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Freedman lifts Mater Dei with blazing finish

January 22, 2016 10:59 PM

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By MARK CARLISLE
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

SANTA ANA – Top-ranked Mater Dei came close to losing its first Trinity League game in five years, but pulled off the comeback to defeat St. John Bosco, 65-56, Friday night at Mater Dei.

Mater Dei sophomore point guard [Spencer Freedman](#), after shooting 3 for 13 for three quarters, went 6 of 6 for 17 points in the fourth and finished with 25 points.

The Monarchs (18-3, 5-0) are 94-1 in the Trinity League since its start in 2006, their lone loss coming to Orange Lutheran in 2011.

St. John Bosco (15-5, 2-3) controlled the first half, going into the break with a 31-20 lead. Junior guard [JJ Watson](#) scored 13 in the first quarter. He finished with 23.

The Braves lost their star when Watson fouled out with 31/2 minutes left in the game. St. John Bosco did not score after his exit.

The Monarchs were without their biggest star for the entirety of the game. Six-foot-10 senior center [MJ Cage](#) was not in the building Friday.

"I think he's sick," was Mater Dei coach [Gary McKnight's](#) comment after the game.

Instead, Freedman took center stage. McKnight said he had confidence in his point guard even after his struggles.

"You can't tell a shooter to quit shooting," McKnight said

Freedman said it was his coaches and teammates trusting him and "making sure I know that I can make those shots (that gave) me the will to keep shooting."

Despite leading most of the game, Braves coach [Matt Dunn](#) didn't feel good about the loss.

"We've led at the half of all five league games, so that shows that we're competitive," Dunn said. "But we haven't found a way to win three of them, so that shows that we're not good enough."



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