



COREY MEINTS/ACKLEY WORLD JOURNAL

George Van Hove missed this pull up but hit a three-pointer to finish with three points in AGWSR 72-19 home loss to Grundy Center on Friday. The loss dropped the Cougars to 0-15 on the season and 0-6 in the NICL-West.

AGWSR boys play latest victim to GC

GC routes Cougars 72-19

BY COREY MEINTS
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The eighth-rated in Class 2A Grundy Center Spartans (14-2, 7-0) have made a lot of teams look bad this season. Even their two losses, by two to second-ranked in 2A Applington-Parkersburg and by one to Jesup, they had their moments.

They had a lot more Friday night in Ackley, handing the AGWSR Cougars (0-15, 0-6) a 72-19 loss.

The Cougars held their own through much of the opening verse. Gabe Nederhoff gave the hosts a brief lead at 3-2 just more than a minute into the game, and were still within two possessions a couple minutes later before GC started to assert themselves.

It was 12-3 until Carter Roder hit a bucket and 14-8 when Ryne Pickering hit a three, but consecutive treys by Jalen Kirkpatrick and Brayden Wallis lifted the Spartans to a 20-8 lead. George Van Hove closed the first quarter with a triple just to pull AGWSR to within 23-11.

"We were able to execute early on," Cougar head coach Ryley Schipper said. "We were able to break the press early. Effort wise, I liked it. We were in the game early and that's what we wanted. We talked all week about getting to spots and I felt we did a better job of that. Especially early."

The hosts couldn't find the basket in the second quarter, the third scoreless quarter in AGWSR's last two North Iowa Cedar League-West games. That allowed the Spartans to widen the gap to 39-11 at the half.

GC reached the running clock threshold on

Grundy Center 72, AGWSR 19

Jan. 27 at Ackley

GC: 23 16 16 17- 72
AGWSR: 11 0 3 5- 19

Scoring

GC: Jalen Kirkpatrick 8 0-0 19; Tate Jirovsky 4 1-3 9; Patrick Brown III 4 1-3 9; Ben Wegmann 3 0-0 7; Brody Zinkula 2 0-0 5; Brayden Wallis 2 0-0 5; Tiernan Vokes 2 0-0 5; Ryker Thoren 2 0-0 5; Colin Gordon 1 1-2 4; Tyler Venenga 2 0-0 4.

AGWSR: Ryne Pickering 2 0-0 6; Gabe Nederhoff 2 0-0 6; George Van Hove 1 0-0 3; Carter Roder 1 0-0 2; Jesus Garibay 1 0-0 2.

a Kirkpatrick three at the 5:12 mark of the third quarter. Nederhoff responded with AGWSR's only points of the quarter, a three-pointer. The visiting lead grew to 55-14 at the end of the quarter.

A long Pickering triple with 6:45 to play and a Jesus Garibay putback with 12 seconds left was all the Cougars could put together in the fourth as GC closed out the win.

With the Spartans pressing everything, the Cougars turned the ball over 28 times. And without leading scorer Bradley Roder and a decided size deficiency, they had no inside presence. Schipper said that all forced some bad decisions at times. Something, he added, teams tend to do against GC.

"We've talked over the last couple weeks we need to use our inside game more," Schipper said. "With GC's length we had to throw it over the top. We had some good passes but we also had some passes we were forced into throwing that we didn't want to throw. Without Bradley, we're settling for threes because we can't get to the rim. Grundy is one of the biggest teams across all classes, and we couldn't practice against that." ●

With all his heart

Brandt returns to the mat and life

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Wolff-Parkinson-White (WPW) syndrome is a heart condition present at birth as a congenital heart defect. It is an extra signaling pathway between the heart's upper and lower chambers causes a fast heartbeat, or tachycardia, and is fairly rare.

AGWSR senior Eli Brandt, 18, found out he has WPW shortly after a wrestling match in seventh grade.

"He had a wrestling meet and after he got home he let me know that his heart was really beating fast," mother Susan said. "We took him to the emergency room in Iowa Falls immediately. They scheduled an appointment that week with a doctor in Waterloo. The EKG showed he had Wolfe-Parkinson-White. They referred us to Iowa City."

According to the Mayo Clinic, the episodes of fast heartbeats seen in WPW syndrome usually aren't life-threatening, but serious heart problems can occur. Rarely, WPW syndrome may lead to sudden cardiac death in children and young adults.

Treatment of WPW syndrome may include special actions, medications, a shock to the heart (cardioversion) or a catheter procedure to stop the irregular heart rhythm (arrhythmia) called ablation – which is what Eli had done.

Ablation is a procedure to treat atrial fibrillation. It uses small burns or freezes to stop the irregular heart rhythm on the inside of the heart to help break up the electrical signals that cause irregular heartbeats. This can help the heart maintain a normal heart rhythm. Ablation has serious risks, although they are rare. They include stroke and death. If ablation doesn't work the first time, it may need to be done again.

Eli has had three of them. The third, though successful, created another issue.

"The first two were



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Eli Brandt has battled a lot just to get back into the locker room at AGWSR. The senior thought he might never participate in wrestling again after suffering through a heart condition, but has returned to win 20 matches.

unsuccessful but the last one was successful on fixing the WPW," Sue said. "But it caused an artery to close during the procedure. They were able to open the artery, but it was narrowed. Medication was prescribed and he was restricted in his physical activities."

Eli – active in football, wrestling and golf – had to undergo a stress test before being released back to all activities. He passed, but at practice on New Year's Eve Day during his sophomore year, he suffered a heart attack at practice.

"He was taken by ambulance to Iowa Falls hospital and transferred later that night to Iowa City," Sue said. "There was no permanent damage and he was released on New Year's Day."

He continued on the medication and, after six months, was allowed to slowly return to light workouts. But other than golf, as a member of the Class 1A Boys' State championship team, Eli chose not to play football or wrestle until this year.

"I think he was just really scared at this point and did not wish to go back to sports," Sue said. "Until he missed football his senior year. I think this was why he decided to try wrestling again. He missed being a part of a team, he missed his friends and of course he is competitive. So, he went out again. So far, so good. And his first pin at home he was so pumped."

Eli carries a 21-11 record with 10 pins at 195 pounds. But it hasn't been an easy road to get there.

"When he would have the tachycardia episodes he would not be able to continue doing whatever activity he was participating in," Sue said. "For example, running. He just

had to stop. He explained that he just couldn't keep running. It would happen at football practice and he would have to be taken out, if he was in. He would do an exercise to stop the tachycardia and medication. Now he is back to his old self. He hasn't had any more complications and is back to it. We are so happy that he can be with his teammates and compete again. He really missed it. We never thought it would happen.

Moving forward, Sue said Eli has no limitations.

"He is excited for graduation and what is in front of him," Sue said. "It was extremely scary for me and Drew (Eli's dad). We had accepted that he wouldn't participate in football or wrestling, thank goodness he still had golf. Ultimately, we just want him to be healthy and happy. I continually ask him about how he is feeling. I ask him if he has had any heart pains. I pester him a lot. I think we will always be more aware of what is happening with him, probably forever. The doctors have assured us that the WPW is not showing up on any EKGs, so he should not have a recurrence of any heart issues – we pray."

Eli, who has other activities he enjoys like hunting and fishing, being part of a team and being with his friends is what he missed most when he had to sit out. As much as he tried, he was forced to miss a lot.

"It has been off and on for a few years," Eli said. "I stopped after the first diagnosis of WPW until I had the first ablation. Then I had to have a second ablation in ninth grade, and a third ablation after football my sophomore year. We scheduled them after football,

but before wrestling so I didn't miss the seasons. The third ablation is the one that caused the narrowed artery. I was released to wrestle over Christmas break, but I had a minor heart attack and had to stop wrestling again until this year."

The hope was that the artery would reroute and heal itself, Sue said after the setback. There was no set date for this to happen, so Eli had a stress test and passed without any issues. This was after some six months of restricted activity.

"There was no permanent damage, but at the time of his heart attack we decided to take a longer break from sports that required cardiovascular work," Sue said. "Eli made the decision that he just didn't want to risk another event. It was really scary for him, painful too, and he just was sure he would compete again."

He was cleared to return again at his last appointment Spring of his Junior year but he chose not to participate in anything other than golf and trap shooting.

"After I missed out on football, I wanted to try wrestling again," Eli said. "I missed my friends and being a part of a team. I would drive to the away games and watch. I felt like I was missing out."

But no more. While he looks forward to a return to the links this spring, he has some unfinished business on the mat this winter yet. With weather taking away his last shot at a conference medal, he is focused on the District Meet in Ogden on Feb. 11, and possibly State in Des Moines the following week.

When asked if he was happy to have the chance, Eli simply smiled.

"Oh yeah," he said. ●

BASKETBALL > CONT'D

then shutdown the Broncos for the next four-plus minutes while making it a 39-30 game. AGWSR's lead stood at 45-36 heading to the fourth frame.

The Broncos got as close as four with two minutes to play in the game before the Cougars closed it out.

"We weren't great defensively in the first half but we were much better in the second half," AGWSR head coach Mike Finger said. "We played one of our best quarters of the season in the third quarter. We made really good decisions on offense and did a much better job defensively. Even though their record isn't that great, they (B-K) have a pretty solid team so I was proud of the way we

played – in the second half in particular."

AGWSR boys head coach Ryley Schipper was also proud of how his team played despite the loss to the now 1-14 Broncos. With an injury to starter Bradley Roder keeping him on the bench, Schipper said others have grown into their spots.

"I thought we played really hard tonight," Schipper said. "We just gave up to many easy baskets in the first half. Carver Brown gave us great minutes, and Carter Roder really gave us great minutes. We had a chance and that's all I can ask for at this point. We are going to continue to work together and fight things out."

Lengthy dryspells kept the Cougars in check

AGWSR vs. Belmond-Klemme

Jan. 23 at Belmond GIRLS

AGWSR: 12 14 19 19- 64
B-K: 16 9 11 23- 59

Scoring

AGWSR: Nakia Ollivierre 9 2-4 23; Josie Kuper 9 2-3 20; Brynn Smith 4 0-0 12; Ava Olson 2 1-4 5; Trevyn Smith 2 0-0 4; Karis Lippert 1 0-0 2.

B-K: Shaylee Aguilera 7 2-2 19; Adasyn Lamb 6 4-5 16; Allison Barnus 5 0-0 12; Calee Kuhlers 3 2-2 8; Quinn Gabrielson 1 0-0 2; Carlee Kuhlers 1 0-0 2.

BOYS

AGWSR: 6 5 12 14- 37
B-K: 10 11 12 13- 46

Scoring

AGWSR: Gabe Nederhoff 2 7-7 13; Ryne Pickering 3 0-0 9; Carver Brown 3 0-0 8; Carter Roder 2 0-2 5; Eli Kuper 1 0-0 2.

B-K: Ty Franklin 7 7-15 21; Brian Duran 3 2-2 9; Brody Kern 3 0-0 7; Jackson Belstene 3 0-0 7; Braden Gabrielseon 0 2-2 2.



Nederhoff

in that first half, but the hosts did not do much to exploit that. B-K held a 4-3 lead midway through the opening stanza, and were up just 8-3 three minutes later on their way to a 10-6 lead at the end. That lead slowly

grew to 21-11 at the half. That 10-point spread lasted through the third quarter, but didn't grow. The Cougars cut into that lead in the fourth, but could only get to within eight with one minute to play. ●