

Boys basketball: Miletic, Rolling Meadows roll past Fremd to win sectional championship

[Dick Quagliano](#)



Rolling Meadows' Ian Miletic slam dunks two of his 35 points against Fremd in a IHSA Class 4A boys basketball sectional final at Schaumburg High School on Friday, Mar. 7, 2025 *John Starks/jstarks@dailyherald.com*

Rolling Meadows needed a spark, and Gavin Escobedo provided the flint.

Escobedo led a third-quarter charge that helped erase a 7-point halftime deficit. That ignited the Mustangs, who were led by Ian Miletic with 35 points. Rolling Meadows knocked off Fremd 73-58 in the Class 4A sectional final at Schaumburg on Friday night.

Rolling Meadows (30-4) will meet Warren in the Northern Illinois University supersectional at 7:30 p.m. Monday in DeKalb. Warren, which lost to Palatine at the NIU supersectional last year, beat Waukegan 70-60 in double overtime to make a return trip.

Making its first supersectional appearance since 1990, Rolling Meadows coach Kevin Katovich couldn't be happier.

"We have a plaque in our team room and every time we have a new accomplishment we change the year," said Katovich, whose team set a school record with 30 wins.

"We always talk about changing them. This year, we have had to change four. So it is good to get off that 1990 banner for a sectional."

Rolling Meadows trailed 30-23 at halftime as Fremd (27-4) had the Mustangs on their heels. But it was Rolling Meadows that landed solidly on its feet in the second half.

After Miletic got his own rebound and a basket to start the second half, Escobedo stepped up his game. Hit hit a 3-pointer, then forced two consecutive Fremd turnovers.

And he wasn't done.

He added four free throws and helped force another turnover. That led to a free throw by Jack Duffer, whose father, Pete, played on the last Rolling Meadows team to win a sectional.

"Our coaches were talking about how slow we were playing," said

Escobedo, who had all 9 of his points in the third quarter. “We weren’t moving the ball much. So we played at a faster pace and made them uncomfortable. I have not played that well in the playoffs, so I knew I had to do the little things for us to pull off the win.”

That free throw ended a 10-0 run by Rolling Meadows. The Mustangs pulled ahead for good with a 39-33 lead with 4:56 left in the third quarter. During that span Fremd turned the ball over four times and missed four shots.

“Offensively in the first half, we were just standing around, not cutting,” Katovich said. “We talked about that and putting more pressure on them. Once we got the lead and they called a timeout, our guys just said that they were not going to give it back. And from there the guys just took over.”

With momentum on its side, Rolling Meadows slowly squeezed Fremd like a boa constrictor. The Mustangs went on short spurts and in one quarter, that 7-point deficit turned into a 50-43 lead after three quarters.

The Vikings tried to get back into the game, but they could never get closer than 7. That’s because Miletic or Lazar Lazarevic would come up with key baskets in the fourth quarter to squash any comebacks.

“We were getting some stops and that was just building up our offense,” said Lazarevic, who scored 9 of his 13 points in the fourth quarter.

“Since feeder we have been dreaming about this. We have been playing together our whole lives. This is once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.”

Miletic put the finishing touches on the game with just over two minutes to play. After a Mustangs steal, Miletic got a wide-open pass. He then threw down a left-handed windmill jam that brought the Rolling Meadows faithful to their feet.

“Tonight was a battle,” said Miletic, who was 14-of-20 shooting. “We didn’t

start off too hit and we knew that. The guys really stayed in it. We stayed connected. And that showed in the second half when we came out with some energy got back the momentum in the game.”

It was the second win for Rolling Meadows over Fremd this season. The Mustangs beat the Vikings 69-62 two weeks ago for the MSL championship.

First-year Fremd coach Mike Brown said he was proud of how his team played all season.

“This was an unbelievable first year,” Brown said. “I could not have asked for anything better than this. In my wildest dreams I couldn’t have expected to have a season like this. Just appreciative to them and the effort that they gave. Our seniors led us.”

Brown said his team just couldn’t hang on after a great first half.

“It was good offense and defense for us in the first half,” Brown said. “They got going a little bit and they are just a really good team. And having someone who can score 35 points out there is really difficult.”