

# Norton girls lose to Riley County in Substate

By DICK BOYD

Coach Kevin Jilka's No. 1 seeded Norton Community High School girls basketball team found a lid on the basket Friday night in the Class 3A Substate Basketball Tournament in Beloit and their season ended with a heartbreaking 44-33 loss to No. 4 seed Riley County.

The Lady Jays had plenty of basket opportunities but, for some unknown reason, could not score consistently enough to produce a win and advance into Saturday evening's finals.

As a team, Norton hit just 12 of 56 shots taken for a cold 20 percent accuracy, by far the lowest percentage of the season. Meanwhile, Riley County converted 14 of just 39 attempts for 36 percent, a percent which is normal for the Lady Jays.

"It's pretty simple. You have to make baskets to win games," said a disappointed Coach Jilka.

"We played decent defense, especially in the first half.

"You have to give them credit. They had a great game plan and executed it well. They made our perimeter girls shoot and we couldn't hit. They clogged up the middle so we couldn't pass into our centers. Our perimeter girls got where they wouldn't shoot. "They are better than a 13-7 team. They've played a tough schedule."

Coming into the tournament, Norton had lost only to Ellis in the finals of the Mid-Continent League Tournament, a team they beat later in the season by 15 points to win the MCL regular season title. The Lady Jays finished the season 18-2.

Despite having major problems hitting baskets, Norton was in the game until the last. The Lady Jays were outscored by just a few points in each quarter but they all added up to 11 points. After the first quarter, Norton trailed 6-5 and at half-time Riley County led 16-13. A 13-7 third quarter in favor of Riley County made it 29-20. The two teams played on equal terms in the fourth quarter. Both teams had scored 13 points in the final stanza until a Riley County basket at the buzzer gave them two extra points.

Jones was leading scorer for Norton with 12 points, all but two of them coming in the fourth quarter. She hit 1 of 2 long range shots, 3 of 6 two-point shots and 4 of 8 overall for 50 percent and was 3 of 4 from the charity stripe for 75 percent accuracy.

Ebert was second high scorer for the Lady Jays with 7 points on 2 of 5 baskets for 40 percent and a perfect 3 of 3 at the line.

Jones and Ebert were the only two Norton players to hit better than 28 percent from the field. Mosier was leading scorer for

Mosier got loose on a fast break for a Riley County basket to start the fourth quarter. Cox was fouled with 6:29 left in the game and hit one of two charities. Mosier was fouled and hit two free throws. Ebert matched Mosier's two charities but the Lady Jays still trailed 33-23 with only 4:10 left in the game.

Jones gave Norton some temporary momentum when she stole the ball and drove down court. She was fouled and hit both free throws to cut the Riley County lead to eight points. Husted answered with a Riley County basket and hit a free throw 10 seconds later to put Riley County on top 36-25 with 3:18 showing.

Jones kept Norton's hopes alive by burying a shot from beyond the arc at the 2:37 mark. Riley County went into their slow down game and Norton had to foul in an attempt to get the ball. Mosier missed a free throw with 1:26 left but Buss connected on charities with 1:12 and 56 seconds remaining to make the score 38-28. Jones swished another basket with 47.5 seconds left on the scoreboard clock. She was fouled while shooting but missed the free throw and it was 38-30. Buss was fouled and hit another free throw. Jones hit her final basket of the game and her outstanding regular season prep career with 28.3 seconds left. She was fouled while shooting and hit the free throw for an old-fashioned three point play that cut the Riley County lead to 39-33.

Riley County scored the final points of the game on two free throws by Buss, a charity by Henry and a basket on a fast break at the buzzer to extend the final margin of victory to 11 points.

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Norton senior center Chelsea Cox wins the battle for a loose ball with assistance from senior guard Klaire Mann during the Lady Jays' 44-33 loss to Riley County in substate tournament action on Friday evening in Beloit. At right for the Lady Trojans is Beth Husted.

Riley County with 12 points.

As a team, Norton swished just 1 of 9 shots from beyond the arc for 11 percent, 11 of 47 two-point attempts for 32 percent and 12 of 56 overall for an even 20 percent.

Riley County connected on 1 of 5 long range tries for 20 percent, 13 of 34 two-point attempts for 38 percent and 14 of 39 overall for 36 percent.

From the free throw line, Norton hit 8 of 11 for 72 percent and Riley County connected on 11 of 23 for 48 percent.

Norton was outrebounded 39-20. The Lady Jays had 10 offensive and 10 defensive rebounds and Riley County pulled down 7 offensive and a whopping 32 defensive caroms.

Cox was leading rebounder for Norton with 6, followed by Ebert, 4; Jones, Mann, 3 each; Laura Lee Baird, 2; Whitney Newell, Chantille Campbell, 1 each.

The Lady Jays had 8 steals and Riley County had just 3. Ebert led Norton in thefts with 2, followed by Newell, Cox, Mann, Overlease, Campbell, Jones, 1 each.

Norton had 7 assists compared to 11 for Riley County. Mann was assists leader with 3, followed by

Newell, 2; Baird, Ebert, 1 each.

The Lady Jays had only 9 turnovers but caused Riley County to turn the ball over 20 times.

"A lot of good things happened this season," said Coach Jilka.

"Our girls will look back on the season and feel good about it and their 18-2 record.

"It was a fun group and a fun

year."

This was the final regular season game of their high school basketball careers for eight Norton Lady Jays. The seniors on this year's quintet were Whitney Newell, Chelsea Cox, Rachael Lentz, Klaire Mann, Amber Overlease, Becca Ebert, Amber Waggoner and Karlie Jones.

During the season, Norton defeated Goodland and Hoxie, two teams that qualified on Saturday evening for state tournament play.

The Lady Jays defeated Goodland 47-33 in the Topside Tipoff Tournament in Goodland on December 10 and came from behind to defeat the Cowgirls 39-38 at Goodland on January 24. Goodland defeated Thomas More Prep-Marian of Hays 52-37 in the substate finals to advance to the Class 4A state tournament this week in Salina.

Norton defeated Hoxie 51-44 in Norton on February 14. Hoxie defeated Atwood 46-34 in the substate finals to advance to the Class 2A state tournament in Manhattan this week.

### GAME STATISTICS

	FGs		FTs		TP
	2s	3s	M	A	
Norton girls 33	12	1	24	4	
Riley County girls 44	14	11	23	44	
Chelsea Cox	1	0	2	4	
Klaire Mann	3	0	0	6	
Amber Overlease	2	0	0	4	
Becca Ebert	2	0	3	7	
Karlie Jones	3	1	3	12	
TOTAL	11	1	8	11	33
Christy Buss	1	0	4	8	
Katie Henry	2	1	1	3	
Whitney Mosier	4	0	5	13	
Beth Husted	4	0	1	9	
Tiffany Bulk	4	0	0	8	
TOTAL	15	1	11	23	44



Even though the Norton girls had trouble hitting the basket in Friday's 44-33 substate tournament loss to Riley County on Friday evening in Beloit, they played good defense. Here, Norton senior centers Chelsea Cox and Becca Ebert prevent Christy Buss from shooting and force her to look for a pass to a teammate.

Norton County Weather - March 7 <sup>th</sup> - 11 <sup>th</sup>				
Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
75/35	45/28	53/25	58/28	63/30

Normal High: 52  
Normal Low: 25  
Sunrise: 6:58 to 7:04 A.M.  
Sunset: 6:39 to 6:43 P.M.

After another warm and breezy day today we have a decent chance for moisture tomorrow. Low pressure will move through Oklahoma wrapping some moisture around into the High Plains. Rains showers will develop tomorrow afternoon and may briefly change to some snow if it lingers past 10pm. Total precipitation should range from .25" to .50". After this system passes mild temperatures and dry conditions return through early next week. Next system would arrive Tuesday or Wednesday of next week.

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Norton senior guard Whitney Newell drives past a Riley County defender in an effort to work the ball inside during the Lady Jays' 44-33 substate tournament loss on Friday evening in Beloit. Norton's inside players were bottled up all night long but Norton's inability to hit from the perimeter cost them the game and ended their season.

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