Norton junior guard Tye Nickell hits another jump shot during his career high 17 point performance in the Mid-Continent League victory over Ellis here on Friday night. - Telegram photo by Dick Boyd

Norton hometown victory

By DICK BOYD
nortontelegram@nwkansas.com

The Norton Community High School boys basketball team broke open a close game with Ellis in the fourth quarter to produce a 57-51 Mid-Continent League victory on Friday in the NCHS Stull Gym.

Norton trailed 16-12 after one quarter, 30-26 at intermission and 40-39 after three quarters but outscored the visiting Railroaders 18-11 in the final stanza to win by six points.

"It wasn't very pretty but we did what we needed to do to get the win," said Norton head boys basketball coach Doug Reusink. "We got some defensive stops and hit some shots at the end.

"In the first half, we'd get within two or four points and wouldn't make stops. In the second half, we got a lead but couldn't increase it until the end.

"We still aren't defending like we should be. We need to be better defensively."

In Norton's 12 point first period, sophomore forward Jacob Brooks hit a basket and three free throws, junior forward Jordan Wahlmeier swished two baskets and senior guard Terrell Lane connected on a basket and charity.

Junior guard Tye Nickell hit three baskets and two free tosses to lead Norton in their 14 point second quarter. Brooks hit another basket, Lane was perfect on two free throws and senior post Luke Ninemire hit a basket.

Brooks hit three baskets, Wahlmeier hit two more two-pointers and Nickell buried a shot from beyond the arc for the Blue Jays' 13 third quarter points.

Nickell finished strong with two more baskets and two free throws in the fourth quarter along with two baskets each by Wahlmeier and junior guard Dillon McConney and a basket and two charities by Lane for 18 points.

Nickell hit a career high 17 points to lead the Blue Jays. He connected on 1 of 5 from long range for 20 percent, 5 of 6 two-point attempts for 83 percent and 6 of 11 overall for an excellent 55 percent. He was a perfect 4 of 4 from the charity stripe.

Brooks ended with 13 points on 5 of 10 from two-point range for 50 percent and 3 of 4 from the free throw line for 75 percent.

Wahlmeier scored 12 points on 6 of 10 from the field for 60 percent.

Jacob Kinderknecht led Ellis with 15 points, 8 of them coming from the free throw line.

It was "Senior Night" for Norton. Honored along with their parents prior to the game were senior players Dakota Dreher, Luke Ninemire, Cole Archer and Terrell Lane and senior manager David Cressler.

As a team, Norton hit 1 of 11 from beyond the arc for 9 percent, 21 of 37 two-point tries for 57 percent and 22 of 48 for 46 percent overall.

The Railroaders also hit just 1 of 11 from long range for 9 percent, swished 17 of 39 two-point tries for 44 percent and were 18 of 50 for 36 percent overall.

Both teams hit well from the charity stripe. Norton connected on 12 of 16 for 75 percent and Ellis hit 14 of 18 for 78 percent.

The Blue Jays pulled down 13 offensive and 24 defensive rebounds for 37 total. The Railroaders grabbed just 7 offensive and 10 defensive caroms for 17 total.

Brooks was the Norton leader with 11 rebounds, followed by Lane, 7; Ninemire, 5; Wahlmeier, 5; Dreher, 4; Nickell, 3; McConney, 2.

Wahlmeier and Brooks each blocked 1 shot.

The Blue Jays had 4 steals and the Railroaders had 8. Brooks had 2 thefts while Lane and Nickell had 1 each.

Norton had 8 offensive assists and Ellis had 10. Nickell, Brooks and Dreher each had 2 assists. Wahlmeier and Lane each had 1.

The Blue Jays had 14 turnovers and the Railroaders had 7.

The Norton boys extended their season record to 11-8; the Blue Jays have now won 9 of their last 11 games!

Junior varsity

The Norton junior varsity boys team lost to Ellis by a score of 56-41.

Norton trailed by quarters 18-6, 23-18 and 46-21.

Leading scorer for Norton was Trey Millan with 12 points; Carson McKenna added 10. They were followed by John Renner, Zach Hartwell, 6 each; Lane Bigge, 4; Andrew Ellis, 3.

Jared Mick scored 12 points for Ellis; Cole Pfeifer and Skyler Tebo each added 10.

Boys C-Team

Norton won the boys C-team game by a score of 37-35.

Norton trailed by quarters 6-4, 20-12 and 28-26.

The young Blue Jays won the game when Trever Lewis stole the ball, drove and hit a layup with one second left!

Leading scorer for Norton was Tanner Furbush with 16 points, followed by Lewis, 10; Toby Nickell, 5; Travis Cressler, 4; Drew Schrum, 2.

Top scorer for Ellis was Cadyn McCoy with 12 points.

Next action

Norton's final games of the regular season will be this evening in Colby.

Contests will begin at 4:30 p.m.

GAME STATISTICS

Norton Boys

Jordan Wahlmeier 6 0 0-1 12; Dillon McConney 2 0 0-0 4; Luke Ninemire 1 0 0-0 2; Tye Nickell 5 1 4-4 17; Terrell Lane 2 0 5-7 9; Jacob Brooks 5 0 3-4 13; Game Totals 21 1 12-16 57.

Ellis Boys

Kyle Weber 1 0 1-2 3; Jared Herl 4 0 1-2 9; Jacob Kinderknecht 2 1 8-10 15; Thatcher Brown 3 0 1-1 7; Tyler Walters 3 0 2-2 8; Luke Lohrmeyer 4 0 1-1 9; Game Totals 17 1 14-18 51.

Keeping you informed on all the Norton Blue Jay sporting events!

Norton Lady Jays lose to Ellis at Mid-Continent tourney

By DICK BOYD
nortontelegram@nwkansas.com

The Norton Community High School and Ellis High School girls played on even terms in the NCHS Stull Gym on Friday night until the visitors hit a series of shots and free throws in the final minutes to pull away for a 44-33 Mid-Continent League victory.

Norton led 16-10 after one quarter and trailed by just 21-20 at intermission. The Lady Jays were on top 28-26 to start the final quarter but the Lady Railroaders shot lights out and Norton couldn't keep up.

Norton led 31-29 with 3:53 left in the game after senior guard Dustyna Sprigg scored inside but the Lady Railroaders went on a 7-0 run to jump out to a 36-31 lead with 1:43 remaining. Then, an Ellis and steal and layup made it 38-31.

The Lady Railroaders hit 6 of 6 free throws for their final points and Norton's only other basket was by Sprigg with 19.9 seconds remaining.

Norton's best quarter was the first when the Lady Jays outscored the visitors 16-10. Senior guard Kaylen Rossi and freshman guard Katelyn Engelbert each hit a basket from beyond the arc and a two-pointer, junior post Caren Thomson hit two baskets inside and Sprigg was perfect on two free throws.

The Lady Jays were outscored 11-4 in the second period with Norton's only points coming on one basket by Sprigg and free throws by sophomore guard Alec Melvin and freshman post Bailey Ambrosier.

In the low-scoring third quarter, Norton had 8 points on treys by sophomore guard Tawni Griffey and Engelbert and another two-point basket by Sprigg.

Norton hit just 20 percent from the field and 38 percent from the free throw line in the game.

"It was a close game until the last three minutes but you can't shoot 20 percent and expect to win in this league," said Norton head girls basketball coach Kevin Jilka.

"We got good looks but our shots weren't falling. Rebounding and free throws also hurt us. We got in foul trouble in the first half and that didn't help. We didn't foul as much in the second half and we played harder.

"We have to play better ball now and are not getting it done. We'll just keep plugging away and hope to do better. "

It was "Senior Night" for Norton. The Lady Jays have two senior players, Dustyna Sprigg and Kaylen Rossi. They were honored along with their parents.

Also honored with their parents were senior cheerleader Kelsie Griffith and senior dance team members Rachel Shepard and Rebekah Streck.

Dustyna Sprigg was leading scorer for Norton with 10 points on 4 of 9 from the field for 44 percent and 2 of 3 free throws for 67 percent. Bailey Hensley led Ellis with 18 points.

As a team, Norton hit 4 of 25 from beyond the arc for 16 percent, 8 of 34 two-point tries for 24 percent and 12 of 59 overall for 20 percent.

Ellis mised all three trey tries and hit 15 of 39 two-point attempts for 38 percent.

From the free throw line, the Lady Jays hit 5 of 13 for 38 percent and the Lady Railroaders swished 14 of 24 for 58 percent.

Norton pulled down 18 offensive and 12 defensive rebounds for 30 total. Ellis grabbed 9 offensive and 15 defensive caroms for 24 total.

Sprigg and Engelbert led Norton in rebounding with 8 each, followed by Thomson, 7; Griffey, 4; Rossi, Melvin, Jones, 1 each.

Norton had 12 steals and Ellis had 9. Sprigg led with 4, followed by Griffey, Engelbert, 3 each; Rossi, Melvin, 1 each.

The Lady Jays had 4 assists and the Lady Railroaders had 5. Griffey and Rossi each had 2 assists.

Norton had 18 turnovers and Ellis had 23.

The Lady Jays are now 9-9 for the season.

TheJunior varsity

The Norton girls junior varsity lost to Ellis 44-29.

Norton trailed by quarters 15-2, 27-4 and 35-16.

Leading scorer for Norton was Johnnye Ruder with 7 points, followed by Abby Bainter, 6; Bailey Ambrosier, 6; Rickele Green, 4; Darcy Bainter, 4; Alec Melvin, 2.

Megan Honas led Ellis with 18 points.

"We had one horrible half and one pretty good half," said Norton assistant girls coach George Rossi.

"This group needs to believe they have the ability to play the game. When we hustle and play with a little pride, we do good things but there is no consistency."

Next action

Norton's final games of the regular season will be this evening in Colby.

Contests will begin at 4:30 p.m.

GAME STATISTICS

Norton Girls

Tawni Griffey 0 1 0-0 3; Katelyn Engelbert 1 2 1-2 9; Kaylen Rossi 1 1 0-0 5; Bailey Ambrosier 0 0 1-2 1; Alec Melvin 0 0 1-2 1; Dustyna Sprigg 4 0 2-3 10; Caren Thomson 2 0 0-4 4; Game Totals 8 4 5-13 33.

Ellis Girls

Bailey Hensley 7 0 4-4 18; Alesha Brenner 0 0 0-2 0; Mikalya Gottschalk 2 0 3-6 7; Brittany Dinkel 2 0 1-4 5; Courtney Waldschmidt 3 0 4-4 10; Kaleigh Soneson1 0 2-4 4; Game Totals 15 0 14-24 44.

To the left, Lady Blue Jay senior guard Kaylen Rossi stole the basketball from an Ellis Lady Railroader and dribbled downcourt with her opponent in mad pursuit during Norton's hard-fought loss here in Mid-Continent League play on Friday night. - Telegram photo by Dick Boyd

Go Norton Blue Jays!

3rd Annual
NORTON COUNTY HORSE COUNCIL
BBQ AND BOOGIE
HOG ROAST, DANCE AND TEXAS HOLD'EM TOURNEY AT NOON
Saturday, March 5 - 6 p.m.-midnight
•Eat 6-8 •Silent Auction 7-9 •Dance 9-12
Norton Eagles Club, Norton - Free Will Donation
Silent Auction with lots of GREAT Donations!
Good Food, Good Company and a Good Time!!
Raising money for the equine facility at Elmwood Park;
announcers booth, handicap access, and general maintenance and upkeep
For More Info: Dave Donovan, 877-2148 or Cindy Wegener, 877-2077

High School Sports This Week

Norton Blue Jays — Northern Valley Huskies — Logan Trojans

WRESTLING:

Norton will compete in the Class 3-2-A State Tournament – 10 a.m. Friday, 9 a.m. Saturday in .....Gross Memorial Coliseum, Hays

BASKETBALL:

Norton Varsity, Junior Varsity vs. Colby in Colby..... 4:30 p.m. Today
Norton Varsity Girls in Sub-State Quarter Finals..... 7 p.m. Monday, TBA
Norton Varsity Boys in Sub-State Quarter-Finals..... 7 p.m. Tuesday, TBA
Northern Valley Girls and Boys vs. Golden Plains in Almena..... 4 p.m. Friday
Northern Valley Girls and Boys in Sub-State..... Feb. 28-March 5, TBA
Logan Girls and Boys vs. Rock Hills in Logan ..... 4 p.m. Friday
Logan Girls and Boys in Sub-State ..... Feb. 28-March 5, TBA