

Goodland ladies stopped by tough 'Jays

By DICK BOYD

On December 8, the Goodland High School girls basketball team, who is currently ranked No.3 in the state in Class 4A, defeated the sophomore-dominated Norton Community High School girls quintet 46-44 in the semi-finals of the Topside Tipoff Tournament in Goodland.

The Lady Jays hosted the Cowgirls on Tuesday night of this week in the friendly confines of the Stull Gymnasium and avenged the previous loss with an impressive 51-40 victory.

This time the Norton girls showed no fear and were the aggressors from the opening whistle. The Lady Jays scored from inside the paint and from beyond the arc and played outstanding defense to pull off the upset.

"This was a huge win for us as much as we've been struggling since the holiday break," said Norton head coach Kevin Jilka.

"We were very aggressive on both offense and defense. Our offensive execution was good and we rebounded very well. It's the first time we've really played total team defense. They made a run at us in the fourth quarter but we hung in there.

"We showed what capabilities

we have. There are things we do on the practice floor that we haven't been taking to the game. We've been trying to get our girls to relax and have fun playing. We stepped it up a couple of notches and this was a good time to do it. It was good to see us get our confidence back. We got physical with them and didn't back down."

With Hayli Bozarth hitting three baskets and two free throws and Laura Lee Baird swishing a three-point and two-point basket and free throw and Taylor Rossi hitting a free throw, the Lady Jays took a 14-9 first quarter lead.

Baird and Rossi both buried shots from beyond the arc in the second quarter when Norton outscored Goodland 13-11 to take a 27-20 halftime advantage.

The outcome was really decided when the Lady Jays came out in the third quarter and put 20 points on the scoreboard compared to just 9 by Goodland. Six different Lady Jays scored in the period. Rossi hit her second trey and Megan Kats drained a trey as well. Maggie Nielsen, Norton's only senior, hit two key baskets inside.

Goodland didn't give up and cut the final margin of victory by outscoring Norton 11-4 in the fourth quarter but it was too little,

too late for the Cowgirls.

Norton extended their season record to 7-4 as Goodland suffered just their second loss of the season.

Bozarth was leading scorer for Norton. She was perfect from the field as she hit 6 of 6 and was 4 of 5 from the free throw line for 80 percent and 16 points. Baird finished with 14 points on 2 of 2 from three-point range, 3 of 11 on two-point shots for 27 percent and 5 of 13 overall for 38 percent.

Whitney Archer led Goodland with 12 points.

Norton's three-point shooting was a big factor in the win. The Lady Jays hit 5 of 10 from beyond the arc for 50 percent, were 14 of 32 from two-point land for 44 percent and 19 of 42 overall for 45 percent.

The Cowgirls missed all six tries from long range, hit 17 of 36 two-point attempts for 47 percent and were 17 of 42 overall for 40 percent.

From the free throw line, Norton connected on 8 of 11 for 73 percent and Goodland cashed in 6 of 12 for 50 percent.

Norton had 9 offensive and 15 defensive rebounds for 24 total. Goodland grabbed 7 offensive and 15 defensive boards for 22 total.

KaraJo Jones was leading

rebounder with 9, followed by Bozarth, 8; Rossi, Baird, Ashley Colip, 2 each; Nielsen, 1.

The Lady Jays had 8 steals and the Cowgirls had 5 thefts. Rossi was the leader with 3, followed by Jones, Bozarth, 2 each; Baird, 1.

Norton had an excellent total of 16 offensive assists compared to just 5 for Goodland. Rossi was the leader with 8, followed by Baird, Colip, 3 each; Kats, Jones, 1 each. The Lady Jays had 11 turnovers and the Cowgirls lost the ball 12 times.

Junior varsity

The Norton girls junior varsity defeated Goodland 38-13.

Norton held quarter leads of 13-2, 21-5 and 34-8.

Leading scorer for Norton was Amanda Ray with 14 points, followed by Ashlie Stewart, 9; Bethany Roy, 6; Kaitlyn Wolf, 4; Steph Eagleburger, 2; Haley Jones, 2; Courtney Cox, 1.

Shelbi Hall and Chelsie Gausman led Goodland with 3 each.

"This was the Lady Jay team I've been waiting to see," said Norton assistant coach George Rossi.

"Our girls put together a wonderful game. Our hustle after the ball was fantastic. Now these girls

know what a great effort will achieve. But, we are only as good as our next game so we will need to be ready to play well again."

C-team

The Norton girls C-team defeated Goodland 13-9 in a two-quarter game.

Norton led 7-3 after one quarter.

Kaitlyn Wolf was leading scorer for Norton with 4 points, followed by Raven Brown, 3; Steph Eagleburger, Austine Dole, Alyssa Thomson, 2 each.

Alexis Bateman tallied 4 for Goodland.

Next action

Norton will play varsity, junior

varsity and C-team games at Smith Center on Tuesday, beginning at 4 p.m.

BOX SCORE Norton Girls 51

Taylor Rossi 1 2 1-2 9; Laura Lee Baird 3 2-3 14; Ashley Colip 1 0 0-0 2; Maggie Nielsen 2 0 0-0 4; Megan Kats 0 1 0-0 3; KaraJo Jones 1 0 1-1 3; Hayli Bozarth 6 0 4-5 16; Total 14 5 8-11 51.

Goodland Girls 40

Kaylee Billinger 2 0 3-4 7; Nicolette Clancy 1 0 0-0 2; Sammie Raymer 2 0-2 4; Emily Murray 4 0 0-2 8; Lindsay Schields 2 0 1-2 5; Whitney Archer 6 0 0-0 12; Total 17 0 6-12 40.

Family tip:
Load up the car and follow your favorite high school team

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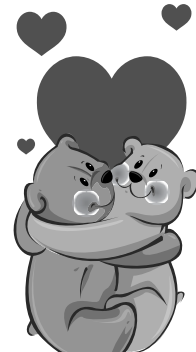
Chris,
Everytime I look at you, my heart skips a beat!
 I Love You! - Love Annie



Melissa,
Your love gives me the feeling that the best is still ahead. I love you so much honey!
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Jennifer,
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 Love, Megan



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