

Lady Jays shake off cold first to finish big

By DICK BOYD

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The No.3 seeded Norton Community High School girls basketball team didn't expect much opposition from No.6 seeded Holcomb in the first round of the Class 3A Substate Tournament on Monday evening in the NCHS-Stull Gymnasium in Norton, but got one early surprise before polishing off the Lady Longhorns 55-34.

The Lady Jays ran into a visiting Holcomb quintet that seemed to hit every shot they took in the first quarter while Norton was having a hard time warming up on their end of the court.

As it turned out, the Lady Longhorns didn't hit every shot, just a blazing 75 percent to take a 15-6 lead by the end of the quarter.

Holcomb was unable to continue their hot shooting streak, however, as they connected on only 6 of 26 shots the rest of the way for 23 percent accuracy.

The Lady Jays got their shooting game going and picked up the pressure on the defensive end the final three quarters, outscoring the visitors 16-6 in the second quarter for a 22-21 halftime lead, outpacing Holcomb 17-4 in the third quarter to extend their advantage to 39-25 and finishing with a 16-9 fourth period.

"We battled back in the second quarter to take the lead by halftime," said Norton head girls coach Kevin Jilka.

"In the second half we played better defense, forced some turnovers and got some easy baskets. We executed much better offensively in the second half and got the ball inside more to Hayli Bozarth.

"We played without Laura Lee Baird but our other players stepped up."

In other games Monday evening, No.1 seed Thomas More Prep Marian of Hays defeated



Lady Jay senior forward Katharine Roy drove inside for a basket during Norton's first round win over Holcomb in the Class 3A Substate Tournament in the NCHS-Stull Gymnasium here on Monday. An all-around player, Roy was second leading rebounder and tied for second in steals for the Norton quintet.

- Telegram photo by Dick Boyd

No.8 seed Lakin 62-24, No.5 seed Phillipsburg outscored No.4 seed Cimarron 64-54 and No.2 seeded Southwestern Heights beat No.7 Goodland 56-23.

Thomas More Prep Marian played Phillipsburg at 6 p.m. and Norton played Southwestern Heights at 7:30 p.m. on Thursday in Holcomb in the semifinals. Results were not available at press time.

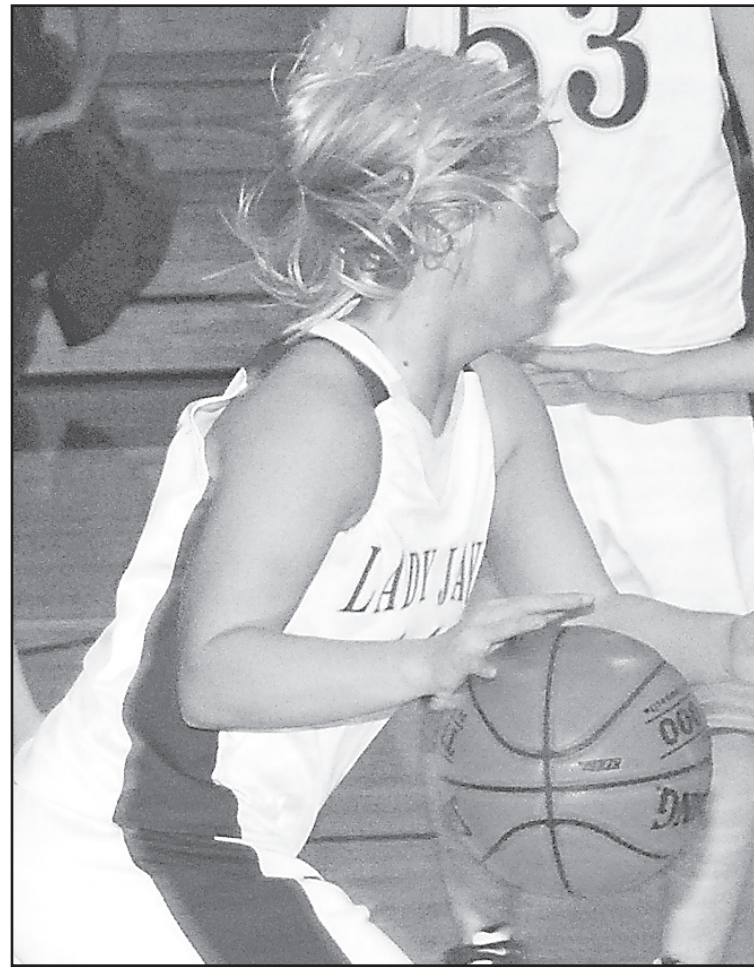
The winners will play at 6 p.m. on Saturday for the tournament championship and a berth in the

State Tournament next week in Hutchinson.

In Monday's win over Holcomb, Norton's first quarter points came on two baskets by Lacey Wallingford and one from Hayli Bozarth.

In the second quarter, Bozarth hit one basket and six free throws, Wallingford hit another basket, Katharine Roy buried a three-pointer, Amanda Ray connected on one basket and KaraJo Jones swished a charity toss.

In the third period, Bozarth con-



Norton junior guard Ashlie Stewart dribbled the ball down court to set up the Lady Jay offense during their win over Holcomb in the first round of the Class 3A Substate Tournament in the NCHS-Stull Gymnasium in Norton on Monday evening.

- Telegram photo by Dick Boyd

ected on three more shots and a free throw, Wallingford hit three more baskets and Roy and Ray each hit another shot.

Bozarth swished two more baskets and three charity tosses, Ashlie Stewart hit two baskets, Wallingford hit another basket and a free toss and Shelby Jones hit two free throws in the fourth quarter for the Lady Jays.

Leading scorer for Norton was Bozarth with 24 points on 7 of 11 shots for 64 percent accuracy and 10 of 12 free throws for 83 percent.

Wallingford tallied 15 points on 7 of 11 two-point shots for 64 percent and 1 of 1 free throws. She missed her only two trey tries and finished with 54 percent accuracy.

Leading scorer for Holcomb was Breanna Gottschalk with 13 points.

As a team, Norton hit 1 of 8 from beyond the arc for 13 percent, 19 of 38 two-point attempts for 50 percent and 20 of 46 overall for 43 percent.

Holcomb connected on 2 of 9 from long range for 22 percent,

10 of 25 two-point tries for 40 percent and 12 of 34 overall for 35 percent.

From the free throw line, the Lady Jays connected on 14 of 19 for 74 percent and the Lady Longhorns hit 8 of 12 for 75 percent.

Norton had 7 offensive and 12 defensive rebounds for 19 total and Holcomb had 3 offensive and 17 defensive caroms for 20 total.

Wallingford was the leading rebounder with 5, followed by Roy, 4; Bozarth, Ray, 3 each; Stewart, 2; Jones, Kaitlyn Wolf, 1 each.

The Lady Jays had 13 steals and the Lady Longhorns stole the ball 9 times.

Bozarth was steals leader with 4, followed by Wallingford, Roy, 3 each; Ray, 2; Jones, 1.

Norton had 12 offensive assists compared to 6 for Holcomb. Stewart and Jones had 4 each, followed by Wallingford, 3; Roy, 1.

The Lady Jays had 17 turnovers but the aggressive Norton defense caused Holcomb to turn the ball over 27 times.

The victory extended the Norton girls' record to 17-4.

The Lady Jays were also the champion this season of the Mid-Continent League and the league tournament.

BOX SCORE

Norton Girls

Lacey Wallingford 7 0 1-1 15; Katharine Roy 1 1 0-0 5; Hannah Waggoner 0 0 0-1 0; Ashlie Stewart 2 0 0-1 4; Shelby Jones 0 0 2-2 2; KaraJo Jones 0 0 1-2 1; Hayli Bozarth 7 0 10-12 24; Amanda Ray 2 0 0-0 4; Game Totals 19 1 14-19 55.

Holcomb Girls

Ashley Baier 1 0 0-0 2; Danielle Asmus 1 0 0-0 2; Breanna Gottschalk 3 1 4-4 13; Tiffney Wolf 0 1 0-0 3; Mallory Komlofske 0 0 3-4 3; Amy Stegman 3 0 1-2 7; Shelby Bennett 1 0 0-0 2; Zoe Shelden 1 0 0-2 2; Game Totals 10 2 8-12 34.

Blue Jay boys see season end on Holcomb's court

By DICK BOYD

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The No.8 seeded Norton Community High School boys basketball team played No.1 seeded Holcomb in the first round of the Class 3A Substate Tournament on Holcomb's home court on Tuesday evening and the Blue Jays' season ended with an 87-35 loss to the No.4 state ranked Longhorns.

The Holcomb quintet put on an offensive display for their home crowd that would have been hard for Norton to match under normal circumstances but the Blue Jays' cold shooting made things worse for the visitors.

Holcomb led 29-8 after one quarter, 53-11 at intermission and 74-20 after three quarters. Norton outscored Holcomb 15-13 in the final quarter when they were playing their reserves.

Four Norton players scored in the first quarter as Dakota Dreher, Jordan Wahlmeier, Luke Ninemire and J.D. Gall each hit a basket.

Zac Dreher hit the Blue Jays' only second quarter basket and Landon Hamel hit a free throw.

Hamel scored all nine of Norton's third quarter points on three two-point baskets and one from beyond the arc.

Five different Norton players tallied in the fourth stanza. Hamel hit two more baskets, Dillon McConney buried a three-point shot, Ninemire hit another basket, Alec Gilgenbach connected for a basket and Dakota Dreher was perfect on four charity tosses.

"Obviously, this is not how we wanted to finish the season," said Norton head boys basketball coach Doug Reusink.

"Holcomb was a very good team. They placed third in the state last year and returned experienced players but we made things worse by not believing in ourselves and our system.

"We know the positive in this season is that we only lose one senior in Zac Dreher, who has given us great effort the last four years,

but we will need some boys to step up and be leaders for us next year to turn things around.

"Our players coming back will need to believe in themselves."

Holcomb extended their record to 18-2 and advanced to Friday's semifinals and Norton's season ended with a 3-18 record.

In other first round games on Tuesday, No.4 seed Thomas More Prep Marian of Hays defeated No.5 seed Lakin 66-47, No.2 seeded Southwestern Heights outscored No.7 Cimarron 58-34 and No.3 seed Phillipsburg beat No.6 Goodland 76-53.

In Friday's semifinals, Southwestern Heights and Phillipsburg will play at 6 p.m. and Holcomb and Thomas More Prep Marian will meet at 7:30 p.m.

The winners will play at 7:30 p.m. on Saturday for the championship and a berth in the State Tournament next week in Hutchin-

son.

Hamel was leading scorer for Norton with 14 points on 1 of 5 from beyond the arc for 20 percent, 5 of 22 from two-point land for 23 percent and 6 of 27 overall for 22 percent.

Matt Heydman, 6'4" senior, led Holcomb with 16 points, followed by Jordan Wilcox, 6' senior, 15; Zevin Roth, 6'5" senior, 14; C.J. Brau, 6' senior, 12.

As a team, Norton hit just 2 of 10 from long range for 20 percent, 12 of 54 two-point attempts for 22 percent and 14 of 64 overall for 22 percent.

Holcomb swished 4 of 15 from long range for 27 percent, 32 of 69 two-point tries for 46 percent and 36 of 84 overall for 43 percent.

From the free throw line, Norton was 5 of 12 for 42 percent and Holcomb was 11 of 18 for 61 percent.

The Blue Jays pulled down 12

offensive rebounds and 23 defensive for a respectable 35 total but the Longhorns grabbed 18 offensive and 30 defensive caroms for 48 total.

In his last high school basketball game, Norton senior Zac Dreher led the Blue Jays in rebounding with 10, followed by Landon Hamel, 7; Luke Ninemire, 6; Dakota Dreher, Jordan Wahlmeier, 3 each; Marcus Herman, 2; Dillon McConney, Cole Archer, J.D. Gall, Alec Gilgenbach, 1 each.

Norton had 11 assists and Holcomb recorded 18. Wahlmeier, Ninemire and Tye Nickell each had 2 assists, followed by Dakota Dreher, McConney, Hamel, Gall, Herman, 1 each.

Hamel had 2 of Norton's 3 steals; Zac Dreher had the other theft. Holcomb stole the ball 15

times.

Norton had 31 turnovers and Holcomb turned the ball over 14 times.

BOX SCORE

Norton Boys

Dakota Dreher 1 0 4-4 6; Jordan Wahlmeier 1 0 0-3 2; Dillon McConney 0 1 0-0 3; Luke Ninemire 2 0 0-2 4; Landon Hamel 5 1 1-2 14; J.D. Gall 1 0 0-0 2; Alec Gilgenbach 1 0 0-0 2; Zac Dreher 1 0 0-1 2; Game Totals 12 2 5-12 35.

Holcomb Boys

C.J. Brau 5 0 2-3 12; Eric Mangels 1 0 0-0 2; Matt Stegman 0 1 0-0 3; Mitchell Gaede 3 0 2-2 8; Jordan Wilcox 3 2 3-3 15; Brett Robinson 1 0 0-0 2; Logan Singhisen 3 0 0-0 6; Matt Heydman 6 0 2-4 14; Jacob VanCampen 4 0 1-2 9; Game Totals 32 4 11-18 87.



Norton's 5'7" freshman guard Tye Nickell thought he had a certain layup for two points against Holcomb in the Class 3A Substate Tournament first round in Holcomb on Tuesday but the Longhorns' Mitchell Gaede used his extra height to block the shot at the last second.

- Telegram photo by Dick Boyd



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