junior Jeffrey Drake-Todd during the first-half of Friday's MLive.com Grand Rapids Area Game of the Week. - (Sally Finneran | MLive.com)

team had. The game was tied 24-24 at halftime and the Rams led 42-40 after three quarters. There were six lead changes in the third quarter, and four other times it was tied.

East Kentwood, trailing 45-42 early in the fourth, received a 3-pointer from Jeff Drake-Todd to tie the game. The Falcons wouldn't trail the rest of the way.

"They are a good team, and they were certainly better than we were tonight," Rockford coach Nick Allen said. "It came down to who made more plays, and they made more plays at the end. They play tough defense, and they made some big shots at critical moments. We would make a play, and they would make a play to answer. They always had an answer."

East Kentwood senior guard Arthur Pearson sparked the Falcons with 14 points,

MLive.com Game of the Week statewide poll: Which Friday night basketball game is the best matchup? (Poll Closed)

Napoleon at Grass Lake boys
41.6% (426 votes)

East Kentwood at Rockford boys
30.96% (317 votes)

Lansing Sexton at Lansing Eastern boys
14.94% (153 votes)

Muskegon Wesern Michigan Christian at Kent girls
12.5% (128 votes)

Total Votes: 1,024

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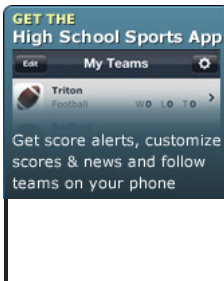
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while senior guard Jaylen Carter added 11.

Rockford's Chase Fairchild led all scorers with 19 points. Zachary Finkbeiner chipped in 12 before fouling out late in the game.

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High School Basketball Bulletin

By Steve Bell

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- Bank Hoops' Class A team, players of the week
(<http://blog.mlive.com/highschoolbasketball/2013/01/bank-hoops-class-a-team-players-of-the-week>)
- Bank Hoops' Class B team, players of the week
(<http://blog.mlive.com/highschoolbasketball/2013/01/bank-hoops-class-b-team-players-of-the-week>)

High School Playoff Brackets

Boys Basketball

- Class A State Tournament
(<http://highschoolsports.mlive.com/tournament/11008/>)
- Class B State Tournament
(<http://highschoolsports.mlive.com/tournament/11009/>)
- Class C State Tournament
(<http://highschoolsports.mlive.com/tournament/10717/>)
- Class D State Tournament
(<http://highschoolsports.mlive.com/tournament/10715/>)
- District Brackets
(<http://highschoolsports.mlive.com/boysbasketball/tournament/12-boys-basketball/>)

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