THE CARLISLE MERCURY SPORTS

Bourbon holds off Nicholas

By Hank Bond
The Carlisle Mercury Staff

CARLISLE — Bourbon County held off a furious Nicholas County rally in the final minute to post a 72-66 win over Nicholas County Saturday night.

Nicholas County, which slipped to 13-4 with the loss, stayed close to its traditional district and regional rival the entire contest, in front of a capacity crowd in the NCHS gymnasium.

In a high scoring first quarter Bourbon County broke away to take an 8-2 lead with 5:12 to go, but Nicholas County tied the score on a Jarrod Wills three point shot from the the left side of the key, 11-11, with 3:27 to play.

A basket by Jamie Simons gave the Jackets a 13-11 advantage, but the score was tied at 13-13 with 2:23 to play as Sean Fryman hit from the right corner, just inside the three point line.

Simons again tied the game (15-15) on a layup with 1:15 to play and Brian Hilander did the same at 17-17 on a six foot shot in the lane with 47 seconds to play in the quarter.

Clint Richardson went to the glass with 27 seconds to go, and a last second shot by Simons bounced off the rim at the buzzer giving the visitors a 19-17 first quarter advantage.

Scoring slowed somewhat in the second quarter, as Nicholas County fell behind by eight, 28-20, with 5:35 to go in the half.

Daniel Brown hit a three point shot from the right side after recovering a lost ball and Simons hit a layup against Cory Williams in the lane to cut the Colonels' lead to 28-25.

After Fryman had given Bourbon a 30-25 lead, Brown hit a three point shot from the right side and Travis Sims canned a tip-in basket with 2:22 to go in the half to tie the score, 30-30.

Bourbon County out scored the hosts 6-2 the rest of the quarter, and an ally opp stuff by Williams with one second to play in the half gave Bourbon County a 36-32 lead at intermission.

After the break Bourbon County bolted to a 44-34 lead with 5:54 to play in the third quarter.

Hilander cut into the lead with two three point shots to make it 44-40 with 5:00 to play in the third stanza, and after three straight Bourbon County fouls, Hilander's layup made it 44-42.

Brown went to the line and connected on two shots to tie the score 44-44, and Nicholas County pushed to a 45-44 quarter ending lead when Simons hit one of two shots with 1:10 to play.

After Bourbon County had missed on its trip down the floor, the Jackets ran the clock down to :02, but turned the ball over to end the period.

With 6:44 to play in the game Nicholas County took its largest of the game when Sims fielded a nifty assist from Hilander and canned the layup. Nicholas was on top 50-46, but the lead was short lived.

Bourbon County went ahead 54-52 on a three point shot by Scott Adams with 4:17 to play in the game, but Simons gave the Jackets the lead back with 2:25 to go in the game on two free throws.

Just 20 seconds later Richardson hit a six foot shot in the lane to give Bourbon County a 61-59 lead, an advantage the Colonels would never give up.

The Jackets did cut the lead to 67-66 with 17 seconds to play on a follow basket by Sims, who went high to tip in a missed shot by Simons. The Nicholas bench yelled for a foul on the play, but to no avail.

Forced to foul, the Jackets sent Williams to the line three straight times, as he hit four of six tries and lifted the Colonels to the six point final.

With two seconds left in the game, seeking to keep control of the game, Nicholas County's Ed Oakley took a timeout he didn't have, earning his team a technical foul.

"I wanted to stress that we should keep our composure and act like we were men. None of this head down stuff," he said after the game.

"This year, the third quarter has been a pretty good quarter for us.

"But with Paris, Estill, and Bourbon they haven't been real good.

"We tried to change a few things (during the timeout) and see if we could do something different. I told them to play hard and something good will happen if we keep playing.

"Friday night (against Estill County) our big guys didn't have a very good game. Saturday morning we had a short around, and I told them we needed them to get more done when they get the ball.

"If he (Cory Williams) blocks it so what. What the team needs out of Jamie (Simons) and Travis (Sims) is to play consistent every night out. Take the ball at people in there. We have to have that."

In looking over statistics for the game, Oakley found some interesting information.

"We out rebounded them, and had less turnovers.

"Bourbon County shot 33 free throws and 24 in the fourth quarter. They were 17 of 24 in the fourth quarter. We shot 11 of 17 for the game.

"We know we can play with Bourbon County. Our players have gotten the confidence and we know we can play with them. We have been successful against other teams in the district.

"It's just we have to work on the little things. We have to take care of the ball late in the game. We need to take the ball inside and make sure *we* get fouled.

"These are things we can improve on and we can keep improving and not be satisfied with the way we're playing."

Bourbon County Coach Russ Day had nothing but praise for Nicholas County.

"I believe we have four teams in our district which can win the district - and the regional. It's been a long time since that has happened," he added.

"We were able to get some shots to fall late from the free throw line to keep us in the lead, but Nicholas County certainly played well and executed well, too.

"This is one of those years any team in the district on a given night can beat another team. It should be interesting.

"I believe the district will all boil down to who's playing well at tournament time and how the draw goes."

The Carlisle Mercury/Beth A. Bond Photo
Nicholas County's Brian Hilander (30) goes for a basket against Bourbon County's Cory Williams. Williams and the Colonels without a fourth quarter rally by the Jackets to post a 72-66 win.

The Carlisle Mercury/Beth A. Bond Photo
Jamie Simons looks for a basket as he goes high in the lane against Bourbon County. Simons finished with 11 points, but the Colonels held on to win, 72-66.

The Carlisle Mercury/ Beth A. Bond Photo
Wesley Broderick goes for a basket in a Nicholas County Junior High basketball team, earlier this season.

Going For The Hoop

Despite the sluggish play Lady Jackets top Augusta

Special To
The Carlisle Mercury

Nicholas County's girls' basketball team pulled away from a 24-18 halftime lead to post a 45-33 win over Augusta, Monday night.

The Lady Jackets took an 11-6 lead at the first stop, and out scored host Augusta 10-1 in the third quarter for a 34-19 advantage at the third stop.

Nikki Smoot had 13 points to lead Nicholas County as Kim Denkins had 10 points, six rebounds and four blocked shots for the winners.

Tacy Earlywine had nine points and six rebounds, Christie Hatton had six points and five rebounds, and Kristi Barton had two points.

Renee Linville had three points in a reserve role, as Tawnya Livingood and Amy Simons had one point each for the Lady Jackets.

The Lady Jackets shot poorly hitting only 16 of 42 or 30 percent from the field and 15 of 26 from the line, for 58 percent.

"We've never gone to Augusta and played well," said NCHS Head Coach Barbara Kenney.

"Augusta handled our defense pretty well as Rachel Hamilton hit for 13 points. They did a good job against us."

Kenney talked of her family's ineffective offense.

"It seemed like there was a lid on our basket last night," she said in a phone interview Thursday morning.

"We couldn't find the range - and too, they did well against us.

"We have been averaging 60 points a game, and this is certainly under that average.

"I was glad to get the win."

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At Paris High School

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The Carlisle Mercury/Beth A. Bond Photo
Members of the Nicholas County seventh and eighth grade cheerleading squad include: left to right front, Tennille Smith, Carol Mitchell, middle Kristi Stone, third row, Jennifer Smith, Cybil Hunt, Favia Pope, and back, Staci Robinson, Bethany Dunn and Erica Brierly. The cheerleaders' sponsor is Kerry Tapp.

SPORTS

Jackets take 69-54 win

Denkins leads NCHS over Bracken

By William Million
The Carlisle Mercury Staff

CARLISLE - The Nicholas County Lady Bluejackets Rocked the Bracken County Lady Polar Bears 69 - 54 Thursday night in a game between the 10th Region powers.

Kim Denkins led the Jackets with 28 points and 13 rebounds as Nicholas County handed Bracken their second loss of the year. Nicholas improved their own record to 13 - 2 in winning their fifth straight contest.

Nicholas County controlled the opening tip, but immediately turned the ball over. That turnover started a string of eight straight turnovers that ended when Bracken finally got on the board at the 5:35 mark.

Kim Denkins went down court and hit the layup, but Bracken's Janet Goecke put the Bears up 4-2 on a jumper at the 4:50 mark.

The teams traded buckets up and down the court, including a nice turnaround jump shot by Nikki Smoot. The Jackets went ahead 8-6 on the layup by Denkins at the 1:20 mark. This is the closest that Bracken would get.

Christie Hatton and Tracey Earleywine each hit two free throws and Bracken added a bucket to finish out the first quarter. The period ended with the Jackets up 12-8.

Thirty seconds into the second, Bracken again closed the gap to 2, but at 6:40, Denkins hit a charity shot.

Christie Hatton got the home crowd into the game by snaring an offensive rebound and following it home to make the score 15-10. Kim Denkins stole the ball on the other end of the court and threw the long pass all the way down court. Earlywine capped off the play by scooping it in at the 5:58 mark. Nicholas was rolling 17-10 and Bracken needed time out.

Bracken's Molly Linville hit a quick bucket and stole the inbounds pass for the assist, and all of a sudden the score was 17-14. Kim Denkins quieted the uprising by hitting two buckets of her own. Nicholas 21, Bracken 14 at the 4:05 mark.

Linville kept the Bears close by hitting two more shots, pulling her team within three. Nicholas coach Barbara Kenney called time out to settle her team down with 2:15 left.

Kim Denkins came out and buried the jump shot, and Tracey Earleywine turned a turnover into a bucket as Nicholas went up 25-18. Christie Hatton then answered a Bracken shot by hitting the layup and drawing the foul. Hatton swished the shot to close the half.

Nicholas went into the locker room with a 28-20 lead.

The Lady Jackets started where they left off. Tracey Earlywine hit a 15 footer to stretch the lead to ten. Denkins answered a Bracken bucket by stealing the ball and driving all the way for the unfontested layup.

Bracken's Linville again tried to turn the tide with a nice layup, but Kim Denkins again hit the shot. On the other end, she ripped the ball away and passed down court to Earlywine. Bracken County needed time with Nicholas up 36-24 at the 5:06 mark.

The two teams traded buckets until Kenney called time out herself to set up her team's defense.

Again, Tracey Earlywine came out hot, stealing the ball and swishing the jumper at the 2:05 mark.

Bracken hit their own shot, but started what would seem like an endless string of fouls.

Christie Hatton hit one of two free throws and Kim Denkins finished off a three point trip by hitting one herself. Bracken chipped in a bucket at the :22 mark, and Nicholas ended the third period up by thirteen, 46-33.

Christie Hatton opened the fourth by hitting a layup and the first of Nicholas' 22 fourth quarter free throw attempts.

The teams traded shots until Bracken's Annie Mainns hit the long three to cut the lead to twelve at the 5:45 mark.

Kim Denkins added two more points, but Molly Linville hit two backdoor shots, and Bracken called time out, trailing 54-44 at the 4:47 mark.

Denkins and Smoot each hit two free throws , but Bracken kept pace. Denkins added a free throw at the 2:04 mark and Nicholas led 59-48.

What ensued was what one fan called "the busiest two minutes I've seen in my life."

Molly Linville started the tear buy hitting one for Bracken. On the other end of the court, Janet Goecke put Kim Denkins on the line and put herself on the bench with her fifth foul.Denkins hit one of two.

At the 1:21 mark, the Bears pulled within eight, but Smoot hit a free throw to make it 61-52.

Bracken's Molly Linville went to the bench with five as well when she put Christie Hatton on the free throw line.Hatton missed the second shot, but Kim Denkins came down with the rebound. (Surprise) She was fouled by LaAnna White, who also went to the bench with five fouls.

Kim hit one of the two shots, but was able to grab her own rebound. She was fouled again, and went to the line. She converted one of the shots, putting Nicholas up 64-52 with :55 seconds left. She then left the game to a standing ovation.

Bracken tried to put things together during a time out, but Tracey .Earlywine and Elizabeth Shandy padded the lead to 67-52 at the :19 mark.

After a late Bracken bucket, Andrea Galbreath hit a layup as the buzzer sounded, and Nicholas prevailed with a comfortable 69-54 margin.

Coach Barbara Kenney had nothing but good things to say about her Jackets."Bracken County is a good team. They were 12-1 coming in here, and they were ranked above us in the region. They move the ball well, and they have experience with all their seniors."

Kenney attributes the team's defense for the win."We had a nice perimeter defense. That created some chip shots for the other team, but we wanted to take their three point shooters out of the game. We switched defenses on them all night, and I believe we play better with a half court game than we did with a full court press. I believe this team gets better every night."

The Carlisle Mercury/Beth A. Bond Photo
Kim Denkins soars for a basket against Bracken County's Lady Polar Bears. The Jackets pulled away in the final quarter to post the win.

The Carlisle Mercury/Beth A. Bond Photo
Jarrod Wills looks for a basket against Estill County, last Friday night. While the Jackets stayed with the Engineers into the final quarter, Estill County prevailed 68-62.

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