

Third-quarter explosion lifts Argylls past Comets

- [Rob Hunt](#) [The Herald Bulletin](#) Feb 20, 2021

FAIRMOUNT — Coming off a one-point win the previous night over Lapel, it was not a surprise Madison-Grant struggled early offensively as it missed its first nine field goal attempts.

“Coming in to it, I thought our conditioning was good, so I wasn’t worried about the physical part, but I thought the mental may have been where we just needed to take a breath,” Argylls coach Kevin Cherry said. “The shots we got were good looks. Maybe we rushed a couple. I’ll look at that on film.”

But, while the Argylls found their legs offensively, the defense did not allow Eastern to build an insurmountable lead.

In its final home game of the season, it was fitting one of the team’s seniors finally put the first ball through the basket.

Jackson Manwell connected on consecutive 3-point baskets to get M-G on the board, and the talented guards of the Argylls took over the game with an explosive third quarter, paving the way for a 56-38 win over the Comets.

The win was the fourth in row for Madison-Grant (18-3) and the ninth win in 10 games. The Comets fell to 11-8.

Manwell, who scored 12 and was one of four Argylls in double figures, said seeing the first made basket has a way of calming the team down. And it could be any player on any given night.

“That’s what makes us competitive and hard to scout. We go eight deep on legit scorers,” he said. “If one of us has a down night, somebody else will pick them up. That’s when we’re at our best.”

For much of the first half, Manwell was assisted in the scoring department by senior forward Justin Moore. Finishing with a game-high 15 points, Moore gave the Argylls the lead for good when he scored at the first-quarter buzzer for a 13-11 advantage.

“I thought Justin took it to another level tonight, and he’s capable of that,” Cherry said. Nursing a five-point lead at halftime, seniors Grant Brown and Kaden Howell and sophomore Jase Howell took over the game from their guard positions in the second half.

A pair of free throws from Eastern’s Evan Monize pulled the Comets within 28-24 early in the third, and that was the closest they got.

After a rebound basket by Moore, Jase Howell grabbed a rebound and hit his older brother for a transition layup and a foul. After Kaden hit the free throw for a 33-24 lead, he moved into second place on the Argylls all-time scoring list.

Grant Brown then followed with a 3-point basket before Monize — who led the Comets with 14 points — paused the onslaught with a score in the lane.

But it continued with a Kaden Howell steal Brown converted for a layup, and Manwell followed with another trey. Then a Jase Howell steal led to the first of two Kaden Howell layups which were sandwiched around a Moore basket. By the time the third quarter was over, so was the game as the Argylls had built a 21-point lead.

“Those guys have tremendous team chemistry,” Cherry said.

Brown scored 14 points along with nine rebounds, and Kaden Howell scored 13 points.

While Jase Howell scored just one field goal, he handed out eight assists.

The event was billed as a “White Out” to kick off a week of celebrating the life of coach Kyle Guenther, who passed away suddenly last February. There will be a week of fundraisers for a scholarship fund in Guenther’s name.

Madison-Grant closes out its season Tuesday at Monroe Central after finding out Sunday who and when they play the following week at the Blackford sectional.

The Argylls jumped out to a double-digit lead early in the junior varsity game and cruised to a 46-28 win over the Comets. Sophomore Peyton Southerland paced M-G with 14 points.