

Panthers outlast Towson Catholic, 60-57

Panther gymnasium, on the campus of St. Frances Academy, was packed for another Sunday afternoon basketball showdown between two top-ranked area teams.

After a huge celebration honoring the Panthers' head coach, William Wells, on his 500th St. Frances win, the St. Frances Academy Panthers (15-6, 7-1 MIAA, 5-1 BCL as of Jan. 14) hung on for a 60-57 home-court victory over Towson Catholic (9-8, 5-2 MIAA, 5-1 BCL as of Jan. 14).

It wasn't the prettiest of contests, with both teams showing sporadic surges of top-level play, but it was enough for the Panthers, behind seniors Sean Mosley who contributed a game high 23 points, and defensive wizard, 6-foot-4-inch Anthony Oquendo with 14 points and eight blocked shots.

Though the tip was controlled by the Owls, the tempo was controlled by the Panthers. They pressed and dropped into a 3-2 zone, forcing the Owls into a perimeter game in an effort to thwart the Owls' big man, Brandon Greene, who was held to just 10 points.

The Panthers were quick, agile and athletic, able to run the break and yet able to change course and run a controlled motion offense, looking for an opening that usually led to an inside bucket.

The Panthers jumped out to a 10-3 lead and by halftime extended their lead to eight, 30-22. However the Owls were relentless, despite early third quarter foul trouble that put 6-foot-7-inch Greene on the bench well into the fourth quarter.

Both teams shot poorly from the foul line, which could have been the turnaround for either team down the line. As the Owls stayed within 10 throughout the second half of play, their chance to close the gap remained viable with key baskets from Vinnie Breckenridge (15 points), who ended the game with a rainbow three-pointer that brought the Owls to within three as time expired.