

Lady Blue Jays look good in latest home victory

By DICK BOYD

Coach Kevin Jilka's Norton Community High School girls basketball team played one of their better games of the season in defeating Hill City 59-35 on Friday evening in The NCHS Stull Gymnasium.

The Lady Jays hit 50 percent from the field while limiting the Lady Ringnecks to 28 percent accuracy and outrebounded the visitors 35-19.

"It was a big win for us," said coach Jilka. "Hill City had been playing pretty well lately.

"We played great defense all night long. We really got after it. We've been trying to get our girls to believe they could play this kind of defense and they did.

"Our offensive shot selection was also a whole lot better.

"Our girls off the bench also played well.

"Hopefully, we can keep rolling but it doesn't get any easier. We face Oberlin, Atwood and Hoxie next from the Northwest Kansas League. They have a tough league and we'll have our hands full.

"Consistency has been a problem for us. Our girls can play at a high level but they have to believe they can do it. We'll need to come

back strong against Oberlin on Tuesday."

With the win, Norton went to 9-5 for the season and Hill City fell to 7-8.

The Lady Jays took a big lead early and the Lady Ringnecks never recovered. Norton outscored Hill City 17-6 in the first quarter. Sophomore Laura Lee Baird hit a three-point basket, two two-point shots and a free throw. Junior guard Megan Kats buried a shot from beyond the arc, sophomore post Hayli Bozarth got loose inside for two baskets and sophomore guard Taylor Rossi also connected for a basket in the first period. Hill City hit just two baskets in the initial quarter.

After a 14-9 second quarter in Norton's favor, the Lady Jays held a commanding 31-15 halftime advantage. Six different Norton girls scored in the second period. Sophomore guard Ashley Colip hit the Lady Jays' third trey of the game, Bozarth added two more baskets, junior post Courtney Cox and senior post Maggie Nielsen each hit a basket, sophomore guard Katharine Roy hit two charities and Kats hit a free throw.

Hill City hit only one field goal in the second stanza.

Norton outscored Hill City 12-10 in the third quarter to take a 43-25 lead into the final period. Bozarth hit two more baskets in the paint, Kats and Baird each hit their second three-point basket of the night and Baird added two charities.

With Bozarth leading the way with four baskets and a free throw, Norton outscored Hill City 16-10 in the fourth quarter to extend the final margin of victory to 24 points. Roy, Baird and Colip each hit a basket and sophomore post KaraJo Jones swished a free throw.

Bozarth had a fabulous shooting night, hitting 10 of 14 shots for a net-smoking 71 percent accuracy. She was 1 of 1 from the charity stripe and finished with 21 points.

Baird connected on 2 of 3 from beyond the arc for 67 percent, 3 of 10 two-point shots for 30 percent and 5 of 13 for 38 percent overall. She was a perfect 3 of 3 from the charity stripe and scored 15 points.

Hill City's leading scorer was Tamra Long with 8 points; Jamie Alexander added 7.

As a team, Norton connected on 5 of 10 long-range shots, 18 of 36 two-point tries and 23 of 46 overall for 50 percent.

The Lady Ringnecks hit 10 of 33

two-point attempts for 30 percent, missed all three trey tries and ended with 10 of 36 for 28 percent.

The Lady Jays cashed in 8 of 14 free throws for 57 percent and the Lady Ringnecks tickled the nylons on 15 of 24 for 63 percent.

Norton outrebounded Hill City 35-19. The Lady Jays pulled down 11 offensive and 24 defensive caroms while the Lady Ringnecks grabbed just 5 offensive and 14 defensive boards.

Nine different Norton girls pulled down at least one rebound. Bozarth led with 10, followed by Jones, 8; Rossi, Baird, 4 each; Nielsen, 3; Roy, Haley Jones, 2 each; Cox, Kats, 1 each.

Norton had 12 steals compared to 9 for Hill City. Baird led with 4 thefts, followed by Colip, Kats, Jones, 2 each; Rossi, Bozarth, 1 each.

The Lady Jays had 22 assists and the Lady Ringnecks recorded 11. Rossi had 11 assists to lead Norton, followed by Baird, Kats, 4 each; Jones, 3.

Norton had 10 turnovers and Hill City turned the ball over 14 times.

Junior varsity

The Norton junior varsity girls quintet defeated Hill City 37-25.

The young Lady Jays held quarter leads of 13-4, 22-12 and 30-19.

Leading scoring for Norton was Ashlie Stewart with 9 points, followed by Amanda Ray, 8; Shelby Jones, Kaitlyn Wolf, 6 each; Katharine Roy, 3; Courtney Cox, Amanda Delimont, 2 each; Haley Jones, 1.

Megan Kennedy led Hill City with 9 and Jessica Stewart added 8.

Norton assistant coach George Rossi was pleased with the victory.

"It was another good win," said Rossi. "Our girls did a great job of moving and hustling.

"We had periods of good shooting. Hopefully, we can gain more consistency in that department."

C-team

The Norton girls C-team defeated Hill City 22-12 in a three-quarter game.

Norton held quarter advantages of 10-0 and 16-2.

Raven Brown and Hannah Waggoner led Norton in scoring with 6 points each, followed by Kendra Engelbert, 4; Austine Dole, Alyssa Thomson and Kaitlyn Wolf, 2 each.

Balthazor and Vincent led Hill City with 4 each.

"Our defense was pretty good,"

said Norton assistant coach Joan Bolt. "Our press gave Hill City fits in the first quarter, giving us a strong 10-0 lead.

"We also executed our post-offense pretty well tonight.

"In the second half, we got a little tired and our shots were short but our girls maintained their lead for the victory."

Next action

Norton will play at Oberlin tonight. Games will begin at 6:30 p.m. with the girls varsity and boys junior varsity games and will be followed by the boys varsity and girls junior varsity contests.

BOX SCORE

Norton Girls 59

Katharine Roy, 1 0 2-4 4; Taylor Rossi 1 0 0-0 2; Laura Lee Baird 3 2 3-3 15; Ashley Colip 1 1 0-0 5; Courtney Cox 1 0 0-2 2; Maggie Nielsen 1 0 0-0 2; Megan Kats 0 2 1-2 7; KaraJo Jones 0 0 1-2 1; Hayli Bozarth 10 0 1-1 21; Total 18 5 8-14 59.

Hill City Girls 35

Jamie Alexander 3 0 1-4 7; Holly Buss 0 0 6-8 6; Kali Roberts 0 0 0-10; Katelyn Keith 0 0 6-8 6; Tamra Long 4 0 0-0 8; Brittany Anderson 1 0 2-3 4; Crystal Kinderknecht 2 0 0-4; Total 10 0 15-24 35.

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