

Lady Blue Jays get big win over Smith Center

By DICK BOYD

Coach Kevin Jilka's Norton Community High School girls basketball team traveled to Smith Center on Tuesday evening and returned with an important 59-49 Mid-Continent League victory.

The Lady Jays had defeated the Lady Redmen 34-22 to place third in the MCL Tournament on January 20 but it was a real challenge to play them again so soon and come away with a win on their home court.

"It was a big win for us on the road," said coach Jilka. "Smith Center is a tough place to play and, anytime you can win here, you are happy."

"Offensively, we played well for the most part. Once in awhile, we stood around but overall we were pleased with our offensive execution. Our delay game was very good. We just need to do a better job of making our free throws."

"Defensively, we played much better. We were much more aggressive. We had two five second calls on them and two charges. This is more than we have had all year total."

"We have another league game Friday with Hill City and they are much improved. Hill City has been playing very well lately."

Norton scored from both the perimeter and inside the paint in the game. Sophomore guard Laura Lee Baird got the outside game going with three baskets and a free throw and sophomore post Hayli Bozarth hit two baskets inside and added two free throws in the first quarter. Sophomore post KaraJo Jones also hit a basket in the paint as Norton outscored Smith Center 15-10.

Both teams scored 14 points in the second quarter and the Lady Jays led 29-24 at halftime. Jones hit two more baskets and sophomore guard Katharine Roy hit two. Bozarth hit her third basket of the night, senior post Maggie Nielsen hit two free throws and junior guard Megan Kats and Baird each hit a charity.

The third quarter was another 14 point one for the Lady Jays but they limited the Lady Redmen to just three field goals and 9 points and extended their lead to 43-33. Baird hit three more baskets and a free throw. Bozarth rippled the

nets on two more shots and a free toss and Jones hit another basket.

Both teams scored 16 points in the final stanza. Bozarth put in two more baskets and a free throw, Baird hit a basket and 4 charities, Jones hit her fifth basket, Kats swished 2 free throws and sophomore guard Taylor Rossi hit a charity toss.

Baird was leading scorer for Norton with 21 points. She hit 7 of 17 two-point shots for 41 percent but missed all four shots from beyond the arc. She was 7 of 11 from the charity stripe for 64 percent.

Bozarth was perfect from the field, hitting 7 of 7 shots and was 4 of 7 from the free throw line for 57 percent and 18 points.

Jones was the third double figure scorer for the Lady Jays with 10 points on an outstanding 5 of 7 from the field for 71 percent.

Taylor Arnold was the only player in double figures for Smith Center. She hit 13 points.

As a team, the Lady Jays hit 21 of 33 two-point attempts for a net-smoking 64 percent accuracy. They missed all 7 three-point shots, however, which dropped their overall percentage to 21 of 40

for 53 percent.

The Lady Redmen hit just 1 of 5 from beyond the arc for 20 percent, 15 of 38 two-point tries for 39 percent and 16 of 43 overall for 37 percent.

From the free throw line, Norton was 17 of 30 for 57 percent and Smith Center was 16 of 23 for 69 percent.

The Lady Jays pulled down 9 offensive and 11 defensive rebounds for 20 total. The Lady Redmen grabbed 10 offensive and 13 defensive boards for 23 total.

Jones was the rebounding leader for Norton with 9 caroms, followed by Bozarth, 4; Rossi, 2; Roy, Ashley Colip, Courtney Cox, Nielsen, Kats, 1 each.

The Lady Jays had 13 assists and the Lady Redmen had just 8. Rossi was assists leader with 7, followed by Kats, 4; Baird, 2.

Norton had 12 steals compared to just 8 for Smith Center. Baird was the leader with 7 thefts, followed by Rossi, Bozarth, 2 each; Jones, 1.

Jones and Bozarth each had 1 charge drawn.

The Lady Jays suffered just 11 turnovers while their aggressive

defense caused a whopping 26 by the Lady Redmen!

Junior varsity

Coach George Rossi's Norton junior varsity girls quintet defeated Smith Center 37-26 but had to come from behind to win it.

The young Lady Jays trailed 11-10 after one quarter but limited the Lady Redmen to just 4 free throws in the second quarter while taking a 16-15 halftime lead. Smith Center outscored Norton 9-6 in the third quarter to regain the lead at 24-22. The Lady Jays came on strong in the fourth quarter, outscoring the Lady Redmen 15-2 to win going away.

Ashlie Stewart led Norton in scoring with 10 points, followed by Amanda Ray, 9; Katharine Roy, 6; Lacy Keilig, 4; Shelby Jones, 3; Bethany Roy, Kaitlyn Wolf, 2 each; Alyssa Thomson, 1.

Kelsey Merritt led Smith Center with 7; Ariel Robinson added 6.

"This was a good all-around game for us," said coach Rossi.

"Our girls came to life on both ends of the floor in the fourth quarter. We made several baskets in a row and did a good job of making

defensive stops. We still need to improve communication on the floor but we are making steps in the right direction."

Next action

Norton will host Hill City today in Mid-Continent League action.

The C-team girls will play three eight minute quarters in the Stull Gymnasium, beginning at 4 p.m. This game will be followed by the junior varsity girls, varsity girls and varsity boys contests.

The junior varsity boys will play in Wilmeth Kirk Memorial Gym, beginning at 5 p.m.

BOX SCORE

Norton Girls 59

Katharine Roy 20-0-4; Taylor Rossi 00-1-4-1; Laura Lee Baird 7-0-7-11-21; Maggie Nielsen 0-0-2-2-2; Megan Kats 0-0-3-6-3; KaraJo Jones 5-0-0-10; Hayli Bozarth 7-0-4-7-18; Total 21-0-17-30-59.

Smith Center Girls 49

Shayla McMurdo 1-0-3-4-5; Samantha Kriley 10-0-2; Taylor Arnold 5-1-0-0-13; Sarah Tucker 1-0-2-2-4; Dannie Boucher 0-0-4-4-4; Morgan Lorenzen 2-0-1-2-5; Rebekah Burgess 2-0-5-7-9; Jihan Arnold 3-0-1-2-7; Total 15-1-16-23-49.

Redmen use free throw line to beat 'Jay boys

By DICK BOYD

The Norton Community High School boys basketball team had a chance Tuesday evening to avenge their loss in the recent Mid-Continent League Tournament championship to Smith Center, but it didn't materialize. Norton stayed with the Redmen in the road game until the fourth quarter when Smith Center paraded to the free throw line to pull out a 57-52 win over the Blue Jays.

Although Smith Center hit just two baskets in their 20 point fourth quarter, the Redmen connected on 16 of 20 free throws as the Blue Jays fouled them in an attempt to get the ball.

Norton head coach Doug Reusink did not think all the free throws were the difference in the game. "You could look at the statistics and say we lost this one at the free throw line but, honestly, we just weren't very tough mentally and lost our composure consistently throughout the game," he said.

The first quarter was a close one with Smith Center taking a slim 13-11 lead.

Point guard Logan Kats hit two baskets, forwards Wes Georgeson and Preston Herman each hit a basket and guard Jared Engelbert buried a three-point shot in the period.

The Blue Jays were edged 9-8 in the second quarter to make it a 22-19 game at intermission. Georgeson, guard Brian Juenemann and Kats each hit a basket and Kats added two free throws.

Norton was outscored 15-9 in

the third quarter to put Smith Center ahead 37-28. Kats hit two more baskets, Juenemann buried a three-pointer and forward Nic Lewis hit his only basket of the game.

By far Norton's best offensive quarter was the fourth when the Blue Jays scored 24 points but Smith Center's free throw accuracy was too good to allow Norton to cut more than four points off the Redmen's lead.

During the fourth quarter, Georgeson swished four baskets, Kats and Engelbert each hit two two-point baskets and a three-pointer and post Blake Wolf hit one basket.

Kats was leading scorer for the Blue Jays with 19 points on 1 of 4 from beyond the arc for 25 percent, 7 of 10 two-point shots for a net-smoking 70 percent accuracy and 8 of 14 overall for 57 percent. He was a perfect 2 of 2 from the charity stripe.

Georgeson also shot well. He hit 6 of 9 from the field for 67 percent and 12 points.

Engelbert hit 10 points on 2 of 5 from three-point land for 40 percent, 2 of 3 two-point tries for 67 percent and 4 of 8 overall for 50 percent.

Braden Wilson and Jared Mocabey each hit 12 points to lead Smith Center. Tate Arnold added 11 and Jared Hays hit 10.

As a team, Norton hit 4 of 11 from long range for 36 percent, 19 of 38 two-point attempts for 50 percent and 23 of 49 overall for 47 percent.

Smith Center was 2 of 10 from beyond the arc for 20 percent, 16

of 32 two-point tries for 50 percent and 18 of 42 overall for 43 percent.

From the free throw line, Norton hit 2 of 9 for 22 percent and Smith Center swished 19 of 26 for 73 percent.

Norton had 9 offensive and 10 defensive rebounds for 19 total. Smith Center grabbed 5 offensive and 18 defensive caroms for 23.

Wolf led Norton in rebounds with 5, followed by Cox, Georgeson, 3 each; Engelbert, Kats, Lewis, 2 each; Juenemann, Herman, 1 each.

Georgeson and Lewis each blocked two shots.

The Blue Jays had 9 steals. Georgeson and Juenemann each had 3 thefts, followed by Jared Cox, 2; Kats, 1.

Juenemann had 4 of Norton's 11 assists. Engelbert, Kats and Wolf each had 2 and Cox had 1.

Norton suffered 13 turnovers but caused the Redmen to turn the ball over 17 times.

The loss dropped Norton's season record to 9-4.

Junior varsity

Norton defeated Smith Center 44-41 in overtime in junior varsity action.

The Blue Jays held a 6-5 lead after one quarter and were on top 18-14 at halftime but Smith Center outscored the Norton quintet 14-9 in the third quarter to take a 28-27 lead. The Blue Jays outscored the Redmen 9-8 in the final stanza to tie the score at 36-all. Norton scored 8 points in the overtime and Smith Center hit only 5.

Zac Dreher led Norton in scoring with 17 points, followed by

Preston Herman, Landon Hamel, 7 each; J.D. Gall, 5; Jared Cox, Ashton Draper, 4 each.

Logan Tuxhorn hit 18 for Smith Center; Trenton Terrill added 11.

Next action

Norton will host Hill City today in Mid-Continent League action.

The junior varsity boys will play in Wilmeth Kirk Memorial Gym, beginning at 5 p.m.

BOX SCORE

Norton Boys 52

Jared Engelbert 22-0-10; Logan Kats 7-1-2-2-19; Brian Juenemann 11-0-3-5; Blake Wolf

1-0-0-1-2; Wes Georgeson 6-0-0-12; Nic Lewis 1-0-0-2-2; Preston Herman 1-0-0-0-2; Total 19-4-2-9-52.

Smith Center Boys 57

Drew Joy 10-0-12; Jared Hayes 0-0-10-12-10; Tate Arnold 4-1-0-1-11; Braden Wilson 4-0-4-6-12; Joe Windscheffel 2-0-3-4-7; Brayton Gillen 0-1-0-0-3; Jared Mocabey 5-0-2-2-12; Total 16-2-19-26-57.

Second quarter dooms Huskies

By TOM DREILING

The culprit this time was the second quarter.

That best summarizes Tuesday night's Northern Valley varsity girls' basketball loss to Alma, Neb., on the road, 55-47.

The teams played even in the first quarter, with Alma hitting for 13 points and the Huskies for 12. In the third period, the Huskies bagged 12 to Alma's 10, and in the fourth the Huskies again outscored the host team, 12-11.

If the game ended at that point,

Northern Valley would have taken home a 36-34 win.

But here's the glitch: in the second quarter of action, the Huskies managed 11 points while allowing Alma to burn the nets with 21.

The evening's marquee player, as far as scoring goes, was Alma's Chelsey Losey with 23.

Runnerup scoring honors went to Northern Valley's Alison Cole who pocketed 15 points. Also in double figures for the Huskies was Jena Jessup with 14.

Box Score

Northern Valley 47

Alison Cole 7-0-7-1-15; Kelli Cole 2-0-2-2-6; Kelsey Kinderknecht 2-0-0-0-4; Jena Jessup 3-1-6-5-14; Jessica Largent 3-0-7-2-8. Totals: 17-1-22-10-47.

Alma 55

Brandon 0-0-3-1-1; Monahan 4-0-1-0-8; Hogeland 5-0-4-2-12; Platt 1-0-0-0-2; Norris 4-0-2-1-9; Losey 10-0-5-3-23. Totals: 24-0-15-7-55.

The schedule has the Huskies at Bertrand today with a tipoff at 4 p.m.

Job Opening

The Norton Telegram is looking for someone to join Lisa Henderson in the Advertising Sales Department. Previous sales experience helpful, but not required. Training provided. Good working conditions. Commission-based, but great potential for the right person. Super staff.

To set up an appointment, or learn more about the opportunity, please contact the newspaper's publisher, Tom Dreiling, at (785) 877-6008 (daytime) or 877-3823 (evenings).

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