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Sports

Sports

Wolves end 27-year drought, defeat Evanston for CSL South crown

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Twenty-seven years ago, the Wolves were the Indians, Niles East still existed and Jimmy Thengil probably wasn't a thought in his parents' heads.

Friday night though, Thengil was on the minds of Niles West's faithful as he carried the Wolves (20-5, 8-2) to a 62-58 win over Evanston and their first conference title in 27 seasons.



Sophomore Sead Odzic (25) frames a free throw.

Photo by Mehanaaz Ahmed

Thengil poured in 20 points on 7-10 shooting with three 3-pointers to pace Niles West. Thengil's

contributions were especially clutch since Sead Odzic, the Wolves' leading scorer, was held to just 11 points in 32 minutes.

"They were concentrating on me more than the first time," Odzic said. "It seemed like they were always sending one or two guys at me."

That strategy, however, came back to haunt the Wildkits. Every Wolves player, when left alone, hit big shots. So many shots that each Wolves' starter scored in double-digits. It was Thengil's performance, however, that carried the Wolves.

Known more for shutting down the opponent's top scorer, Thengil became what he fights against. In the first half, Thengil caught fire, scoring six of the Wolves' first 10 points, helping West weather an opening 8-1 Evanston burst.

Then, midway through the fourth with the game hanging in the balance, Thengil buried a long deuce from the corner defense.

Up against the large post-presence of Evanston forwards Jonathan Blakely and Quovadis Harper, the Wolves front-line of

Wolves pound Senn

Senior Jimmy Thengil scored 26 points and junior Jarryd Loyd added 17 as Niles West overwhelmed Senn 76-44 in Tuesday night's regional contest.

The Wolves play the winner of tonight's Northside College Prep vs. Notre Dame game for the regional title Friday night at 7:30 p.m. at West.

Victor Colon and Walter Mendenhall did not budge. Though undersized, the pair battled all night long, eventually getting the best of Evanston when Colon took a hard foul after snagging the rebound of a missed three-pointer that would have tied the game.

After Colon hit the game-clinching free throw, the capacity crowd at Niles West erupted, seemingly shaking the bleachers. That was just one of many times the fans at West made their presence felt.

"It was so loud there," Odzic said. "At times, I barely could hear coach [Dave] Genis during the huddle."

For many, it was the first time they had ever heard a crowd get that loud at Niles West. If the Wolves continue to play the way they have, they won't have to wait 27 years to hear it again.