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VAN WERT – The Ottoville Big Green and St. John's Blue Jays faced off Friday night at Van Wert High School in Division IV sectional-final tournament action.

In a high-intensity defensive battle, St. John's out-lasted Ottoville to take the sectional crown, 52-41.

St. John's got out to an early lead 11-8 after the first quarter but Ottoville struck back in the second.

Jays outlast Big Green in tournament action

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Down by five with under four minutes to go in the second quarter, the Big Green sparked a run. Luke Schimmoeller started the run with short jumper and Tyler Roby followed that up with a jumper of his own to cut the lead to one. A pair of Brandt Landin free throws gave Ottoville a 20-19 lead, which they carried into hal time.

Head coach Aaron Elwer spoke about his team's first-half struggles.

"A few things occurred in that first half. We had some foul trouble and that's the first time in a long time we had to deal with that," explained Elwer. "We had to try to figure out minutes and try and get through that first half. On top of that, we didn't make many shots. I thought our shot selection was really good, so I can't fault that; the ball just didn't go in."

On the flip side, Ottoville head coach Todd Turnwald was pleased with the way his team played early.

"I thought we got off to a good start. Brandt Landin stepped up and made some big plays early. I thought we attacked the basket pretty well, ran some decent offense and made some plays," Turnwald observed.

St. John's came out aggressive defensively in the second half, which helped them build a 5-point lead after the third quarter, 30-25.

With the Blue Jays up two late in the third quarter, St. John's gave themselves some breathing room. The Jays went on an 8-0 run led by Andy Grothouse, who had six points during the run.

The spurt put Delphos up 35-25 early in the fourth quarter but Ottoville fought back.

Schimmoeller led the Big Green charge by scoring five of the team's seven points during the run to cut the lead down to 35-32 with over five minutes to play in the game.

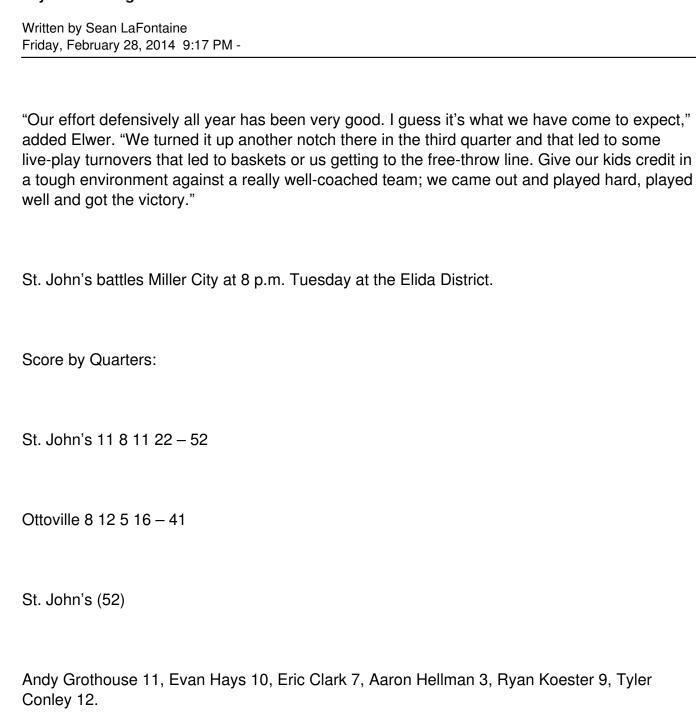
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Elwer spoke about how his team's effort defensively in the second half.

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Ottoville (41)



Tyler Roby 2, Austin Honigford 5, Brandt Landin 18, Luke Schimmoeller 14, Colin Bendele 2.