

**BELLEVILLE EAST 66, O'FALLON 39:** In the first game of a varsity doubleheader, the Lancers built a 20-point second-quarter lead and rolled to a lopsided victory. East improved to 5-5 overall and 3-2 in the SWC.

"I was very proud of the way the girls came out and played hard from the beginning," said Lancers coach Andrea Seipp. "It seems like when we hit our first couple shots, everybody plays with a lot more confidence."

East's Mariah Sunkett, a 6-1 junior, had 20 points and 19 rebounds.

"It's the third game in a row that Mariah has consistently scored and rebounded," Seipp said. "We have something called 'play hard points' and she had 10 of those. I also give our guards credit - they're doing a much better job of giving her the basketball."

"A lot of it is just being stronger and I have more confidence," Sunkett said. "I keep improving as the season goes on."

O'Fallon (5-4 overall, 1-3 in the conference) played without its leading scorer, junior Taylor Klingelhofer, who was on crutches due to pain in the Achilles tendon in her right leg.

"I think it's something that just popped up and everyone expected her to play tonight," said Panthers coach Ryan Massey. "I literally changed my starting lineup 10 minutes before the game and we had a freshman, Taylor Underwood, start in her place. We also used another freshman, Ciara Jones. It was rough going for us early on."

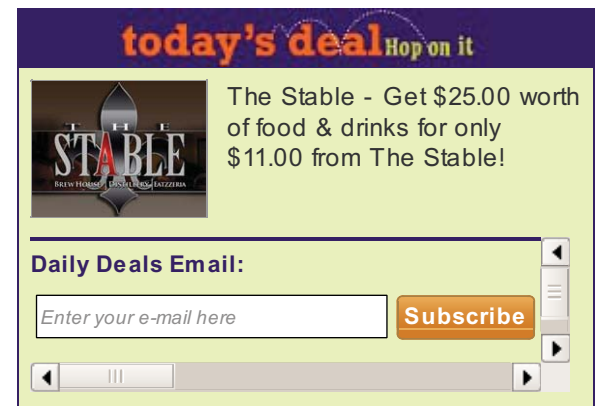
"That was a game time decision and they didn't think they were going to have to play without her," Seipp said of Klingelhofer. "It makes them a different team because she's a great player. But the girls they had played really hard without their floor leader."

A trey by Brittany Hodge capped a 13-0 East run and boosted the Lancers' lead to 25-5 with 6:52 remaining in the second quarter.

"The more we work together and the quicker we play, the more success we have," Sunkett said. "A game like this is a really big confidence boost for us."

"A lot revolves around Taylor, but we've got four other players on the floor and I want them to step up in situations like this," Massey said. "We need to learn that we can be OK when different players are not on the floor."

Yelana Moton and Alexis Brown added 12 and 10 points, respectively, for East. Jones led O'Fallon with 10 points.



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