

# 8th-grade girls get four wins in one week

By **CHUCK ZIMMERMAN**

Norton's eighth grade Lady Jays added four more victories to their belt when they defeated Ellis 43-38 on Dec. 11, Beloit 34-21 and Belleville 39-29 at the Smith Center Tournament on Dec. 13, and Victoria 38-15 on Dec. 18.

## Ellis

Norton traveled to Ellis for a very crucial game in relation to seeding at the league tournament as Ellis had only been defeated once compared to our twice. We needed to win this game to at least give us a chance to not be seeded on the same side as No. 1 and have to play them in the second game of a doubleheader.

Since this was a very important game, it is good that the Ladies responded by picking up the intensity of our defenses and rebounding the best that they had done all season — plus, finding more teammates for scores with assists.

Chantille Campbell knocked down the two-pointers making 10 added to 2 free throws for 22 points. Jessica Strickland made 7 points; Haley Jones, 6; Megan Kats, 4; and Thea Wiseman and Kylie Morel, 2 each.

Defensively, Kats had a very good game as she was a "pain" in the Ellis guards' sides as she had 6 deflects, which is a hustle stat that means she was bothering them all game long. And then if she wasn't working to deflect the ball, she was stealing it as she took six balls from the Ellis team. Helping Kats and the team's defense were Jones and Strickland, both of whom had two deflects of their own. Adding to Ellis' "pain" was Strickland who stole 4, while Wiseman took 2.

Then in the rebounding department, Campbell dominated the boards with 9, while the threesome of Jones, Wiseman and Strickland each pulled down 6.

Kats, Jones and Wiseman were involved in the assists as all found three teammates open. The recipient on most of the passes was Campbell.

One more key ingredient of the past few games has been the addition of valuable minutes from reserves as Morel has come in to provide defense and scoring, while Courtney Cox, Courtney LeClair and Lacy Ellis plus McKenzie Linner and Ashley Smith Maybon have all contributed when called upon — a team effort with each helping in their own way.

The final score — 43-38 Norton.

## Smith Center Tournament

We traveled to Smith Center for their annual tournament, which took on a new look this year as we played two games in one day, a prelude to the league tournament.

We were pitted against Beloit in our first game and went out hard in the first half to take control with a 28-15 half-time score.

The second half was even as we substituted liberally and the reserves did a very good job of keeping the Trojans in check, which gave our starters time to rest for the championship game.

Kats continued where she left off against Ellis by harassing the opponents with 7 deflects, while Cox and Jones each had 2.

Steals were taken by Strickland with 4 and Kats with 3.

Rebounds were gathered by every team member as Strickland took 5, followed by Campbell and Cox with 3 each.

There are becoming more assists each game as the team is taking the time to make the extra pass and finding the easy shot for the score, an indication that we are improving each time out. Jones, Wiseman and Kats each found 3 teammates while Strickland found 2 for scores.

Making those scores were Campbell with 15 points; Jones, Wiseman and Kats, 4 each; Morel, 3; and Linner and Strickland, 2 each.

The final tally was 34-21 with

Belleville next for the championship.

The Buffaloes of Belleville stood in the way of claiming the championship trophy and the junior Lady Jays wanted to make it a sweep for Norton as our "little sisters" had won their tournament in convincing style earlier. Congratulations seventh grade!!!!

We again used our pressure defense, which has started to click as the girls become more familiar with their roles and positioning, and caused the Buffs considerable trouble. Then we converted their turnovers into offensive baskets with the team looking to our "big kahonas" for basically lay-ups or jump shots for assists.

It was a very impressive deflects game as all the starters "got after it" thanks in part to the reserves, who gave them some valuable minutes of rest throughout the day. Again, Kats led the effort with 6 as Campbell tipped 5, Strickland 4 and Wiseman and Jones 3 each.

Steals were taken by Wiseman with 3 and Kats with 2.

Rebounds were dominated again this game by Campbell as she took 9 down, with Strickland finding 4 more.

Assists — again a stat that keeps getting more impressive with each game — were made by Campbell, Kats and Jones with 3 each, while Wiseman found 2.

Another key stat that has been improving is our shooting percentage. In this game we shot a season high 55 percent, which is very good at this level. Scoring were Campbell with 12 points; Wiseman, 10; Strickland, 7; LeClair, 4; and Morel, Jones, and Kats, 2 each.

If we can continue to keep pressure on defensively and keep improving offensively we will end the season well advanced from where we began.

Final score for the championship 39-29.

## Victoria

We closed out our 2003-04 basketball home season on a high note against the Victoria Squires as we played a very good first half and charged to a 24-6 lead. We proceeded to win the second half with our reserves getting some playing time that they have greatly earned. The final score was 38-15.

This was again, as it has been for the last few games, a victory led by our defense as the Ladies stepped up and shut down the Squires' offense by creating 31 turnovers and holding them to 18 percent shooting from the field.

Our deflects leaders were key as most deflects led to steals by another teammate picking up a loose ball or a tap. Kats led with 4, followed by Jones, Wiseman and Campbell with 3 each.

Steals, which result from a good defensive move such as a deflect or a rushed pass, were taken by Kats with 6, and Strickland, Campbell and Wiseman with 3 each.

Rebounds were key in the first half as we controlled the boards. Strickland and Campbell each grabbed 5, while Wiseman took 4 and LeClair, Jones and Kats each took down 3 each.

Assists are starting to become a major part of this team as we are finding the open teammate and she is scoring a goal. Wiseman found 6 teammates open, while Jones found 3 and Kats 2.

Scoring were Campbell with 13 points, Strickland with 8, Wiseman with 7, Jones and Kats with 4, and Ellis with 2.

We thank all those who supported us during this season. We continue after the break with our league tournament and hope to challenge the rest of the league for the title.

We also congratulate our "little sisters" for the excellent season they had in going 10-1. We appreciate their competitiveness during practice, which just helps make us a better team.



Joey Copper shot one of the three free throws that he made in the second half of the Northern Valley Huskies

win against Bertrand last Friday. The Huskies made 23 free throws in the contest. — Telegram photo by Susie Marble

## Husky boys beat Bertrand 59-47

The Northern Valley Huskies downed Bertrand 59-47 last Friday in Almena.

"During our last game with Smith Center, we figured out some situations that will help us become a better, more confident ball club offensively," said Coach Jason Dibble. "This definitely carried over into this game on both ends of the floor.

"I told the players before the game that if we could just hang in the game and keep from going down 20 like the first three games, we could give ourselves a chance to win the game in the fourth quarter. It couldn't have played out any better. Not only did we keep from having a single digit quarter, we were able to consistently play for four quarters.

"Up one after the first and down two after the second and third, we were able to go up five halfway through the fourth and then hit free throws down the stretch to seal the victory.

"Bertrand pressured the ball up the floor and gave us some fits while we were trying to run our offense in the half-court. Avery Thalheim stepped up with some big shots early in the game and Jesse Hilburn carried us offensively throughout most of the game. Whether Jesse was taking it strong to the hole, coming off picks from other players, particularly Garth Gebhard, or knocking down free throws, he was opening up opportunities for other players.

"If we can decrease our turnovers and continue to improve of-

fensively, I think we will have some good opportunities ahead of us."

Hilburn led scoring with 3 two-pointers, 1 three-pointer and 11 free throws for 20 points. He was followed by Avery Thalheim, 14 points; Garth Gebhard, 7; Thomas Ostmeyer, 6; Joey Copper, 5; Clarke Nelson, 4; Cole Kinderknecht, 2; and Andrew Sheley, 1.

Rebounding honors went to Thalheim and Ostmeyer with 7 apiece.

Hilburn led steals with 3 and assists with 4.

The junior varsity was defeated 42-27.

Leading scorers were Nelson with 8 points and Sheley with 7 points. Also scoring for the Huskies were Kinderknecht and

Chance Miller, 4 points apiece; and Casey Dole and Cody Lowry, 2 points apiece.

### N. Valley 59, Bertrand 47

Score by quarters:

N. Valley 12 14 10 23-59  
Bertrand 11 17 10 9-47

### Bertrand (47)

Weeder 6 0 7-5 17, Chapin 4 1 0-0 11, Schwarz 1 1 6-3 8, Giger 0 0 6-3 3, Schwarz 1 0 2-0 2, Steinbrink 1 0 0-0 2, Pierce 1 0 0-0 2, Ford 1 0 0-0 2.

### Northern Valley (59)

Jesse Hilburn 3 1 17-11 20, Avery Thalheim 2 2 6-4 14, Garth Gebhard 1 1 3-2 7, Thomas Ostmeyer 3 0 4-0 6, Joey Copper 1 0 4-3 5, Clarke Nelson 2 0 0-4, Cole Kinderknecht 0 0 2-2 2, Andrew Sheley 0 0 2-1 1.



The Northern Valley Husky girls looked for a pass from Alasia Eagleburger in the game against the Bertrand Vi-

kings last Friday in Almena.

— Telegram photo by Susie Marble

## Northern Valley girls lose to Bertrand

The Northern Valley Lady Huskies were defeated 47-36 by Bertrand on Dec. 19.

"I was pleased that after we fell behind by 8 points early we battled back to within 3 points at half," said Coach Bill Lowry. "We were down only 4 points after the third quarter, but then they made a 10-0 run on us and we could never recover. We were able to out-rebound Bertrand and we reduced our turnovers."

Leading scoring for the Huskies were Regan Fessenden and

Lindsey Jessup. Fessenden made 2 two-pointers and two three-pointers for 10 points. Jessup shot in 2 two-pointers, 1 three-pointer and 3 free throws also for 10 points. Also scoring for Northern Valley were Lindsey Graham, 8 points; Kelli Cole, 5 points; and Alasia Eagleburger, 3 points.

Rebounding honors went to Eagleburger with 9 and Serena Woodside and Graham with 7 apiece. As a team, the Huskies grabbed a total of 31 rebounds.

Eagleburger made 2 of the

team's 6 steals, while Jessup made 4 of the team's 7 assists. Graham made the only block.

Northern Valley's B-team defeated Bertrand 21-14.

Andrea Lowry and Jena Jessup led scoring with 4 points apiece.

The Lady Huskies will next compete in the Cambridge Tournament on Jan. 2 and 3 in Cambridge, Neb.

### Bertrand 47, N. Valley 36

Score by quarters:

Bertrand 14 6 8 19-47

N. Valley 9 9 6 12-36

### Bertrand (47)

Kylee Trautman 7 0 3-1 15, Jessica Secrest 3 0 3-2 8, Mandy Kuck 4 0 1-0 8, Brianne Ehmen 3 0 1-0 6, Kinsey DeBoer 2 0 1-1 5, Alysia Lundy 1 0 2-0 2, Brittney Barnes 1 0 0-0 2, Anna Ebmeier 0 0 5-1 1.

### Northern Valley (36)

Regan Fessenden 2 2 0-0 10, Lindsey Jessup 2 1 4-3 10, Lindsey Graham 2 0 4-4 8, Kelli Cole 0 1 2-2 5, Alasia Eagleburger 1 0 2-1 3, Serena Woodside 0 0 2-0 0.