

Fourth ranked Blue Jays smother Hill City

By DICK BOYD

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Coach Kevin Jilka's Norton Community High School girls basketball team, ranked No. 4 in the state in Class 3A, outshot Hill City, ranked No. 10 in Class 2A, on Friday night in the Stull Gymnasium to win a Mid-Continent League game by the score of 74-45.



Junior guard Ashlie Stewart hustled down court with the ball as a Hill City defender tried to keep up during the Lady Jays' Mid-Continent League win in Stull Gym on Friday night.

— Telegram photo by Dick Boyd

The game was closer earlier but Norton had an excellent shooting night and pulled away in the second half. The Lady Jays swished 52 percent from the field compared to 28 percent for the Lady Ringnecks.

Hill City depends a lot on hitting three-point baskets but, on Friday night, the Norton defense kept them off balance and they were off target, hitting only 6 of 31 tries for 19 percent from beyond the arc.

Norton held only a 13-10 lead after one quarter but extended the advantage to 32-18 at halftime by outscoring the visitors 19-8. In the third quarter, the Lady Jays outscored the Lady Ringnecks 15-12 to make it a 47-30 contest, then finished strong with 27 more points in the fourth stanza compared to 15 for Hill City.

With the victory, Norton extended its season record to 12-1 and Hill City fell to 9-6.

"We played pretty well although we didn't shoot the ball very well in the first half," said coach Jilka.

"They like to shoot the three point shot and we did a good job of guarding against it.

"Offensively, we shot well after a slow start but played solid defense all night long. We were doing a lot of things right. It was a big league win for us.

"Our girls are playing hard in games. We just need to keep working hard in practice.

"We're taking the games one at a time. Tonight we have a game at Oberlin. Hopefully, we can keep the momentum going."

Hayli Bozarth got Norton scoring off to a good start by hitting four baskets and a free throw in the first period. Laura Lee Baird buried a three-point basket and hit a free throw for Norton's other first period scores.

Baird added a two-point and three-point basket and two free throws in the second quarter. Lacey Wallingford hit two baskets and two free throws, Bozarth connected on another basket and two charities and Kara Jones hit a two-point basket.

Baird continued to find the range in the third quarter when she swished three more baskets. Amanda Ray hit two baskets, Bozarth connected on another basket and charity and Wallingford hit another basket.

Wallingford led the way in scoring for Norton in the 27-point fourth quarter with three two-point baskets and a three-pointer. Baird also buried another trey and hit five free throws. Bozarth finished with two more baskets and two free throws, Kaitlyn Wolf connected on a field goal and Jones and Hannah Wagoner each hit one charity toss.

Baird was leading scorer for Norton with 25 points. She hit 3 of 8 from long range for 38 percent, 4

of 7 two-point tries for 57 percent and 7 of 15 overall for 47 percent. She also hit 8 of 12 free throws for 67 percent.

Bozarth scored 22 points on 8 of 14 two-point attempts for 57 percent and 6 of 9 charities for 67 percent.

Wallingford was the Lady Jays' third double figure scorer with 17 points. She hit 1 of 4 shots from long range for 25 percent, 6 of 8 two-point tries for 75 percent and 7 of 12 overall for 58 percent. She was perfect on two free throws.

Leading scorer for Hill City was Crystal Kinderknecht with 17 points; she was followed by Lexi Hardiek with 11.

As a team, Norton hit 4 of 15 from beyond the arc for 27 percent, 22 of 35 two-point tries for a net smoking 63 percent and 26 of 50 overall for an excellent 52 percent.

Meanwhile, the Lady Ringnecks managed to connect on just 6 of 31 from beyond the arc for 19 percent, 10 of 27 two-point attempts for 37 percent and 16 of 58 overall for 28 percent.

From the free throw line, Norton swished 18 of 28 for 64 percent and Hill City found the range on 7 of 12 for 58 percent.

Norton outrebounded Hill City 33-30. The Lady Jays pulled down 8 offensive and 25 defensive rebounds compared to 10 offensive and 20 defensive for the visitors.

Bozarth was leading rebounder for Norton with 8, followed by Jones, Wallingford, 7 each; Baird, 4; Katharine Roy, 2; Waggoner, Stewart, Lacy Keilig, Wolf, Ray, 1 each.

Norton had 9 steals and Hill City had 4 thefts. Wallingford led with 4, followed by Bozarth, 2; Baird, Jones, Ray, 1 each.

The Lady Jays were credited with 17 offensive assists compared to 10 for Hill City. Baird led with 5, followed by Stewart, 4; Jones, 3; Wallingford, Ray, 2 each; Bozarth, 1.

Norton had 9 turnovers and Hill City lost the ball 15 times.

Junior varsity

The Norton girls junior varsity lost a 45-41 game to Hill City.

The young Lady Jays trailed by quarters 13-4, 20-15 and 31-23.

They outscored the Lady Ringnecks 18-14 in the fourth quarter to cut Hill City's final margin of victory down to four points.

Kaitlyn Wolf was leading scorer for Norton with 17 points, followed by Lacy Keilig, 10; Sady Keilig, 7; Hannah Waggoner, 4; Kaylen Rossi, 3.

Megan Kennedy led Hill City with 16 points; Kelsey Keith added 10 and Sheranda Brown hit 8.

"We played hard most of the game but it was the part of the game that we didn't play hard that hurt us," said Norton assistant girls coach George Rossi.

"Hill City worked hard the entire game and that was the difference.

"We didn't take care of the ball at times and that also hurt. We were able to come back and take the lead late but were unable to hang on."

Next action

Norton will travel to Oberlin this evening for varsity and junior varsity contests, beginning at 6:30 p.m.

The Blue Jays will return to Norton to host the Phillipsburg Panthers on Thursday in games that were postponed from December due to inclement weather.

The girls C-team game will begin at 4 p.m. and will be played in the NCHS Stull Gymnasium, followed by the junior varsity girls, varsity girls and varsity boys contests.

The junior varsity boys game will be in Wilmeth Kirk Memorial Gym and will begin at 5 p.m.

BOX SCORE

Norton Girls

Lacey Wallingford 6 1 2-2 17; Hannah Waggoner 0 0 1-1 1; Laura Lee Baird 4 3 8-12 25; Kara Jo Jones 1 0 1-2 3; Kaitlyn Wolf 1 0 0-0 2; Hayli Bozarth 8 0 6-9 22; Amanda Ray 2 0 1-0 4; Game Totals 22 4 18-28 74.

Hill City Girls

Lexi Hardiek 0 3 2-2 11; Blair Nickelson 0 1 2-2 5; Sheranda Brown 0 2 0-0 6; Kaitlyn Davis 1 0 0-0 2; Tayler Money 1 0 0-0 2; Kelsey Keith 1 0 0-0 2; Crystal Kinderknecht 7 0 3-8 17; Game Totals 10 6 7-12 45.



The Norton boys pride themselves with good defense. Above, Blue Jay guard J.D. Gall put an "overcoat" on a Hill City player during Friday night's Mid-Continent League action in Stull Gym.

— Telegram photo by Dick Boyd

Blue Jay boys fall to Ringnecks

By DICK BOYD

nortontelegram@nwkansas.com
The Norton Community High School boys basketball team was within striking distance of the visiting Hill City quintet in Mid-Continent League action Friday night in Stull Gymnasium until late in the third quarter but the Ringnecks finished strong to win 55-30.

The Blue Jays trailed 15-6 after one quarter and by just 23-14 at halftime. With 2:20 left in the third quarter, Ashton Draper buried a three-point shot that made it a 32-24 game but Norton's two-point basket by Zac Dreher produced the only Blue Jay points the rest of the period and Hill City stretched their lead to 13 points at 39-26.

Norton continued to find a lid on their basket in the fourth quarter when the Blue Jays hit just one basket, another by Dreher, and two free throws by Landon Hamel and were outscored 16-4.

"I was happy with the way we played," said head coach Doug Reusink. "We played hard and got some good shots but just couldn't score."

"Overall, I was pleased with our effort."

Zac Dreher hit a two-point basket and one free throw and Tye Nickell buried a three-point shot for Norton's first quarter points.

In the second period, Hamel hit two baskets and a free throw, Dreher hit another basket and J.D. Gall connected on a free throw.

Norton's best quarter was the third where they hit 12 points and kept up with the Ringnecks for awhile. Dreher threw in three more baskets.

Draper buried a three-pointer, Nickell hit another two-point basket and Hamel connected on a free throw.

Unfortunately, Dreher was the only one to hit a basket for the Blue Jays in the final stanza and Hamel added two charities for Norton's

4 point total, compared to 16 for Hill City.

Leading scorer for Norton was Dreher with 13 points on 6 of 9 from the field for 67 percent and 1 of 2 from the charity stripe for 50 percent. Hamel scored 8 points which included 4 of 7 free throws for 57 percent.

Leading the scoring for Hill City was Seth Thompson with 12 points; Dalton Breinig added 8.

As a team, Norton hit 2 of 11 shots from long range for 18 percent, 9 of 32 two-point tries for 28 percent and 11 of 43 two-point attempts for 26 percent.

Hill City hit just 2 of 8 from beyond the arc for 25 percent, 19 of 48 two-point tries for 40 percent and 21 of 56 overall for 38 percent.

From the free throw line, the Blue Jays swished 6 of 14 for 43 percent and the Ringnecks connected on 11 of 20 for 55 percent.

Rebounding was about even. Norton pulled down 9 offensive and 15 defensive caroms for 24 total and Hill City grabbed 12 offensive and 14 defensive boards for 26 total.

Zac Dreher was leading rebounder for Norton with 7, followed by Dakota Dreher, Landon Hamel, J.D. Gall, 4 each; Luke Ninemire, Tye Nickell, 2 each; Ashton Draper, 1.

Dreher blocked two shots. The Blue Jays had 4 steals and the Ringnecks recorded 5 thefts. Hamel had 2 steals and Nickell and Zac Dreher each had 1.

Norton recorded 12 offensive assists compared to 17 for Hill City. Hamel led in assists with 4, followed by Gall, 3; Draper, Nickell, 2 each; Zac Dreher, 1.

The Blue Jays had 19 turnovers and the Ringnecks lost the ball

11 times.

Junior varsity

The Norton junior varsity boys team lost to Hill City 47-15.

Norton trailed by quarters: 12-2, 23-4 and 36-9.

Leading the young Blue Jays in scoring was Alec Gilgenbach with 4 points. Dillon McConney added 3, followed by Luke Ninemire, Zach Hartwell, Cole Archer, Tye Nickell, 2 each.

Lewen Ninemire led Hill City with 12 points.

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BOX SCORE

Norton Boys

Ashton Draper 0 1 0-0 3; Tye Nickell 1 1 0-2 5; Landon Hamel 2 0 4-7 8; J.D. Gall 0 0 1-3 1; Zac Dreher 6 0 1-2 13; Game Totals 9 2 6-14 30.

Hill City Boys

Marcus Goetz 0 0 1-2 1; Dylan Vap 1 1 2-2 7; Seth Thompson 5 0 2-4 12; Corey Lewis 1 0 0-0 2; Anthony McDonald 0 1 0-0 3; Lewen Ninemire 10 1-23; Reggie Jordan 20 3-5 7; Blake McKeever 2 0 1-3 5; Dalton Breinig 4 0 0-0 8; Ross Breese 3 0 1-2 7; Game Totals 19 2 11-20 55.

Huskies bow to Thunder Ridge

The Northern Valley varsity basketball boys lost a 56-27 decision to Thunder Ridge at home Friday night.

The Huskies were never quite in this game, trailing at the end of the opening period 15-4 and going into the locker room at the half down 28-9. At the end of three quarters of action, Thunder Ridge held a 39-18 lead.

Only in the third quarter did the Huskies manage to stay with the visitors, scoring 9 points to Thunder Ridge's 11.

Scoring for Northern Valley were: Austin Herman 1; Dusty Eagleburger 6; Cody Callaway 6; Drew Eagleburger 4; and Eric Woodside 10.

The Huskies scored 12 2-point-

ers, none from 3-point range and were 3 of 8 from the free throw line.

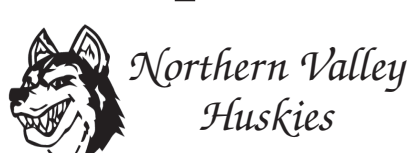
Thunder Ridge had three players in double digits — Yoxall 17, Kirchhoff 15 and Tesselle 10.

The visitors connected on 14

2-pointers, 8 3-pointers and 4 charity tosses.

Thunder Ridge also won the junior varsity game in overtime 32-31. Dusty Eagleburger with 7 and Bryant Tharman with 6 were top scorers for the Huskies.

High School Sports This Week



WRESTLING:

Norton vs. Hill City and Osborne in Hill City 5 p.m. Thursday

BASKETBALL:

Norton Varsity, Junior Varsity vs. Oberlin in Oberlin 6:30 p.m. Today
Norton Varsity, Junior Varsity, Girls C-team vs. Phillipsburg in Norton 4 p.m. Thursday
Norton Varsity, Junior Varsity vs. Hoxie in Hoxie 6:30 p.m. Tuesday
Northern Valley Girls and Boys vs. Ellis in Almena 4 p.m. Friday
Northern Valley Girls and Boys vs. Hill City in Hill City 5 p.m. Tuesday
Logan Girls and Boys vs. Jewell in Jewell 4:30 p.m. Today
Logan Girls and Boys vs. Western Plains in Ransom 4 p.m. Friday
Logan Girls and Boys vs. Trego Community in WaKeeney 4 p.m. Tuesday

SportsLines:
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ANNUAL

McMullen & Wyatt Auctions Farm Consignment Auction

McMullen & Wyatt Auctions is now taking consignments for our Annual Spring Auction. Any farm related items, livestock equipment, tools, machinery, tractors, or trucks accepted for the March 28 auction. To consign or for more information, please contact Donald or Robert

785-877-3299 OFFICE
785-877-2731 ROBERT
785-877-2028 DONALD