

Lady Jays defeat Plainville in Mid-Continent tournament

By Dick Boyd

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The No.4 seeded Norton Community High School girls basketball team defeated No.5 Plainville 49-41 in the first round of the annual Mid-Continent League Tournament on Tuesday evening in the NCHS Stull Gym in Norton.

It was the second time within a week that the two teams met on the Norton floor. The Lady Jays defeated the Lady Cardinals 52-47 in regular league play on that occasion.

In the previous game, Norton held a comfortable lead most of the game until Plainville's rally cut the final margin of victory to five points.

This time around, Plainville also rallied in the final period but it was not as close.

Both teams had trouble scoring in the first quarter, which ended in a 6-1 tie.

Senior guard Tawni Griffey and junior guard Katelyn Engelbert were the only scorers for Norton in the first quarter as both drained three-point shots.

The second quarter turned out to be the best for the Lady Jays as they outscored the visitors 22-9 to take a commanding 28-15 halftime lead.

Although Griffey did not score, five other players put points on the board. Engelbert hit two baskets and a free throw, junior guard Darcy Bainter hit a trey and two-point basket, junior post Bailey Ambrosier hit

two baskets, junior guard Johnnye Ruder buried a three-pointer and senior guard Kamilla Jones hit from beyond the arc along with a two-point basket.

Although Norton hit just 13 points in the third period, they held Plainville to 10 to increase their advantage to 41-25. Ambrosier led the way with 8 points on four baskets. Griffey hit a two-point basket and free throw and Ruder hit a two-pointer.

In the fourth quarter, Plainville rallied as they had in the previous game but the Lady Cardinals were just too far behind, despite outscoring Norton 16-8.

The Lady Jays slowed things down on offense as Griffey hit a trey and two charities and Ambrosier hit a two-point basket and one free throw.

"Defensively, this was a good night for us," said Norton head coach George Rossi.

"Their game plan was to stop Tawni from scoring with a box and one defense. It worked for awhile but Darcy, Katelyn, Kamilla and Bailey stepped up on the offensive end and, in the second half, they took it off.

"Our defense was good all night. We got a lot of turnovers off our full court press.

"We're not so good about handling the lead. We need to work on slowing it down and running some clock."

Ambrosier was leading scorer for Norton with 15 points on 7 of 9 from the field for 78 percent

accuracy and 1 of 4 free throws for 25 percent.

Griffey added 11 points on 2 of 6 from long range, 1 of 3 two-point tries and 3 of 9 overall for 33 percent and 3 of 4 free throws for 75 percent.

Leading scorer for Plainville was Courtney Copeland with 17 points.

As a team, Norton outshot Plainville. The Lady Jays hit 6 of 17 three-point attempts for 35 percent, 13 of 36 two-point tries for 36 percent and 19 of 53 overall for 36 percent.

The Lady Jays' aggressive defense limited the Lady Cardinals to 4 of 12 three-point baskets for 33 percent, 11 of 39 two-point tries for 28 percent and 15 of 51 overall for just 29 percent.

Norton hit 5 of 11 free throws for 45 percent and Plainville swished 7 of 9 for 78 percent.

Rebounding was even. Norton pulled down 9 offensive and 22 defensive boards for 31 total. Plainville grabbed 7 offensive and 24 defensive caroms, also 31 total.

Ambrosier was leading rebounder for Norton with 12 caroms, followed by Engelbert, 6; Griffey, 4; Bainter, 4; Jones, 3; Ruder, Alec Melvin, 1 each.

Norton had 7 steals compared to 3 for Plainville.

Ruder was the leader with 3 thefts, followed by Griffey, Engelbert, Ambrosier, Jones, 1 each.

The Lady Jays had 7 offensive assists. Griffey led with 3,

followed by Jones, 2; Engelbert, Melvin, 1 each.

Norton had 13 turnovers but Plainville turned the ball over 16 times.

Next action

In the other tournament first round games on Tuesday, No.1 Smith Center defeated No.8 seed Phillipsburg 66-33, No.2 Ellis outscored No.7 Hill City 53-43 and No.3 Osborne beat No.6 Stockton 44-20.

Norton will advance to a championship semi-finals game with unbeaten Smith Center at 3 p.m. today in the Gross Memorial Coliseum in Hays.

Ellis and Osborne will play at 6 p.m. today in Gross Coliseum in Hays.

Phillipsburg played Plainville and Hill City played Stockton in consolation games on Thursday. Results were not available at the Norton Telegram's press time.

Winners of the Norton-Smith Center and Ellis-Osborne contests will play for the league championship at 6 p.m. Saturday in Gross Coliseum in Hays.

Losers will play for third place at 3 p.m. in Gross Coliseum.

The fifth place game between consolation winners on Thursday will be at 12 noon on Saturday in Gross Coliseum and the seventh place contest between consolation losers will be played at 9 a.m. on Saturday in Gross Coliseum.

Norton girls

Tawni Griffey 1 2 3-4 11; Katelyn Engelbert 2 1 1-1 8;



Norton junior post Bailey Ambrosier had a good night against Plainville on Tuesday. She is shown here scoring two of her 15 points in the game and she also led Norton in rebounds with 12.

- Telegram photo by Dick Boyd

Darcy Bainter 1 1 0-0 5; Bailey Ambrosier 7 0 1-4 15; Johnnye Ruder 1 1 0-0 5; Kamilla Jones 1 1 0-2 5; Totals 13 6 5-11 49.

Plainville girls

Hannah Friend 1 0 2-2 4;

Shelbe Pywell 2 0 0-0 4; Courtney Copeland 2 4 1-3 17; Allison Sears 2 0 2-2 6; Kim Junkmeier 3 0 0-0 6; Brianna Casey 1 0 2-2 4; Totals 4 4 7-9 41.

Blue Jays lose to Smith Center in first round of tourney

By Dick Boyd

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The No.6 seeded Norton Community High School boys basketball team had a chance to upset No.3 seed Smith Center and came within striking distance several times before losing 68-64 in the first round of the annual Mid-Continent League Tournament on Monday evening in Smith Center.

Most of the game, the Redmen led by just a few points but the Blue Jays could never get the extra basket or two they needed to take the lead.

Smith Center led 16-11 after the first quarter which saw senior center Lane Bigge take charge inside and hit two baskets and a free throw. Senior guard Jacob Brooks, senior forward Andrew Ellis and senior guard Carson McKenna each hit a basket in the period.

After Bigge, Brooks and McKenna scored again, Norton trailed by just 20-19 in the second period but, fueled by Payton Buckmaster's 13 points, Smith

Center increased their lead and was on top 35-28 at halftime.

McKenna and Brooks each hit another basket, junior guard Drew Schrum buried a three-point shot, Ellis scored again and sophomore center Conor Cox hit two points in the quarter.

With Brooks leading the way, Norton came out in the third quarter and cut the Smith Center lead to 41-40 with 3:00 left in the period but the Redmen caught fire and extended their advantage to 55-42 by the end of the quarter.

Brooks hit 11 of Norton's 14 points in the third quarter on four baskets and three free throws. Senior guard Dalton Miller hit a free throw and McKenna a basket for Norton's other points in the period.

Norton kept fighting and scored the first 10 points of the fourth quarter. Ellis hit a two-point basket, McKenna buried a three-pointer, Bigge hit inside and Ellis found the range on a trey, cutting the Smith Center lead to 55-52.

The Redmen were leading 58-54 when junior forward Tanner Furbush scored on a rebound. Smith Center scored again but Cox tallied and the Redmen's lead was two-points again at 60-58 with 2:41 left in the game.

After a trey by Smith Center, Brooks drove for two-points and Norton trailed 63-60. Smith Center survived the Norton rally by hitting a basket and three free throws down the stretch while Norton added a basket by Miller and two free throws by Ellis to make the final score 68-64.

"Our boys played hard but did not play smart enough to get a win," said Norton head coach Doug Reusink. "Early in the game, we played at their pace. I felt we were better in the second half when we cut their lead to one point late in the third quarter but, at that point, we let it get away from us. We just couldn't take the lead.

"If we can give this kind of effort every night, we will get some wins."

Neither team was bashful when it came to shooting in the

game. Both put up a lot of shots and the difference in the game was that Smith Center hit just two more baskets than Norton.

Norton took 66 shots and hit 29 for 44 percent accuracy while Smith Center shot the ball 72 times and hit 31 for a similar 43 percent.

Brooks led Norton in scoring with 19 points on 8 of 22 two-point tries for 36 percent, 0 of 2 from long range and 3 of 3 free throws.

McKenna tallied 13 points on 4 of 13 two-point tries for 31 percent, 1 of 1 from long range and 2 of 4 free throws for 50 percent.

A third player scoring in double figures for Norton was Ellis who tallied 11 points on 3 of 8 two-point tries for 38 percent, 1 of 3 trey tries for 33 percent and 2 of 3 free throws for 67 percent.

Leading scorer for Smith Center was Payton Buckmaster with 22 points. Zach Linn added 18 tallies.

Both teams hit 9 free throws. Norton hit 9 of 15 for 60 percent

and Smith Center swished 9 of 14 for 64 percent.

Norton grabbed 8 offensive and 25 defensive rebounds for 33 total. Smith Center pulled down 13 offensive and 22 defensive caroms for 35 total.

Leading rebounders for the Blue Jays were Brooks, Miller and McKenna, 6 each, followed by Cox, 5; Bigge, Furbush, 4 each; Schrum, Ellis, 1 each.

Norton had 5 offensive assists and Smith Center had 11. McKenna had 3 assists, followed by Ellis, Miller, 1 each.

The Blue Jays had 13 steals and the Redmen had 14 thefts.

Norton had 23 turnovers and Smith Center had 20.

In other first round games on Monday, No.1 seed Phillipsburg defeated No.8 Hill City 58-40, No.5 seed Ellis outscored No.4 Stockton 74-53 and No.2 Plainville beat No.7 Trego 64-25.

Norton's loss dropped the Blue Jays into the consolation bracket. They will play Trego at 7:30 p. m. on Thursday in Plainville. A win by Norton would put them versus the winner of

the Hill City-Stockton consolation game, which will be played the same time in Plainville. This game would be for fifth place and would be played at 1:30 p.m. on Saturday in Gross Coliseum in Hays.

A loss by Norton would put the Blue Jays in the seventh place game versus the loser of the Hill City-Stockton contest at 10:30 a.m. on Saturday in Gross Coliseum in Hays.

Norton boys

Jacob Brooks 8 0 3-3 19; Conor Cox 2 0 0-1 4; Drew Schrum 0 1 0-0 3; Andrew Ellis 3 1 2-3 11; Dalton Miller 1 0 1-2 3; Tanner Furbush 1 0 0-0 2; Carson McKenna 4 1 2-5 13; Lane Bigge 4 0 1-2 9; Totals 23 3 9-16 64.

Smith Center boys

Zach Linn 7 1 1-1 18; Kody Molzahn 3 0 1-1 17; Mason Buckmaster 2 0 0-0 4; Cole Lorenzen 0 0 2-2 2; Taylor Zabel 5 0 0-2 10; Payton Buckmaster 7 2 2-3 22; Weston Rothchild 1 0 3-5 5; Totals 25 3 9-14 68.

Norton junior varsity wrestlers win championship at Elm Creek

By Dick Boyd

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The Norton Community High School junior varsity wrestlers had their best outing of the season on Friday when they earned the championship of the Elm Creek Invitational.

The young Blue Jays scored 155 points to win the title, followed by Medicine Valley, 129; Lexington JV, 90.5; Pleasanton, 70; Arapahoe, 59; Southern Valley JV, 55; Overton, 54; Elm Creek, 53; Sargent/Burwell, 34; Cozad JV, 31; Alma, 23; Gibbon JV, 13; Holdrege JV, 12.

"I am very proud of our first place finish at Elm Creek," said Norton assistant coach Shane Miller. "This was our most complete tournament so far.

"We ended with 11 placers; six were finalists with three of those being champions. In most tournaments prior to this, we have had some open weight classes for one reason or another but we were able to field a relatively full team.

"Our first place finish is a testament to the schedule and situations we put our junior varsity

squad in. They obviously have a great opportunity to make themselves better each day in the practice room but have benefited from our competitive schedule.

"Statistically, we had 33 wins with 17 losses and 24 of the wins were pins. Anytime you have that many pins in a tournament you are going to set yourself up for a chance at a team trophy and we did that today!"

Winning championships were junior Toby Nickell, 138; freshman Gavin Lively, 145 and sophomore Kendall Miller, 152.

Finishing runner-up in their weight divisions were freshman Skylar Johnson, 106; freshman Riley Hager, 120 and freshman Chandler Sumner, 195.

Junior Garret Otter, 120; sophomore Derek Rowh, 132; sophomore Chris Chastain, 170 and junior Michael Johnson, 285, all placed third.

Freshman Kyle Bell, 113, finished fourth.

Also competing for Norton were freshman Weston Erbert, 126 and junior Andre Valencia,

220.

Gavin Lively was named "Junior Varsity Wrestler of the Week" by the Norton coaches. "Gavin was probably in the most competitive bracket and he was able to dominate his finals opponent from Medicine Valley," said coach Miller. "It was a real close match until midway through the second period when Gavin secured a takedown. From that point on, Gavin completely dominated the remainder of the match, winning 15-3."

Individual matches

106 - Skylar Johnson pinned Johnston, Holdrege JV, in 3:48; won an 11-9 decision over DeSantiago, Lexington JV; pinned Simpson, Sargent/Burwell, in 1:22 and lost a 4-3 decision to Lienemann, Alma, to place runner-up.

113 - Kyle Bell lost a 12-5 decision to Victorino, Lexington JV, pinned Johnston, Holdrege JV, in 2:41; pinned Pruitt, Arapahoe, in 4:58 and lost a 12-9 decision to Bloom, Elm Creek, to place fourth.

120 - Riley Hager lost an 8-0 decision to Gonzalez, Lexing-

ton JV; won a 16-4 major decision over Hammond, Alma; decided Norton's Otter 12-5 and pinned Loeffelhol, Pleasanton, in 3:34 to place second.

120 - Garret Otter pinned Loeffelhol, Pleasanton, in 1:45; lost a 20-4 technical fall to Gonzalez, Lexington JV; lost a 12-5 decision to Riley Hager, Norton and won a 17-5 major decision over Hammond, Alma, to place third.

126 - Weston Erbert pinned Abe Hermosillo, Cozad JV, in 3:04; was pinned in 3:40 by Luis Lechuga, Lexington JV and lost an 8-6 decision to Austin Kregdl, Southern Valley JV.

132 - Derek Rowh pinned Ace Bloom, Elm Creek, in 5:17; was pinned in 2:47 by Colton Lambers, Pleasanton; won an 11-10 decision over Patrick Cure, Elm Creek and pinned Bloom in 4:20 to place third.

138 - Toby Nickell won a 4-2 decision over Lienemann, Alma; lost a 2-0 decision to DePhillips, Overton; pinned Lazo, Lexington JV, in 6:20; pinned Gardner, Arapahoe, in :40 and pinned Geis, Elm Creek, in 3:47

to place first.

145 - Gavin Lively pinned Austin Aragon, Southern Valley JV, in :32; won a 4-1 decision over Jesus Leyva, Lexington JV and won a 15-3 major decision over Ty Contrerez, Medicine Valley, to place first.

152 - Kendall Miller pinned Andrew Cotton, unattached, in 2:45; won a 9-0 major decision over Jesse Jackson, Southern Valley JV and won a 9-0 major decision over Isaac Cure, Elm Creek, to place first.

170 - Chris Chastain lost a 15-0 technical fall to Tyler Kipp, Arapahoe; pinned Brett Jones, Medicine Valley, in 3:47; was pinned in 5:00 by Austin Bower, Southern Valley JV, won a 7-3 decision over Ismael Perez, Gibbon JV and pinned Lane Barker, Arapahoe, in 3:00 to place third.

195 - Chandler Sumner pinned Anthony Gutierrez, Elm Creek, in 5:04; was pinned in :14 by Cory Merrigan, Medicine Valley and pinned Levi Kamphaus, Sargent/Burwell, in 1:52 to place second.

220 - Andre Valencia was

pinned in 1:43 by Rulon Taylor, Medicine Valley; pinned Zack Wadleigh, Arapahoe, in :53 and was pinned in 1:30 by Cole Haase, Southern Valley JV.

285 - Michael Johnson pinned Netherton, Cozad JV, in 3:08; pinned Alvidrez, Lexington JV, in 3:48; was pinned in 5:15 by Keaschall, Pleasanton; was pinned in :37 by Zeleski, Overton and pinned Kemp, Medicine Valley, in 3:40 to place third.

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