

# Lady Jays get off to a good start, lose 42-31

By DICK BOYD

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Coach Kevin Jilka's Norton Community High School girls varsity basketball team got off to a good start against No. 10 state ranked Smith Center in Mid-Continent League play on Tuesday in the NCHS Stull Gymnasium in Norton but couldn't hold on and lost 42-31.

The Lady Jays held a 15-10 lead after one quarter with three baskets by senior post Kaitlyn Wolf, two field goals by senior point guard Ashlie Stewart, a basket each by senior guard Kendra Engelbert and sophomore post Erin Terrell and free throw by junior forward Dustyna Sprigg.

The second quarter didn't go so well for Norton, however, and Smith Center tied the score at 15-all with 2:05 left in the half.

The Lady Jays scored on only one free throw by Stewart the rest of the half and the Lady Red took a 19-16 advantage into the dressing room at intermission.

Smith Center got some early baskets off their full court press to start the third quarter and jumped out to a 23-16 lead at the 6:35 mark.

Stewart broke the press and drove for two points but three more Lady Red baskets extended their lead to 29-18 with 4:34 left. Norton cut the lead down to 32-25 at the end of the period on three free throws by Stewart, a field goal by Terrell and two charities

by Ray.

Terrell narrowed the Smith Center lead to five points on two free throws to start the final stanza but the Lady Red added four more points on two quick steals off their press.

Stewart scored two points to make it 36-29 with 4:15 left. After two Smith Center free throws, Sprigg added a basket for Norton. Another Lady Red basket and two charities extended their final margin of victory to 11 points.

"We had silly turnovers; a lot of them were unforced," said coach Jilka. "We just didn't take care of the ball."

"We didn't shoot well either but our biggest problem was turnovers."

"They also outrebounded us and that disappointed me."

"We had their lead down to five points in the fourth quarter then had two silly turnovers. We still had a chance to cut the lead but couldn't get a shot to go down."

"Defensively, we played pretty good although we didn't always block out on rebounds."

"It won't get any easier on Friday at Hill City. We'll have to play better to have a chance to beat them."

Lady Jay junior guard Kaylen Rossi was lost for the season when she injured a knee during practice several days prior to the game and coach Jilka said her absence caused some regrouping problems for his squad.

Norton was outrebounded 22-13 by Smith Center and had 20 turnovers against the Lady Red.

The Norton girls are now 7-7 for the season and the No. 10 state ranked Smith Center girls are 11-2.

Leading scorer for Norton was Ashlie Stewart with 12 points on 4 of 13 two-point shots for 31 percent and 4 of 14 free throws for 29 percent.

She missed her only shot from beyond the arc.

Sara Timmons led Smith Center with 12 points.

As a team, Norton missed all three trey tries, hit 11 of 31 two-point attempts for 35 percent and was 11 of 34 overall for 32 percent. Smith Center also missed all three tries from beyond the arc, hit 16 of 40 two-point tries for 40 percent and was 16 of 43 overall for 38 percent accuracy.

From the free throw line, the Lady Jays threw in 9 of 17 for 53 percent and the Lady Red connected on 10 of 15 for 67 percent.

Norton had 6 offensive and 7 defensive rebounds for 13 total. Smith Center pulled down 9 offensive and 13 defensive caroms for 22 total.

Wolf was leading rebounder for Norton with 3, followed by Engelbert, Sprigg, Meaghan Peterson, Amanda Ray, 2 each; Stewart, Terrell, 1 each.

The Lady Jays had 11 steals and the Lady Red had 12 thefts.



Norton senior Amanda Ray battled Smith Center's McKenzie Benoit for a loose ball during the Lady Jays' game with the Lady Red here on Tuesday evening. Also pictured for Norton are senior point guard Ashlie Stewart, left, and senior post Kaitlyn Wolf, right.

— Telegram photo by Dick Boyd

Sprigg led Norton with 5 steals, followed by Wolf, 3; Terrell, 2; Stewart, 1.

Norton had 5 offensive assists and Smith Center had 9. Wolf led Norton with 2 assists, followed by Engelbert, Sprigg, Ray, 1 each.

The Lady Jays had 20 turnovers compared to only 5 by the Lady Red.

### Junior varsity

The Norton girls junior varsity lost to Smith Center 56-11.

The Lady Red held quarter leads of 18-4, 35-11 and 45-11.

Leading scorers for Norton were Caren Thomson and Teslee Nick-

ell, each with 4 points. Meaghan Peterson scored 3 points.

Briana Dietz led the Lady Red with 15 points.

"We just did not play well tonight," said Norton assistant girls basketball coach George Rossi.

"It is time for this group to come out of their shell."

### Next action

Norton girls and boys basketball teams will travel to Hill City today for more Mid-Continent League action, beginning at 4 p.m.

### BOX SCORE Norton Girls 31

Kendra Engelbert 1 0 0-0 2; Ashlie Stewart 4 0 4-8 12; Erin Terrell 2 0 2-3 6; Dustyna Sprigg 1 0 1-2 3; Kaitlyn Wolf 3 0 0-2 6; Amanda Ray 0 0 2-2 2; Game Totals 11 0 9-17 31

### Smith Center Girls 42

Torie Fuller 0 0 1-2 1; Tangie Hileman 2 0 3-7 7; Whitney St. Clair 1 0 0-0 2; Baylee Ratliff 2 0 0-0 4; Taylor Arnold 2 0 0-0 4; Sara Timmons 5 0 2-2 12; McKenzie Benoit 2 0 1-1 5; Andrea Stewart 0 0 1-2 1; Jamie Strine 1 0 2-2 4; Sydney Benoit 1 0 0-0 2; Game Totals 16 0 10-15 42

# Jays score last second basket to win against Redmen



Norton junior guard Terrell Lane did not have one of his better shooting nights against Smith Center on Tuesday but he is shown hitting nothing but net for the basket in the final seconds that brought the 41-39 Blue Jay victory!

By DICK BOYD

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A buzzer-beating basket by junior guard Terrell Lane was the difference in the Norton Community High School boys basketball game with Smith Center in the NCHS Stull Gymnasium on Tuesday evening.

The Redmen's Dillon Corbett tied the score at 39-all with two free throws with 34 seconds left in the contest.

Norton brought the ball down-court and did a good job of working the ball around for one final shot. The ball was in Lane's hands

with seven seconds remaining and he waited until the final moment to put up the shot, which hit nothing but net for a 41-39 Blue Jay victory!

It was a hard fought game in which the two quintets traded leads throughout until the winner was decided on Lane's final shot.

The first quarter ended in a 9-all tie. Lane hit two baskets in the period, one of them a jumper at the buzzer. Senior guard J.D. Gall swished a three-point shot to start the game. Senior guard Marcus Herman hit a driving layup for the Blue Jays' other two points.

Norton found a lid on the basket in the second quarter, hitting only on another driving layup by Herman and a two-point shot by sophomore forward Jordan Wahlmeier.

Meanwhile, Smith Center scored 10 more points as Corbett repeated his performance from the first quarter with three baskets and a free throw. The 10-4 quarter put the Redmen ahead 19-13 at halftime.

The third quarter belonged to Norton, however, as they out-scored Smith Center 10-4 to tie the score at 23-all with 4:25 left in the period. Scoring 20 points in

the quarter, Norton took a 33-26 lead. Gall left the nets smoking with another basket from beyond the arc, two two-point field goals and a free throw. Lane added a trey and two-point basket, Wahlmeier found the range on two more field goals and senior forward Ashton Draper hit a two-pointer. Smith Center had just two field goals in the period.

The determined Redmen closed the gap in the fourth stanza. Norton led 38-34 when Alex Hobelmann hit a three-point basket for Smith Center with 1:07 showing on the scoreboard clock to make it a 38-37 game.

Wahlmeier hit one of two free throw attempts with 53 seconds left. Then, Corbett hit two charities to tie it at 39-all.

Norton's 8 fourth quarter points came on Wahlmeier's basket and two free throws, a basket by sophomore guard Tye Nickell and Lane's final basket.

"We had trouble hitting the basket and weren't patient enough on shot selection in the first half," said Norton head boys basketball coach Doug Reusink. "We weren't rebounding very well, either, in the first half."

"We did a much better job in the third quarter and got a good lead but didn't make good choices on shots in the fourth quarter."

Norton had three players in double figures in the scoring column. Gall led with 12 points on 2 of 4 from long range for 50 percent, 2 of 5 two-point shots for 40 percent and 4 of 9 overall for 44 percent. He hit 2 of 3 free throws for 67 percent.

Lane finished with 11 points on 1 of 7 from beyond the arc for 14 percent, 4 of 11 two-point tries for 36 percent and 5 of 18 overall for

28 percent.

Wahlmeier scored 10 points on 4 of 8 two-point shots for 50 percent and 2 of 8 free throws for 25 percent.

Leading scorer for Smith Center was Corbett with 22 points.

As a team, Norton hit 3 of 13 shots from long range for 23 percent, 14 of 38 two-point attempts for 37 percent and 17 of 51 overall for 33 percent.

Smith Center swished 3 of 8 from beyond the arc for 38 percent, 11 of 35 two-point shots for 31 percent and 14 of 43 overall for the same 33 percent as Norton.

From the free throw line, Norton connected on 4 of 15 for 27 percent and Smith Center swished 8 of 17 for 47 percent.

Norton had 10 offensive and 20 defensive rebounds for 30 total. Smith Center grabbed 9 offensive and 25 defensive caroms for 34 total.

Terrell Lane was leading rebounder for Norton with 10 boards, followed by Jordan Wahlmeier, 7; Ashton Draper, 5; Marcus Herman, 4; Dillon McConney, 3; Tye Nickell, 1.

The Blue Jays had 6 steals compared to 4 by the Redmen. Lane had 2 thefts, followed by Wahlmeier, Draper, Gall, Herman, 1 each.

Norton had 10 offensive assists and Smith Center had 9. Leading in assists were Wahlmeier, Draper, Lane, Herman, 2 each; McConney, Gall, 1 each.

Wahlmeier blocked 3 Redman shots.

The Blue Jays had 10 turnovers and the Redmen gave up the ball 15 times.

Norton is now 9-5 for the season and Smith Center is 6-7.

### Junior varsity

The Norton junior varsity boys also had a close game with Smith Center before winning 44-41.

Smith Center led 12-11 after one quarter, the score was tied 21-all at halftime and Norton led 31-29 after three quarters.

Leading scorer for Norton was Dillon McConney with 14 points, followed by Tye Nickell, 9; Jacob Brooks, 8; Zach Hartwell, Cole Archer, Dalton Miller, 3 each; Luke Ninemire, John Renner, 2 each.

Payton Buckmaster led Smith Center with 15 points.

### Next action

Norton boys and girls basketball teams will travel to Hill City today for more Mid-Continent League action, beginning at 4 p.m.

### BOX SCORE Norton Boys 41

Jordan Wahlmeier 4 0 2-8 10; Ashton Draper 1 0 0-2 2; Tye Nickell 1 0 0-0 2; Terrell Lane 4 1 0-2 11; J.D. Gall 2 2 2-3 12; Austin Herman 2 0 0-0 4; Game Totals 14 3 4-15 41

### Smith Center Boys 39

Alex Hobelmann 0 1 0-0 3; Trey Molzahn 0 2 0-2 6; Jace Winder 1 0 1-2 3; Kale Terrill 1 0 0-0 2; Dillon Corbett 8 0 6-10 22; Spencer VanderGiesen 1 0 1-3 3; Game Totals 11 3 8-17 39

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