



Lady Blue Jay senior guard Laura Lee Baird hit a jump shot over the outstretched arm of an Ellis defender during Tuesday's game in the NCHS Stull Gym. At left for Norton is senior guard KaraJo Jones, No.33.

- Telegram photo by Dick Boyd

Lady Jays lose close one to visiting Railroaders

By DICK BOYD
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The Norton Community High School girls varsity basketball team suffered their first Mid-Continent League loss on Friday night in the NCHS Stull Gym when Ellis came to town and edged them 51-49.

It was a close game throughout with the Lady Railroaders holding a two to six point lead most of the time and the Lady Blue Jays narrowing it down to two as time ran out.

Ellis was on top 11-10 after one quarter, 27-24 at halftime and 40-37 after three periods. Norton limited Ellis to just two field goals in the fourth quarter but the Lady Jays had to foul and put the Lady Railroaders on the free throw line in hopes they would miss and Norton would get the ball back. Ellis hit only 7 of 19 charity tosses in the fourth stanza but it was enough to hold off the Lady Jays.

Ellis led 51-46 with just 4.4 seconds left on the clock when Norton's junior guard Ashlie Stewart buried a three-point shot to cut the margin down to just two points. The Lady Railroaders' leading scorer Whitney Taylor was fouled when Norton tried to steal the ball in the closing seconds. Taylor missed the free throw and Norton got the rebound but could not call time out to set up a final play due to being out of time outs and the scoreboard score remained the same, Ellis 51, Norton 49.

"We didn't shoot the ball very well in the first half and poor shot selection was part of the problem. We also didn't have very good discipline on defense," said Norton head girls coach Kevin Jilka.

"We fought back and had some chances to tie or take the lead but Ellis played hard and it didn't happen.

"We're not playing very well as a team right now. We've got to get it figured out. We have to find a way to re-group and get on track for sub-state play.

"The game here with Plainville on Monday is also very important in the league race. We must win in order to at least tie for the league title."

The results of the game with Plainville on Monday evening were not available at press time.

The Lady Jays suffered their second loss of the season at Hoxie on Tuesday evening so the loss to Ellis on Friday dropped their

record to 15-3. Norton had 10 points in the first quarter against Ellis. Senior guard Laura Lee Baird hit a three point shot and free throw, senior forward Lacey Wallingford and senior guard KaraJo Jones each hit two-point baskets and senior post Hayli Bozarth connected on two free throws for Norton in the first period.

Bozarth hit two field goals and three charities and senior wing Katharine Roy hit a two-point basket in the second quarter. Late in the period, Jones threw in two baskets and a free throw to help the Lady Jays' cause and cut the Lady Railroaders' lead down to three points at intermission.

Both teams hit 13 points in the third quarter. Norton's points came on two timely three-point shots by Wallingford, two baskets and a charity by Bozarth and Baird's second basket of the night.

In the final stanza, Norton put in 12 more points compared to 11 by Ellis. In addition to the three-point basket by Stewart, she hit two free throws. Norton's other points came on baskets by Baird and Jones and three more charities by Bozarth.

Leading scorer for Norton was Bozarth with 17 points on 4 of 10 from the field for 40 percent and 9 of 11 free throws for 81 percent.

Whitney Taylor led Ellis in scoring with 18 points; Bethany Polifka added 11 points.

As a team, Norton hit just 4 of 17 from beyond the arc for 24 percent, 12 of 36 from two-point range for 33 percent and 16 of 53 overall for just 30 percent.

Ellis hit 3 of 7 long range shots for 43 percent, 13 of 32 two-point tries for 41 percent and 16 of 39 overall for 41 percent.

From the charity stripe, Norton connected on 13 of 17 for 76 percent and the Lady Railroaders hit 16 of 32 for 50 percent.

Norton outrebounded Ellis 24-22. The Lady Jays grabbed 9 offensive and 15 defensive caroms and the Lady Railroaders pulled down 6 offensive and 16 defensive boards.

Bozarth was leading rebounder for Norton with 9, followed by Roy, Jones, 4 each; Wallingford, Baird, Amanda Ray, 2 each; Lacy Keilig, 1.

Norton had 8 steals and Ellis stole the ball 10 times. Baird was the leader with 4 thefts, followed by Roy, Jones, Bozarth, Ray, 1

each. The Lady Jays had 11 offensive assists and the Lady Railroaders had 7. Jones and Stewart were assists leaders with 3 each, followed by Roy, 2; Wallingford, Bozarth, Ray, 1 each.

Norton had 16 turnovers and Ellis lost the ball 13 times.

Junior varsity

The Norton junior varsity girls defeated Ellis 44-14.

Norton trailed 10-4 after one quarter but held Ellis scoreless in the second quarter to take a 16-10 lead by halftime.

A 12-4 score in Norton's favor in the third quarter extended the young Lady Jay lead to 28-14. Ellis did not score in the fourth period and Norton added 16 more points to win by 30.

Leading scorers for Norton were Hannah Waggoner and Kaitlyn Wolf with 8 points each, followed by Dustyna Sprigg, Erin Terrell, 5 each; Kendra Engelbert, Sady Keilig, Lacy Keilig, Raven Brown, 4 each; Kaylen Rossi, 2.

Mikayla Gottschalk led Ellis with 5 points.

"This was our best hustle of the year," said Norton assistant girls coach George Rossi.

"Our girls started out a bit slow in the first quarter but then only allowed four points the rest of the game. The hustle was great!

"We need to finish the year playing aggressive and with great intensity."

Next action

Norton will travel to Colby this evening to play the Lady Eagles. Games will begin with the C-team girls contest at 4:30 p.m., followed by the girls varsity and boys varsity games, all in the Community Building.

The boys junior varsity contest will begin at 6 p.m. in the high school gym and will be followed by the girls junior varsity game.

BOX SCORE

Norton Girls

Lacey Wallingford 1 2 0-0 8; Katharine Roy 1 0 0-0 2; Ashlie Stewart 0 12-25; Laura Lee Baird 2 1 1-2 8; KaraJo Jones 4 0 1-2 9; Hayli Bozarth 4 0 9-11 17; Game Totals 12 4 13-17 49.

Ellis Girls

Haley Wolf 1 2 1-4 9; Whitney Taylor 4 1 7-12 18; Bethany Polifka 4 0 3-8 11; Courtney Waldschmidt 2 0 3-4 7; Natasha Hollingshead 2 0 0-1 4; Kendra Mickelson 0 0 2-4 2; Game Totals 13 3 16-32 51.

Blue Jay boys unable to get lid off the basket

By DICK BOYD
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The Norton Community High School boys varsity basketball team is executing well offensively and playing good defense but a lid remains on the basket for the Blue Jays and the final result on Friday evening was a 53-34 Mid-Continent League loss to Ellis in the NCHS Stull Gymnasium.

Norton hit just 33 percent from the field and Ellis swished 51 percent.

"We played hard and had good execution but just could not make a shot," said Norton head boys coach Doug Reusink.

"We miss our shots and then lose confidence in ourselves.

"I'm proud of our boys for continuing to play hard."

Ellis held quarter advantages of 13-5, 26-13 and 38-23.

In the first quarter, senior post Zac Dreher, who is the only senior on the Blue Jay squad, hit Norton's only two baskets and junior guard Landon Hamel added a free throw.

Hamel hit two baskets, freshman post Jordan Wahlmeier hit a basket and Zac Dreher threw in another basket for Norton's eight second quarter points.

Junior guard Ashton Draper hit 3 of 3 attempted shots in the third quarter for 6 of Norton's 10 points. Hamel and Zac Dreher each hit another basket in the period.

Zac Dreher swished three more baskets, junior guard J.D. Gall and Draper each hit a basket and Hamel connected on a charity for Norton's final 11 points.

Zac Dreher was leading scorer for Norton with 14 points on 7 of 15 from the field for 47 percent accuracy. He missed his only free throw.

Draper ended the game with 8 points on perfect 4 of 4 shooting

from the field. He missed both charity tries. Hamel also scored 8 points on three field goals and two free throws.

Leading scorer for Ellis was Matt Erbert with 13 points; Monte Honas added 10.

As a team, Norton connected on 16 of 41 two-point tries for 39 percent, missed all 8 attempts from beyond the arc and finished 16 of 49 overall for 33 percent.

Ellis hit 1 of 5 from long range for 20 percent, 22 of 40 two-point tries for 55 percent and 23 of 45 overall for 51 percent.

From the free throw line, Norton hit just 2 of 7 for 29 percent and Ellis swished 6 of 16 for 38 percent.

Norton had 7 offensive and 14 defensive rebounds for 21 total. Ellis pulled down 15 offensive and 19 defensive caroms for 34 total.

Zac Dreher was leading rebounder for the Blue Jays with 8, followed by Landon Hamel, 4; Ashton Draper, Dakota Dreher, 3 each; Jordan Wahlmeier, 2; J.D. Gall 1.

The Blue Jays had 8 steals and the Railroaders had 3. Hamel was thefts leader with 3, followed by Gall, 2; Dakota Dreher, Wahlmeier, Zac Dreher, 1 each.

Norton recorded 13 offensive assists and Ellis had only 8. Gall was the leader with 5, followed by Hamel, 3; Tye Nickell, 2; Wahlmeier, Draper, Zac Dreher, 1 each.

The Blue Jays had 11 turnovers and the Railroaders had 15.

Wahlmeier, Hamel, Gall and Zac Dreher each blocked one shot.

Junior varsity

The Norton junior varsity boys team had a good ending to their contest with Ellis as they won in overtime by a 55-43 score.

Both teams scored just 2 points

in the first quarter. Ellis outscored Norton 16-11 in the second quarter to take an 18-13 lead by halftime. A 16-14 third quarter in favor of the Railroaders gave them a 34-27 advantage but Norton outscored the visitors 15-8 in the fourth quarter to tie the score at 42-42.

The Norton defense was equal to the occasion in the overtime period, allowing Ellis only one point on a free throw and scoring 13 themselves to win by 12 points.

Leading scorer for Norton was Jordan Wahlmeier with 18 points, followed by Dillon McConney, Luke Ninemire, Marcus Herman, 8 each; Dakota Dreher, 6; Tye Nickell, 5; Cole Archer, 2.

Ryan Weber led Ellis in scoring with 15 points; Matt Cunningham and Daniel Honas each added 10 points.

Next action

Norton will travel to Colby this evening for girls and boys contests, beginning with the girls C-team game at 4:30 p.m., followed by the girls varsity and boys varsity games, all in the Community Building.

The boys junior varsity contest will begin at 6 p.m. in the high school gym and will be followed by the girls junior varsity game.

BOX SCORE

Norton Boys

Jordan Wahlmeier 1 0 0-0 2; Ashton Draper 4 0 0-2 8; Landon Hamel 3 0 2-4 8; J.D. Gall 1 0 0-0 2; Zac Dreher 7 0 0-1 14; Game Totals 16 0 2-7 34.

Ellis Boys

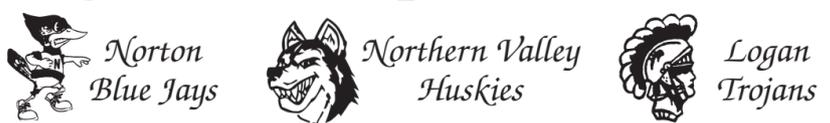
Dylan Pfeifer 3 0 0-0 6; Kyle Hadley 2 0 0-0 4; Kyle Fox 1 0 2-2 4; Aaron Gnad 3 0 0-0 6; Monte Honas 5 0 0-6 10; Gideon Fuchs 2 0 2-3 6; Clay Barton 2 0 0-4; Matt Erbert 4 1 2-5 13; Game Totals 22 1 6-16 53.



Senior post Zac Dreher was a "horse" on the boards Tuesday night in Norton's league game with Ellis. He is shown pulling down one of his eight game-leading rebounds. He also led Norton in scoring with 14 points. At left is the Blue Jays' junior guard Ashton Draper who had 3 rebounds and scored 8 points.

- Telegram photo by Dick Boyd

High School Sports This Week



WRESTLING:

Norton will compete in Class 3-2-1A State Tournament 10 a.m. Friday, 9 a.m. Saturday in Gross Memorial Coliseum, Hays

BASKETBALL:

Norton Varsity, Junior Varsity, C-team vs. Colby in Colby 4:30 p.m. Today
Norton Varsity Girls in Sub-State Quarter-finals 7 p.m. Monday TBA
Norton Varsity Boys in Sub-State Quarter-finals 7 p.m. Tuesday TBA
Northern Valley Girls received a Regional Opener bye and will play the winner of Monday's Palco-Quinter game in the Semi-finals on Thursday in Grainfield TBA
Northern Valley Boys will play at Hoxie in Regional Opener at 7 p.m. Today
Logan Girls will play at Natoma in Regional Opener at 6 p.m. Today
Logan Boys will play at Natoma in Regional Opener at 7:30 p.m. Today

Northern Valley Husky boys, girls — see report on Page 12