

Marietta rolls to win over SACA

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MARIETTA - Marietta finally has something to smile about.

Kenny Sprague had a team-high 14 points and 12 Blue Devils found their way into the scorebook as Marietta rolled past Southwest Atlanta Christian, 73-58, in the final game of Southeast Basketball Academy's second Annual Atlanta Hoop Festival on Saturday at the Cobb County Civic Center.

"We did some good things (Saturday)," Marietta coach Charlie Hood said. "We had a few fast-break points. We can make layups, sometimes the jump shots are off, but we got some rebounds and were able to get out and run."

The Blue Devils (2-4) proved their coach's point in the third quarter as they turned a 14-point halftime lead into a 24-point advantage, 56-32, by making 10 field goals in the period, nine of them of the layup variety. Leading the break for most of the night was senior Chris Tanzy who said a win over the traditional Class A power, even if they are 2-6, is the kind of game that can get Marietta pointed back in the right direction. "It is definitely the upside," he said. "It gives us a heads up. Hopefully, Santa can help us get it started."

The Blue Devils never trailed and wasted little time getting started as Sprague hit the first two shots of the game - a layup and a 3-pointer - for a 5-0 lead just over a minute into the game. A 3-pointer by Devin Washington and baskets by Chad Lang, Steven Hunter and Daniel Orr pushed the lead to 21-9 by the end of the first period.

After a second-quarter layup by James Henderson with 6 minutes to play lengthened Marietta's lead to 23-11, the Warriors got no closer than 11 points the rest of the way. One continuing drawback for the Blue Devils was their ability - or lack there of - to take a charge. Nearly every time Southwest Atlanta perimeter players drove to the basket, they would end up on the foul line. In the game, Marietta committed 28 fouls, leading to 36 foul shots for the Warriors. Luckily for the Blue Devils, the Warriors made only half those attempts from the line.

"We have to cut down on the fouls," Hood said. "We are fouling so much (that) we are getting outshot at the line nearly 3-to-1 every night." Helping ease the Blue Devils' free-throw pain was Greg Franklin, who scored 11 points and pulled down five rebounds - four on the offensive end - in the second half. Orr finished with nine points and 11 rebounds as Marietta owned the glass, outrebounding Southwest Atlanta, 35-24.

Darrell Roberts led the Warriors with 24 points and 12 rebounds. Tekele Cotton added 16 points and Vincent Wallace had 12 as only four Warrior players scored in the game. Marietta will return to the floor next week in the Campbell Holiday Classic.

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