Blue Jay boys lose to Trego in tourney finals

By DICK BOYD

The No.4 seeded Norton Community High School boys basketball team upset No.1 seed Plainville in the semi-finals of the annual Mid-Continent League Basketball Tournament on Friday night but was unable to do the same against No.2 seed and defending champion Trego, falling 60-42 in Saturday's championship finals in Gross Memorial Coliseum in Hays.

Norton is now 8-3 for the season and Trego extended their record to 11-2.

Carrying over some momentum from the exciting win over Plainville, the Blue Jays held a slim 12-11 lead after one quarter but were outscored 16-8 in the second quarter to fall behind 27-20 at intermission. Trego outpointed Norton by just 14-12 in the third quarter, thanks to a long, three-point basket by Norton sophomore guard Logan Kats at the buzzer, but still led 41-32 with one period left. The Golden Eagles outscored the Blue Jays 19-10 in the fourth quarter to win by 18.

Three-point baskets by senior guard Nathan Morse and junior guard Jared Engelbert helped Norton in the first quarter. Senior center Heath Vincent hit a basket and junior center Nic Lewis and Morse each hit two free throws.

Only two Trego players tallied in the first quarter. Senior forward Tyler Ummel hit two baskets and two free throws and senior center Nathan Locke came outside to hit a trey and also added a two-point basket.

Morse buried another three-point basket for Norton in the second quarter but it was the Blue Jays' only basket. Sophomore guard Logan Kats, junior guard Brian Juenemann and sophomore forward Wes Georgeson each hit a free throw and Vincent added two charities for the Blue Jays in the second period.

Locke had a big second quarter for the Golden Eagles, hitting three field goals and a free throw. Freshman guard Spencer Hemmert hit two field goals, sophomore Nolan Smith buried a three-point basket and junior forward Nick Geist hit two free throws.

Norton scored 12 points in the third quarter compared to 14 by Trego. Kats hit a two-point shot plus the long range basket at the end of the period. Lewis hit his first two field goals of the game and Vincent added a field goal and free throw.

In the third period, Hemmert hit two more baskets for Trego, Geist hit a basket and free throw, Kevyn Goodman hit a three-point shot for his only points of the game and Ummel and Matt Pfannenstiel each hit baskets.

Kats and Engelbert each hit their second treys of the game, Lewis hit a two-point basket and Georgeson hit two free throws in the fourth quarter and Norton trailed by 52-42 with 3:08 left but Trego scored the final eight points of the game.

The Golden Eagles scored 19 points in the final quarter but most of their points came from the free throw line. Geist hit a basket and seven free throws, Locke swished a basket and two charities, Ummel hit a basket and one free toss and Hemmert connected on three free throws.

"We just didn't play well enough to win," said Norton Coach Doug Reusink.

"We got a good start but began playing tentative on offense and not going to the basket. Defensively, we weren't doing things correctly either.

"I'm proud of our young men. They are playing hard but we need to keep working to get better. We need to work on our basketball sense to make the right plays."

Kats was leading scorer for Norton with 9 points on 2 of 4 from beyond the arc for 50 percent, 1 of 1 two-point shots and 3 of 5 overall for 60 percent. He hit 1 of 2 free throws for 50 percent. Lewis and Morse both scored 8 points, Vincent added 7 and Engelbert 6.

Leading scorer for Trego was Locke with 16 points, followed by Geist, 14; Ummel, Hemmert, 11 each.

As a team, Norton hit 6 of 17 three-point attempts for 35 percent, 6 of 25 two-point shots for 24 percent and 12 of 42 overall for 29 percent.

Trego hit 3 of 12 from long range for 25 percent, 16 of 37 two pointers for 43 percent and 19 of 49 overall for 39 percent.

From the free throw line, the Blue Jys were 12 of 19 for 63 percent and the Golden Eagles were 19 of 28 for 68 percent.

Norton was outrebounded 34-30. The Blue Jays pulled down 9 offensive and 21 defensive caroms and the Golden Eagles grabbed 11 offensive and 23 defensive boards.

Vincent was leading rebounder for Norton with 12, followed by Lewis, 8; Kats, 4; Juenemann, Georgeson, 2 each; Morse, Engelbert, 1 each.

Norton had 4 steals. Morse, Kats, Engelbert, Juenemann each had 1 theft.

The Blue Jays had just 6 assists. Morse led with 3, followed by Kats, Engelbert, Juenemann, 1 each.

Norton had 16 turnovers and Trego had just 10.

In other tournament boys games, No.3 seed Smith Center defeated Plainville 62-47 for third place, No.5 seed Hill City outpointed No.6 seed Phillipsburg 53-45 for fifth and No.7 seed Ellis outscored No.9 seed Stockton 61-48 for seventh.

Next action

The Norton boys and girls basketball teams will return to action this evening when they travel to Goodland for games beginning at 6:30 p.m. (central time). The junior varsity boys game will be held first, followed by the girls junior varsity game. Both of these games will be in the junior high gym.

The girls varsity game will also begin at 6:30 p.m. and will be followed by the boys varsity contest. These two games will be in the Max Jones Fieldhouse.

GAME STATISTICS

Norton boys 42

	FGs 2s	FGs 3s	FTs M-A	TP
Nathan Morse	0	2	2-3	8
Logan Kats	1	2	1-2	9
Jared Engelbert	0	2	0-0	6
Brian Juenemann	0	0	1-2	1
Wes Georgeson	0	0	3-4	3
Nic Lewis	3	0	2-4	8
Heath Vincent	2	0	3-4	7
TOTAL	6	6	12-19	42

Trego boys 60

	FGs 2s	FGs 3s	FTs M-A	TP
Nathan Locke	5	1	3-5	16
Matt Pfannenstiel	1	0	0-1	2
Tyler Ummel	4	0	3-4	11
Kevyn Goodman	0	1	0-0	3
Spencer Hemmert	4	0	3-4	11
Nolan Smith	0	1	0-0	3
Nick Geist	2	0	10-14	14
TOTAL	16	3	19-28	60

Norton sophomore forward Wes Georgeson defends against a jump shot by Trego's Nick Geist during the Blue Jays' Mid-Continent League Tournament championship game against the Golden Eagles on Saturday night in Gross Memorial Coliseum in Hays. Also defending for Norton were, from left, sophomore guard Logan Kats, No.11; senior center Heath Vincent, No.44; senior guard Nathan Morse, No.10; junior guard Brian Juenemann, No.20. —- Telegram photo by Dick Boyd

Mid-Continent League games will be televised

Smoky Hills Public Television will present a taped, delayed broadcast of the Mid-Continent League Basketball Tournament girls and boys championship games which were played Saturday in Gross Memorial Coliseum in Hays.

The boys championship game between Norton and Trego Community will air at 5:30 p.m. this Saturday and the girls championship game between Norton and Ellis is scheduled to be broadcast at 5 p.m. on Sunday.

Jerry McGuire, Hays, will be the play-by-play announcer and Larry Jantz, Hays, will be the color commentator.

Videotapes of the broadcasts will be available by contacting Les Kinderknecht at (785)483-6990 or *1kinderknecht@shptv.org*.

This marks the sixth year that Smoky Hills Public Television has presented a taped, delayed broadcast of the league's tournament championship games.

Smoky Hills Public Television serves 70 counties in Kansas and one county in Nebraska. It is available on 120 cable systems, DirecTV and the Dish network.

More information on Smoky Hills Public Television and its programs and projects can be obtained by calling (785)483-6990 or at *www.shptv.org*.

Norton beats No. 1 seed in semi-finals

By DICK BOYD

Coach Doug Reusink's No.4 seeded Norton Community High School boys basketball team played their best game of the season to defeat No.1 seed Plainville 56-55 on Friday night in Gross Memorial Coliseum in Hays in the semi-finals of the Mid-Continent League Tournament.

Norton extended their season record to 7-3 and Plainville dropped to 10-2.

The Blue Jays trailed 17-8 after one quarter but outscored Plainville 20-6 in the second period to take a 28-23 halftime lead. Plainville edged Norton 19-17 in the high scoring third quarter but still trailed Norton 45-42.

Plainville took the lead early in the fourth quarter when senior guard Justin Casey hit two free throws and a three-point shot in the first two minutes to put the Cardinals on top 47-45. Norton senior guard Nathan Morse scored for the Blue Jays and it was 47-all with 4:48 left. Senior forward Brock McDowell scored for the Cardinals but sophomore forward Wes Georgeson scored inside for the Jays to tie it again at 49-all with 4:10 remaining.

McDowell hit two more baskets and Plainville led 53-49 with 3:21 left. Senior center Heath Vincent scored inside for Norton and it was 53-51. Sophomore guard Logan Kats stole the ball and drove down court. He passed to Morse and he buried a shot from beyond the arc to put Norton on top 54-53 with 2:34 remaining.

Casey stole the ball for Plainville and scored at the 1:47 mark to put the Cardinals on top 55-54. Norton came down court, shot and missed and Plainville got the rebound. The Cardinals went into a slow down game but the aggressive Norton defense caused them to throw the ball away with 38 seconds left.

Norton brought the ball down and worked it into Vincent, who swished a shot with 15 seconds left

to put Norton ahead 56-55!

Casey drove toward the basket but was fouled before he could shoot. He stepped to the free throw line with 1.1 seconds on the scoreboard clock. His shot bounced off the rim, giving the Blue Jays a 56-55 victory and berth in Saturday's championship finals contest against Trego Community.

Georgeson and junior center Nic Lewis each hit a basket and free throw and Vincent swished one basket for Norton in the first quarter. McDowell had a big first quarter for Plainville as he hit three baskets and a free throw. Taylor Dix hit a three-point and two-point basket, Josh Brungardt hit a basket and charity and Dalton Mick swished a basket. Plainville scored the last four points of the quarter to extend the Cardinals' lead to 9 points.

The Blue Jays gave notice in the second quarter that they would not go away. Vincent hit two quick baskets to start the quarter and narrow the Plainville lead to 17-12. Taylor Dix hit a three-pointer but Kats matched it for Norton with 3:57 left. Mick hit a free throw but Vincent hit two charities to make it 21-17 with 3:23 left. Georgeson hit a bank shot, Plainville turned the ball over and sophomore center Jared Cox scored inside to tie the score at 21-all with 2:26 left.

Vincent hit two free throws and Norton led 23-21. McDowell scored inside for Plainville to tie the score again but the Blue Jays scored the last five points of the half. Junior guard Brian Juenemann hit a two-point basket with 24 seconds left and junior guard Jared Engelbert buried a three-point shot at the buzzer to give Norton the 28-23 halftime lead.

The third quarter was a hard-fought one with Norton managing to maintain a narrow lead. Morse hit a three-point and two-point basket, Lewis hit two baskets, Juenemann hit a shot from beyond the arc, Vincent hit a basket and free throw and Georgeson threw in another basket for Norton's 17 points in the quarter.

Plainville stayed in contention with two treys and a two-point basket by Taylor Dix, two more baskets by McDowell, a long range basket by Casey, a basket by Mick and two free throws by Tanner Dix.

"I'm very, very proud of our players," said Coach Reusink. "We played harder as the game progressed; we played with emotion. Heath Vincent made some big plays inside and Nathan Morse hit some key shots from long range but everyone played well. Jared Engelbert came through with a big three-point basket just before halftime that gave us some momentum."

Vincent led Norton in scoring with 17 points on 6 of 14 shots from the field for 43 percent and 5 of 6 free throws for 83 percent. Morse added 10 points on 2 of 6 shots from beyond the arc for 33 percent, 2 of 5 two-point baskets for 40 percent and 4 of 11 overall for 36 percent. Georgeson hit 9 points on 4 of 7 from the field for 57 percent and 1 of 2 free throws for 50 percent.

McDowell led Plainville with 19 points, followed by Taylor Dix, 16 and Casey, 10.

As a team, Norton swished 5 of 12 from long range for 42 percent, 17 of 38 two-point shots for 45 percent and 22 of 50 overall for 44 percent.

Plainville hit 6 of 20 from beyond the arc for 30 percent, 15 of 37 two-point baskets for 41 percent and 21 of 57 overall for 41 percent.

From the free throw line, Norton connected on 7 of 12 for 58 percent and Plainville hit 7 of 11 for 64 percent.

Norton outrebounded Plainville 32-24. The Blue Jays grabbed 8 offensive and 24 defensive rebounds compared to 8 offensive and 16 defensive caroms for the Cardinals.

Vincent had a double-double for the game as he pulled down 12 rebounds for Norton. He was followed by Lewis, 5; Georgeson, Juenemann, 4 each; Engelbert, Morse, 3 each; Cox, 1.

Vincent also blocked five Plainville shots.

Norton had five steals in the game. Kats led with 2, followed by Juenemann, Cox, Georgeson, 1 each.

Seven Blue Jays had at least one offensive assist, demonstrating great teamwork. Morse, Kats, Cox, Vincent had 2 assists each, followed by Engelbert, Juenemann, Georgeson, 1 each, for a total of 11.

Norton had 13 turnovers and Plainville gave up the ball 9 times.

GAME STATISTICS

Norton boys 56

	FGs 2s	FGs 3s	FTs M-A	TP
Nathan Morse	2	2	0-0	10
Logan Kats	0	1	0-0	3
Jared Engelbert	0	1	0-0	3
Brian Juenemann	1	1	0-0	5
Jared Cox	1	0	0-0	2
Wes Georgeson	4	0	1-2	9
Nic Lewis	3	0	1-4	7
Heat Vincent	6	0	5-6	17
TOTAL	17	5	7-12	56

Plainville boys 55

	FGs 2s	FGs 3s	FTs M-A	TP
Justin Casey	1	2	2-3	10
Taylor Dix	2	4	0-0	16
Tanner Dix	0	0	2-2	2
Dalton Mick	2	0	1-2	5
Brock McDowell	9	0	1-3	'19
Josh Brungardt	1	0	1-1	3

Norton senior center Heath Vincent scores inside during the Blue Jays' Mid-Continent League Tournament semi-finals win over Plainville on Friday night in Gross Memorial Coliseum in Hays. Vincent was leading scorer for Norton with 17 points. No.30 for Norton is sophomore forward Wes Georgeson. —Telegram photo by Dick Boyd