

# Norton and the Hill City boys reverse scores



Norton junior guard Dillon McConney drives into the paint to get loose for a shot during the Blue Jays' narrow loss to Hill City in Norton on Friday night. McConney led Norton in scoring with 14 points and rebounding with 7 caroms. He hit 86 percent of his shots! - Telegram photo by Dick Boyd

By **DICK BOYD**

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The Norton Community High School boys basketball team defeated Hill City 48-42 in the recent Mid-Continent League Tournament and the score was about the same when the two met again on Friday night in Norton but, unfortunately for the Blue Jays, it was reversed.

The Ringnecks came into the NCHS Stull Gym and led most of the way after the early minutes to record a 47-41 league win.

The winner was still in doubt however when, with 2:02 left in the game, senior guard Terrell Lane hit his third basket of the contest to cut the Ringneck lead to 41-37. Then, with 1:50 left, Lane went to the free throw line and calmly hit two charities to reduce the visitors' advantage to 41-39.

Two more Hill City baskets, however, made it 45-39 and Norton's final two points by junior forward Jordan Wahlmeier were not enough to bring a Blue Jay victory.

"We did not play very well defensively and had no ball penetration on offense in the first half," said Norton head boys coach Doug Reusink.

"We played better in the second half. We made them take tough

shots but didn't finish very well on rebounds.

"Offensively, we had our opportunities but just didn't make plays at the end."

Norton trailed 9-7 after the first quarter. The Blue Jays points came on baskets by Lane, Wahlmeier and junior guard Dillon McConney and a free throw by junior guard Tye Nickell.

Sophomore forward Jacob Brooks and McConney each hit two baskets in the second quarter along with one two-pointer by Nickell but Hill City outscored them 12-10 to take a 21-17 lead at halftime.

A 14-13 third quarter in Hill City's favor made it 35-30 with one quarter remaining. Norton's third quarter points came on a trey and two-point basket by McConney, three more baskets by Brooks and Lane's second basket of the game.

Hill City had a 12-11 point advantage in the final period. McConney hit a trey, Wahlmeier hit his second and third baskets of the game and Lane hit his third basket and two charities.

It was not a good shooting night for most of the Blue Jays but McConney was the exception. He hit 2 of 3 from beyond the arc for 67 percent, a perfect 4 of 4 two-point attempts for 100 percent and 6

of 7 overall for a net smoking 86 percent and 14 points!

Leading scorer for the Ringnecks was Reggie Jordan with 21 points; Eric VanLoenen added 12.

As a team, the Blue Jays hit 2 of 9 from long range for 22 percent, 16 of 34 two-point tries for 47 percent and 18 of 43 overall for 42 percent.

The Ringnecks missed all four tries from beyond the arc but hit 20 of 39 two-point tries for 51 percent and were 20 of 43 overall for 47 percent.

Norton hit 3 of 8 charities for 38 percent and Hill City connected on 7 of 11 for 64 percent.

The Blue Jays had 6 offensive and 13 defensive rebounds for 19 total. The Ringnecks grabbed 12 offensive and 30 defensive caroms for 42 total.

McConney led Norton in rebounds with 7, followed by Wahlmeier, 5; Brooks, 3; Lane, 2; Nickell, Luke Ninemire, 1 each.

A defensive highlight for Norton was the fact they blocked 8 Hill City shots. Brooks had 5 rejections and Wahlmeier had 3.

Both teams had 7 steals. Nickell and Lane had 2 each, followed by Wahlmeier, McConney, Brooks, 1 each.

The Blue Jays had 7 offensive assists and the Ringnecks had

8. Nickell and Lane each had 2 assists, followed by Wahlmeier, McConney, Brooks, 1 each.

Both teams also had 16 turnovers.

## Junior varsity

The Norton junior varsity boys lost to Hill City 53-23.

Norton trailed by quarters: 15-3, 28-9 and 43-16.

Carson McKenna led Norton in scoring with 9 points, followed by Lane Bigge, 5; Zach Hartwell, 3; Trey Millan, 3; Trever Lewis, 2; Andrew Ellis, 1.

Solomon Wilson led Hill City with 12. Ricardo Parigi and Jerry Isakson each added 10.

## Next action

Norton will travel to Oberlin for contests this evening, beginning at 5 p.m.

## GAME STATISTICS

### Norton Boys

Jordan Wahlmeier 3 0 0-2 6; Dillon McConney 4 2 0-0 14; Tye Nickell 1 0 1-2 3; Terrell Lane 3 0 2-2 8; Jacob Brooks 5 0 0-2 10; Game Totals 16 2 3-8 41.

### Hill City Boys

Adam Pfeifer 3 0 0-0 6; Reggie Jordan 9 0 3-7 21; Eric VanLoenen 5 0 2-2 12; Dylan Anderson 2 0 0-0 4; Marcus Goetz 1 0 2-2 4; Game Totals 20 0 7-11

# Smith Center avoids second loss to Lady Jays

By **DICK BOYD**

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The No. 8 state ranked Smith Center girls basketball team's only loss this season so far was to Norton in the Mid-Continent League Tournament but the Lady Red avenged the earlier loss on Thursday night on their home court when they outscored the visiting Lady Jays 60-44 in a weather-delayed contest.

Coach Kevin Jilka's Norton girls, who played so well in beating Smith Center 39-32 in the semi-finals of the league tournament, were never really in this contest.

"We just got outplayed tonight," said coach Jilka. "Smith Center was the better team."

"They were much more physical than us and just took it right at us."

"Offensively, we didn't handle their press well at all. We had too many turnovers that led to easy

baskets for them. Our half court offense was very good but, unfortunately, we weren't in it much."

"Defensively, we allowed too many easy baskets inside by poor rebounding and giving up position."

"I'm anxious to see how we respond in the future."

Norton was outscored by just 14-12 in the first quarter. Sophomore point guard Tawni Griffey hit two two-point baskets and one from long range, senior guard Kaylen Rossi buried a three-pointer and senior guard Dustyna Sprigg hit a two-point basket.

Junior post Erin Terrell swished three baskets, Griffey hit two more and Sprigg connected on a free throw in Norton's 11 point second period. Smith Center scored 16 in the stanza, however, to extend their lead to 30-23 at halftime.

Norton was stuck on 11 points in the third quarter as Terrell hit

two two-point baskets and a charity, junior post Caren Thomson hit her first basket and added two charities, and Sprigg hit a two-pointer. The Lady Redmen scored 18 points in the period to extend their lead even farther to 48-34.

The Lady Redmen tallied just 12 points in the fourth quarter but the Lady Jays were only able to hit 10 points on two baskets by Thomson and a basket and free throw each by Terrell and Griffey.

Leading scorers for Norton were Tawni Griffey and Erin Terrell, each with 14 points.

Griffey hit 1 of 5 shots from beyond the arc for 20 percent, 5 of 10 two-point attempts for 50 percent and 6 of 15 overall for 40 percent. She hit 1 of 2 charities for 50 percent.

Terrell connected on 6 of 8 two-point shots for 75 percent accuracy and was 2 of 4 at the free throw line for 50 percent.

Leading scorer for Smith Center was McKenzie Benoit with 16 points but Sydney Benoit added 14 and Whitney St. Clair hit 10 points.

As a team, Norton hit 2 of 9 from beyond the arc for 22 percent, 16 of 27 two-point tries for 59 percent and 18 of 36 overall for 50 percent.

Smith Center connected on 1 of 4 from long range for 25 percent, 25 of 49 two-point attempts for 51 percent and 26 of 53 overall for 47 percent.

At the free throw line, Norton swished 6 of 10 for 60 percent and Smith Center hit 7 of 10 for 70 percent.

Norton had 8 defensive and 9 offensive rebounds for 17 total. Smith Center pulled down 11 offensive and 7 defensive caroms for 18 total.

Dustyna Sprigg and Caren Thomson led the Lady Jays in rebounds with 5 each. Griffey and

Terrell each pulled down 3 caroms and Kaylen Rossi grabbed 1.

The Lady Jays had 9 steals compared to 18 thefts by the Lady Redmen. Steals leader for Norton was Terrell with 4, followed by Kamilla Jones, 2; Griffey, Rossi, Thomson, 1 each.

Norton had just 7 offensive assists and Smith Center had 9. Thomson led with 3, followed by Griffey, 2; Katelyn Engelbert, Rossi, 1 each.

The Lady Jays had 27 turnovers and the Lady Redmen had 18.

## Junior varsity

The Norton girls junior varsity team was defeated 61-26.

The Lady Jays trailed by quarters: 20-10, 38-14 and 54-24.

Antjelica Pfannenstiel, Alec Melvin and Kamilla Jones each scored 6 points for Norton, followed by Johnnye Ruder, 5; Katelyn Engelbert, 2; Marisa Maddy, 1.

Leading scorer for Smith Cen-

ter was Treena Cox with 13; Briana Dietz added 12.

"We played like timid puppies," said Norton assistant girls coach George Rossi. "We must learn to be more aggressive on both ends of the floor. We see a different team often in practice."

"As coaches, we are charged to get these girls playing Blue Jay basketball and that is our intent."

## GAME STATISTICS

### Norton Girls

Tawni Griffey 5 1 1-2 14; Kaylen Rossi 10 0-0 3; Erin Terrell 6 0 2-4 14; Dustyna Sprigg 2 0 1-2 5; Caren Thomson 3 0 2-2 8; Game Totals 16 2 6-10 44.

### Smith Center Girls

Treena Cox 0 0 2-2 2; Sydney Benoit 7 0 0-0 14; Hallie McCall 1 0 0-2 2; Whitney St. Clair 4 0 2-2 10; Sara Timmons 3 0 1-2 7; McKenzie Benoit 7 0 2-2 16; Tangie Hileman 3 1 0-0 9; Game Totals 25 1 7-10 60.

# Norton girls nearly beat Hill City

By **DICK BOYD**

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Coach Kevin Jilka's Norton Community High School girls basketball team rebounded from a disappointing loss to state-ranked Smith Center in a weather-delayed game Thursday to take No. 2 state ranked Hill City down to the wire before losing an exciting 47-42 game on Friday night in the NCHS Stull Gym in Norton.

The Lady Jays hit one more field goal than the Lady Ringnecks but the visitors hit four more free throws to make the difference.

"This was a great high school basketball game," said coach Jilka. "Our girls played well."

"We had lots of opportunities but couldn't make the big basket or hit free throws. We had our chances."

"I'm proud of our girls coming off the Smith Center game the night before. We didn't play well there and I didn't know how we would react but we played great!"

"A basket here and a basket there could have made the difference but we didn't get that done. We'll need to get our confidence back for Tuesday's game at Oberlin."

A very close first quarter ended with Hill City leading 11-10. Sophomore point guard Tawni Griffey hit a three-point and two-point basket, junior post Erin Terrell hit two two-point baskets and senior guard Dustyna Sprigg hit a free throw in the period.

The second quarter was also a low-scoring one with Norton edging Hill City 9-8 to tie the score at 19-all. Terrell hit two more baskets and a charity and

Griffey connected on two more baskets, as well.

The visitors gained an advantage in the third quarter by outscoring Norton 20-10 to take a 39-29 lead into the final stanza. Norton's points came on three more baskets by Terrell and one each from Griffey and junior post Caren Thomson.

Hill City, who is known for their expertise on three-point goals, displayed that ability in the third period when they buried four three-pointers, two each by Lexi Hardiek and Shelby Keith.

The Lady Jays did not give up but doubled their efforts to overtake the talented Hill City squad. Terrell scored inside to start the final stanza. After a Hill City basket, Griffey buried a three-pointer. Thomson hit a free throw and it was 41-35.

After another Lady Ringneck basket, senior guard Kaylen Rossi stole the ball and drove for two more points. Terrell scored again and it was 43-39 with 2:07 remaining.

Hill City turned the ball over to the aggressive Lady Jay defense and, with 1:58 left, Rossi buried a three-point shot that made it 43-42 and brought a deafening roar from the Norton crowd!

Hill City hit 1 of 2 free throws but got the rebound. With a minute remaining, another Lady Ringneck free throw was missed. Two free throws by Keith with 34.5 seconds left found the mark, however, and she hit one more with 11.8 seconds remaining to extend the final margin of victory to 5 points.

Terrell led Norton in scoring with 19 points on 9 of 16 shots for an excellent 56 percent accuracy

from the field. She hit 1 of 8 free throws for 13 percent.

Griffey tallied 14 points on 2 of 4 from beyond the arc for 50 percent, 4 of 13 two-point tries for 31 percent and 6 of 17 overall for 35 percent.

Leading scorer for the Lady Ringnecks was Keith with 21 points; Hardiek added 13.

As a team, Norton hit 3 of 9 from long range for 33 percent, 15 of 39 two-point attempts for 38 percent and 18 of 48 overall for 38 percent.

Hill City swished 6 of 15 treys for 40 percent, 11 of 21 two-point tries for 52 percent and 17 of 36 overall for 47 percent.

From the free throw line, Norton hit just 3 of 14 for 21 percent and Hill City connected on 7 of 11 for 64 percent.

Rebounds were about even. Norton pulled down 8 offensive, 7 defensive rebounds for 15 total. Hill City grabbed 5 offensive and 12 defensive caroms for 17 total.

Terrell led the Lady Jays in rebounds with 7, followed by Sprigg, 4; Thomson, 2; Griffey, Rossi, 1 each.

The Lady Jays had 11 offensive assists and the Lady Ringnecks had just 8.

Assists leader was Griffey with 5, followed by Terrell, Sprigg, 2 each; Rossi, Thomson, 1 each.

Norton had 6 steals and Hill City had 13. Terrell was steals leader with 3, followed by Rossi, Sprigg, Kamilla Jones, 1 each.

Norton had 16 turnovers but Hill City lost the ball 21 times to the intense Lady Jay defense

## Junior varsity

The Lady Jay junior varsity defeated the Lady Ringnecks

46-28.

After trailing 9-3 at the end of the first quarter, Norton outscored Hill City 13-9 in the second period and trailed by only 18-16 at intermission.

The Lady Jays also outscored the Lady Ringnecks 14-5 in the third period to take a 30-23 lead into the final stanza where a 16-5 advantage extended Norton's final margin of victory to 18 points.

Alec Melvin led Norton in scoring with 12 points, followed by Bailey Ambrosier, 11; Antjelica Pfannenstiel, 9; Katelyn Engelbert, 5; Johnnye Ruder, 5; Abby Bainter, 2; Darcy Bainter, 2.

Shelby Stewart led Hill City with 9 points.

"This was by far our best game of the season," said Norton assistant girls coach George Rossi.

"Our girls were focused on basketball. After the beating we took against Smith Center, it was great to see our girls come out with determination."

"The big question is: what do we do now? We have a long way to go but this was a huge step forward!"

Norton will travel to Oberlin this evening.

## GAME STATISTICS

### Norton Girls

Tawni Griffey 4 2 0-0 14; Kaylen Rossi 1 1 0-0 5; Erin Terrell 9 0 1-8 19; Dustyna Sprigg 0 0 1-4 1; Game Totals 15 3 3-14 42.

### Hill City Girls

Darrien Collins 1 0 0-0 2; Kelsey Keith 3 3 6-8 21; Sheranda Brown 1 0 0-0 2; Blair Nicholson 3 0 0-1 6; Lexi Hardiek 2 3 0-0 13; Tayler Money 1 0 1-2 3; Game Totals 11 6 7-11 47.

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