

Huskies lose to Smith Center 79-69

The Northern Valley boys basketball team lost to Smith Center 79-69 Tuesday in Smith Center.

"One of the main focuses we had after the lackluster offensive performance against Hill City was that we needed to continue our offensive aggressiveness that we had in the first two games," said Coach Jason Dibble. "We felt if we could keep the pressure on the defense to get back we could put ourselves in some good situations and either score or get to the foul line. "We were able to do both, but the problem was Smith Center shot the lights out. They came out and got up 13-3 and were leading by 8 after the first quarter. I told the players we have a lot of time left and not to panic, but take it one possession at a time.

"Unfortunately, Smith Center continued their hot shooting throughout the first half going 8 for 11 from the three-point line. The players understood at half that if we continued playing, Smith Center would cool off and we could get back in the game. We came out after halftime and had two good possessions cutting the lead from 14 to 8, but then Smith Center hit a few shots to widen the gap.

"We fought hard all night and made it an 8-point game with two and a half minutes left in the fourth, but they always had an answer. They did not shoot the ball as well in the second half and we went out and won the second half 35-31. If we continue to push the ball on the break and give ourselves opportunities to score and go to the free throw line, we can definitely win some games scoring 69 points."

Joey Copper led scoring for the Huskies with 23 points, followed by Avery Thalheim, 14; Henry Griffiths, 13; Cole Kinderknecht, 10; Jesse Hilburn, 7; and Andrew Sheley, 2.

Rebounding honors went to Copper with six; Hilburn and Kinderknecht, four apiece; Griffiths, three; and Sheley, one.

Assists were made by Copper, five; Thalheim, three; Hilburn and Sheley, two each; and Kinderknecht, one.

Making steals were Copper, five; Griffiths, three; and Hilburn, Kinderknecht and Thalheim, one apiece.

The junior varsity lost 73-31. "Going into this game, I knew Smith Center had a very talented group of freshman that have played a lot of basketball at their young age," said the coach. "They came out and proved it right by being able to full court pressure us



Northern Valley junior Joey Copper goes up for a basket in the game against Smith Center. Copper scored 23 points in the game and led rebounds for the Huskies with six. Below, senior Jesse Hilburn shoots a free throw.

and turn it into turnovers and easy baskets.

"Even though, for the game, we had more turnovers than before I felt we were able to get the ball past half court and give ourselves some scoring opportunities. Unfortunately we were not able to convert on many of those scoring opportunities.

"One of the areas of concern has been our hustle, but tonight we came and played hard even though we were getting beat pretty bad. In the third quarter, Smith Center went to a two-three zone and on a few inbounds plays and offensive sets we were able to knock down about four threes in the quarter and give ourselves some confidence. If the players keep playing hard it will definitely pay off once we hit our league schedule and schools our size."

Scoring for Northern Valley were David Harris, 9; Cody Lowry, 6; Clarke Nelson, Sheley and Chance Miller, 4 apiece; and Chase Miller and Anthony Simants, 2 each.

Rebounding honors went to Chase Miller, Richie Kersch, and Nelson, four each; Harris, three; Simants, Bryce Marble, Sheley, and Chance Miller, two apiece;



and Lowry and Scott Shearer, one each.

Seventh grade boys win championship

The Norton Junior High School seventh grade basketball team took home the Smith Center Basketball Tournament Championship after defeating Smith Center 40-38 and Belleville 44-42.

Smith Center
"This was another one of those games where we gave a great effort," said Coach Jim Myers. "That's something I don't have to worry about with this bunch. They don't always hit a high percentage of their shots, but they come to play and never quit.

"The breaks went our way at the end of the game and we pulled out a two point victory."

Kaenon Keiswetter led scoring for the Junior Jays with 15 points. He was followed by Landon Hamel, 12; J.D. Gall, 9; and Conner Pfannenstiel, 4.

Norton made 34 percent of its field goals and 62 percent of its foul shots.

Rebounding honors went to Keiswetter, seven; Gall, six; Hamel, five; Corey Lewis, three; Adam Myers, Pfannenstiel and Ashton Draper, one each.

Making steals were Hamel, five; Keiswetter, four; Gall, Lewis, Myers and Pfannenstiel, one each.

Belleville
"What a gutsy effort by our kids — to just work our opponents and refuse to lose," said the coach. "Both games in this tournament were hard fought, close games.

"In this game, we got to the free throw line more and hit enough to win. Kaenon drew 20 free throw shots, which is remarkable. He hit 13 of them. That really helps."

Keiswetter led scoring for

Norton with 23 points, followed by Hamel, 13; Gall, 6; and Pfannenstiel, 2.

The Jays shot 28 percent from the field and 56 percent from the foul line.

Rebounds were grabbed by Keiswetter, seven; Gall, six; Hamel and Draper, four apiece; Lewis, two; and Myers, Pfannenstiel and Grant McClymont, one each.

Steals were made by Keiswetter and Hamel, five each; Pfannenstiel, four; Gall, Myers and Lewis, two apiece.

The seventh grade varsity boys now hold a 7-2 record.

The Jays played Victoria on Thursday and won't play again until after winter break, when they will play host to Phillipsburg on Thursday, Jan. 6 at 5:30 p.m.

Huskies' junior high played games

The Northern Valley Junior High School girls basketball team remains undefeated after beating Eastern Heights 59-12 last week. The Junior Husky boys also added another win to their record with a close 34-33 victory over the Mustangs.

Girls
"We beat Eastern Heights 59-12 to improve our record to 6-0," said Coach Jim Cole. "Nine girls scored points for the Huskies. The girls are improving on their shooting.

"We did a good job of running our offense and taking good shots."

were Alison Cole, 21 points; Megan Cole, 12; Karen Wenzl, 6; Christina Anderson, 6; Kenzie Chandler, 4; Staci Dole, 4; Miriah Florence, 2; Hannah Hawks, 2; and Brittney Braun, 2.

Boys
"Our A-team boys improved their record to 3-3 with an exciting 34-33 win over Eastern Heights," said the coach. "We played great defense the whole night and had a balanced attack on offense."

Scoring for the Huskies were Drew Britt, 13 points; Eric Woodside, 6; Tanner Jessup, 6; Nathaniel Graham, 5; and Travis Redeker, 4.

winning 34-15," Coach Cole said. Getting the ball in the basket were Jacob Gallentine, 6 points; Colton Lowry, 6; Cody Callaway, 4; Ethan Hays, 4; Chaim McMillin, 4; Stanton Nelson, 2; Taylor Hammond, 2; Michael Callaway, 2; Dusty Eagleburger, 2; and Samuel Field, 2.

"The C-team boys lost 10-16, but are really showing improvement with each game," he said.

"I am proud of all of our players. They are working hard and playing well as a team."

Scoring for the C-team were Bryant Tharman, 4 points; Matthew Dole, 2; Cole Archer, 2; and Zachary Vincent, 2.

Quarterback ends college grid career

By DICK BOYD
Neal Philpot, 6-foot-4-inch, 254-pound quarterback from Norton, completed a decorated four-year football career at Pittsburg State University on Saturday when his Gorillas finished as the runner-up for the Division II National Championship.

Top-ranked and previously undefeated, Pittsburg State lost 36-31 to third-ranked Valdosta State University at Braly Municipal Stadium in Florence, Ala.

Pittsburg State ended its season with a 14-1 record while Valdosta State won its first-ever national title, capping a 13-1 campaign.

Philpot, who finished his career with a 38-8 record as the Gorillas

starting quarterback, rushed 20 times for 117 yards and a touchdown and completed five of 11 passes for 60 yards and a score in his final collegiate game.

He finished the game with 10,168 yards of total offense to become the all-time leader in Mid-America Intercollegiate Athletics Association history.

Philpot rushed for 1,398 yards and 16 touchdowns and completed 96 of 170 passes (56.5 percent) for 1,825 yards and 25 touchdowns with five interceptions this season.

He helped direct a Pittsburg State offense that set all-time NCAA all division records this season for points, 837; rushing yards, 5,320 and total yards, 8,976.

JV basketball tourney Saturday

By DICK BOYD
Norton will compete in a high school junior varsity basketball tournament on Saturday in Quinter.

Games will be played in the varsity and junior varsity gyms and will begin at 9 a.m. Competing, in addition to Quinter and Norton, will be girls and boys teams from Trego and Oakley.

In the first round at 9 a.m., the Norton girls will play Oakley in the junior varsity gym and Quinter and Trego girls will play in the

varsity gym. In the boys' first round at about 10:30 a.m., Norton will play Oakley in the junior varsity gym and Quinter will play Trego.

Winners of the girls games will play at around 12:30 for first place and the girls losers will play at the same time in the junior varsity gym for third.

The boys championship game will be around 2 p.m. in the varsity gym. The third place game will be at the same time in the junior varsity gym.

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