

# Boys basketball: Rolling Meadows turns tables on Palatine

*John Bumbales*

After losing to Palatine in the Mid-Suburban League title game the last two seasons, host Rolling Meadows was looking for some revenge against Palatine in an MSL crossover game Tuesday night.

The Mustangs got it, 53-30, but the contest was still close when Palatine's Darrin Dick (5 points) hit a 3-pointer to open the second half as the Pirates only trailed 27-22.

But the Mustangs (7-1, 2-0) would take complete command of the contest the rest of the way as Marquette-bound senior Ian Miletic scored 8 points, including two 3-pointers in a span of 1:09, to quickly give his team their biggest lead at 35-22 with 5:08 left in the third quarter.

Palatine (3-4, 0-2) could not recover after that point as a 3-pointer by Ryan Meyer (4 assists, 3 points) gave Rolling Meadows a 42-26 lead heading into the fourth quarter.

Miletic scored 7 of his game-high 24 points in the first quarter to go along with 10 rebounds and 4 assists as the Mustangs went on an 8-point run to lead 16-8 after one quarter and 27-19 at halftime.

"Going back to last year when we had the MSL championship game against them we knew we had to come out strong in that second half, and me and the guys continued to echo that," said Miletic, who spoke with visiting Marquette coach Shaka Smart after the game.

"So we took the initiative to really put that game away, and that's exactly what we did by executing our game plan overall. We took care of what we needed to do to get some stops and set the tone to slow these guys down and allow us to get into transition."

A baseline jumper by Jack Duffer (9 points, 5 assists) boosted the lead to 44-26 with 7:18 to play while teammate Gavin Escobedo scored 9 points on three 3-pointers in the first half. Rolling Meadows had 10 3-pointers overall, including four from Miletic.

"I thought defensively we played well the whole game. We did some nice things pressuring them to take them out of what they want to do and we knew it was going to be a battle," said Rolling Meadows coach Kevin Katovich. "I thought our kids played really well tonight. Gavin Escobedo had a really nice game tonight, and our big guys played really well against their big kids so it was a really nice team win."

Palatine was led by Carter Monroe with 8 points while teammates Kasey May and Tony Balanganayi scored 6 points each. The Pirates were outscored 26-11 in the second half.

"They had us on skates there for awhile offensively. They did a nice job of popping the ball around, and I thought we were very reactive defensively but they had a lot to do with that," said Palatine coach Eric Millstone, whose team placed fourth in Class 4A last year. "They hit shots and it's a pretty simple game when you do that. He (Miletic) is going to Marquette for a reason, he's a big-time player, and he's not just a scorer he does everything well."