

Beachwood toppled top-seed Gilmour Academy 55-47 to advance to the Cuyahoga Falls Regional in D-III action.

By BRYANT K. KIZER

High School Reporter

The Bedford Bearcats are on the loose as they knocked off the third-seed, and Robert Hurst-less, Garfield Heights Bulldogs 68-58 to advance to the final four in the Division I Solon District at Solon, last Saturday.

The Bearcats will face their old foe from the Lake Erie League, Shaker Heights on Thursday at 6 p.m.

The Bearcats came into the sectionals as the hottest team in the bracket, and on Saturday night, they did not disappoint. The play of seniors, Chris Carter, Aaron Beidleman and sophomore, Mike Smith, was more than enough for the Bearcats to pound the Bulldogs.

"We felt good going into this game," said Carter, who had 16 points and eight rebounds. "We knew that we could win this game."

The Bearcats (18-6), who have won nine in a row, were led in scoring by Beidleman with 20 points, eight of those points coming from the free-throw line. Beidleman and Smith combined for 15 points from the charity stripe.

"That was one of coach's pet peeves, missing the free throws. We worked really hard on the free throws after a tough practice, because we are going to have tough games," said Beidleman.

Coming into the game, Sonny Johnson, head coach for Garfield Heights, had his cards stacked against him as their senior point guard, Robert Hurst, was suspended, and they really did need him to contract the Bearcats attacking defense. The Bulldogs committed 17 turnovers, 18 points were converted by the Bearcats.

"With him, we know we are going to win, without him we think that we can win," said Johnson, a former Mr. Ohio Basketball. Johnson would not elaborate on why Hurst was suspended. Hurst, who averages more than 10 points and seven assist a game, missed the last three regular season games due to a concussion. The Bulldogs lost all of those games.

Without him, the Bulldogs still look tough, thanks to the shooting of senior, Richard Parker. Parker made eight field goals and all were three-pointers.

"I told them to find No. 15 (Parker) for the whole week of practice," said Bearcats head coach Matt Miller. "That did not work out too well."

However, on the offensive side for the Bearcats, they managed to offset Parker's game-high 24-point performance. The Bearcats' big three of Carter, Beidleman and Smith broke down the Bulldogs defense.

The score was tied at 17 and 28 at the half.

Parker had three consecutive three-point goals, the last one in transition to give them a 26-22 lead. But free-throws by Beidleman, and two straight lay-ups by junior Miles Meredith and Beidleman (both on transition off of turnovers) and the Bearcats had a 28-26 lead. Parker had an 18-point first half.

After the conventional three-point play by the Bulldogs 6-foot-10 junior David Bell, the Bearcats went on a 10-0 run. The Bearcats led after three, 45-40.

The Bearcats' second 10-0 run gave them a 55-42 lead with 4:36 remaining in the fourth. The Bulldogs gave their last charge and closed the gap to five at 60-55 with 2:10 left following Parker's last three-pointer. But clutch free-throw shooting by Smith and Beidleman preserved the Bearcats' victory.

The Bulldogs, who made it to the Columbus last season, finished the season 15-7, losing their last four games.

Shaker Heights 63, John Adams 54

Mel Leach led the third-seed Shaker Heights Red Raiders to a 63-54 victory over John Adams. Leach, a senior guard, led them with 17 points. Sophomore forward/center Esa Ahmad had 16 points and junior Rosel Hurley had 11 points.

The Red Raiders (17-6), who have won six in a row, made sure that the Rebels did not have another three-point barrage. The Rebels snapped off 12 three-point field goals in their 89-75 first-round victory over Euclid.

Senior Archie Patrick, who had six in that game, was introduced to the Red Raiders' 3-2 zone defense. Patrick finished with 14 points. He had 30 against Euclid.

The Rebels finished the season 13-7.

In Euclid,

It will be East Tech, Cleveland Senate's lone left playoff team, taking on Brush, today at 7 p.m. The Golden Scarabs eliminated Cleveland Senate champs, Glenville 77-73. Senate's MVP, K. Taylor, led the Golden Scarabs with 35 points. Taylor had 31 points in their 30-point rout of the first-round opponent, Mayfield. Taylor has scored 20 points or more in 12 games. He has scored 20 points or more in the last five games.

In the other semi-final game, top-seed Mentor takes on Willoughby South on Thursday. The Cardinals have scored 114 points in both of their games.

At Broadview Heights District...

Top-seed St. Edward will take on Solon, today at 6 p.m. The Eagles advanced by beating John Marshall 91-40. The Comets moved on to the final four by beating fourth-seed Midpark 60-52.

In the Thursday game, the second-leg of the semi-final, Berea takes on second-seed North Royalton. The two teams met on Nov. 30, and the Bears won in Berea 65-52.

In the girl's district finals...

Twinsburg kept their win streak alive by nudging Hudson 55-52 to capture the D-I Akron District title. Down the stretch, the Tigers, the two-time D-I champs (26-0) relied on the skill of Purdue recruit, Ashley Morrissette. The Tigers have won 40 in a row, and 70 in a row to Ohio teams. The Tigers will move on to the Canton Regional.

In D-III

Beachwood toppled top-seed Gilmour Academy 55-47 to advance to the Cuyahoga Falls Regional in D-III action. The Bison (22-2) takes on Mogadore, today.