

Sports

Montgomery too much for Lady 'Jackets

Dale scores 18 for Nicholas Co.

By DENVER BROWN
Sports Editor

The Nicholas County Lady 'Jackets went toe-to-toe with perennial power Montgomery County on Monday night in Carlisle — but the Lady Indians went on to the romp, 85-46.

"We did a good job executing early on," Nicholas County Head Coach Nikki Smoot told *The Carlisle Mercury*. "We held with them for most of the opening quarter, we wanted to keep it away from Mullins."

Sophomore guard Courtney Dale and senior guard Whitney Massey each nailed buckets to make it a 5-4 Montgomery County lead with 3:15 to play in that first period. But a Lady Indian three-pointer started an 11-point run that left the Lady 'Jackets trying to play catch up.

sank a pair of free throws at :33 to snap the Montgomery County run, but back-to-back baskets by the visitors gave them a 20-6 margin by the start of the second period.

The Lady Indians' press forced 16 turnovers by the hosts in the opening half, but Smoot's club put in 19 points in the second quarter to make it 44-22 at the break.

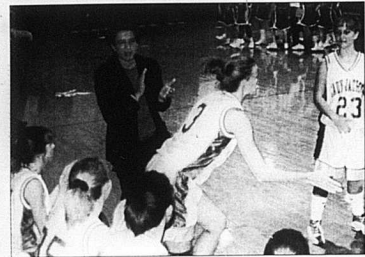
"They were quick and they play good defense," Dale said after the game. "And they knew where they were supposed to be at all times."

Dale led the Lady 'Jackets with 18 points, including a three-pointer. Massey added 10.

The hosts never got within striking range the remainder of the game, but they applied tough defense and saw a few sparks that encouraged the coaching staff — Dale nailed a 16-foot jumper with just a few ticks left and eighth-grader Kellie Roberts hauled down a defensive rebound on the game's final play.

"I don't want them to get down because of one game," Smoot said. "Montgomery County is a good team — trying to play catch up."

See LADY 'JACKETS on 7



Sophomore Courtney Dale scored 18 points in Monday night's season opener, but the Nicholas County Lady 'Jackets fell to Montgomery County in Carlisle. Head coach Nikki Smoot's (right) club visits Mason County and hosts Augusta, also this week.

Student Viewpoint



Whitney Massey
Lady 'Jackets
Basketball

Lady 'Jackets play hard...

On Monday, Nov. 27, the Nicholas County basketball Lady 'Jackets hosted the Montgomery County Lady Indians in Carlisle. The Lady 'Jackets came out with a loss, 85-46.

The Lady 'Jackets played hard and gave it all they could but I think this loss will help us improve as the season progresses. The top scorers for Nicholas County were Courtney Dale with 18 points and I had 10 points. Montgomery County came away with a big win for the opening of their season. Mullins was the key of the game, she took decent shots and was quick on defense.

I hope we come out and play much better our next game on Wednesday versus Mason County.



'Jackets battle back to beat Bath in opener

Hunt leads all scoring with 23

By DENVER BROWN
Sports Editor

It must have been some halftime chat!

After suffering through a poor shooting first half (and just 14 points at the break), the Nicholas County Blue 'Jackets battled back from a nine-point deficit in the third quarter Tuesday night to send the Wildcats back to Bath County knowing they'd been in a battle. Head Coach Bobbie Storie's club came from behind to get the 49-41, season-opening win.

"You're looking at a team that went 22-9 last year and they're used to playing hard and grit things out," Bath County Head Coach Gary Boyd said of the hosting 'Jackets. "They stuck in there when they weren't able to make shots."

And the boys in blue didn't make many early on. Storie's roster was without the services of a pair of starters. Injuries kept seniors Jay Grant and Josh Fygan on the bench. And Nicholas County missed them, sorely, early on.

The teams tied it up three times in the first quarter (22-44, 7-7). The visiting 'Cats put in a last-minute bucket to hold a 9-7 edge after the opening period.

Senior forward Stuart Baird and freshman guard Ryan Bretz helped the 'Jackets get to within one at 12:11 midway through the second period before the 'Cats clawed out five quick points and a 17-11 lead. Storie's club headed into the lockers down, 20-14 at halftime.

"I made a difference missing two starters," Hunt told *The Carlisle Mercury*. "But we've been working hard lately in practice and the underclassmen have really been stepping up."

Storie said his players' determination allowed for the second-half surge.

"These kids' character has always been like this, they

just won't give up," the Coach said. "Sometimes, though, if they miss one they don't have the confidence to try again."

But in the opening seconds of the third quarter, Bath County got things started with a three-pointer, their third of the game, to hold a nine-point lead. Instead of falling over, the 'Jackets dug in and began to battle.

Senior center Jacob Broderick, senior forward B.J. Tineher and junior guard Darrin Herrington, combined with a try from Hunt, pulled the Nicholas County to within a whisker of the 'Cats at 3:56 in the third, 26-25. Hunt's three from the stripe just a possession later gave the hosts the lead.

At 1:09 remaining in the third, and holding a four-point lead, junior guard Seth Saunders launched a three-pointer that made it 35-28. Bath County managed to pull back even early in the fourth, but they were spent. The 'Cats even took a short-lived lead on a pair from the line, but Hunt answered with two throws and off Bretz's defensive rebound, Hunt put the 'Jackets up again — for good this time.

"Really, towards the end of the game, things didn't fall our way and we were missing our shots," Bath County's Thomas Hodge said. "You never want to say never, but that three-pointer they hit was sort of the dagger."

Storie's missile was also a signal to the 'Jacket coaching staff.

"It was a big lift for us," Storie said. "He came in off the bench for us and did a good job, he's tough on offense and defense."

Boyd said his 'Cats tired down the stretch.

"There was a lot of fatigue," the Bath County coach said. "But I have to give them credit for sticking in there with us and being able to pull it out."

Hunt led all scoring with 23 points, and he was 8-for-8 from the charity stripe.

Tineher finished with eight points and a team-best seven rebounds, including four on the offensive side. Baird had six boards. Herrington, Hunt and Tineher each swiped three steals from the Wildcats.

Brooke County led Bath County with 16 points and Greg Robbins had 13.

"I just knew we had to play

hard 'D' in this game," Saunders said of Nicholas County's scrappy defenses. "You have to make the shots, but you have to play hard 'D' to win games."

The 'Jackets travel to Mayville to battle the Royals of Mason County Friday night. Next Tuesday, Dec. 5, the 'Jackets are on the road at Harrison County.

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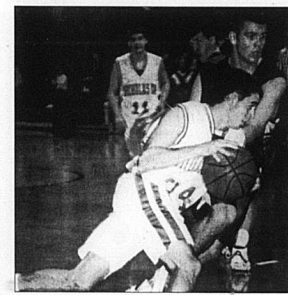
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Denver Brown photo
Nicholas County senior Forrest Hunt drives the lane against a Bath County defender. Hunt scored 23 points.

LADY 'JACKETS from front

As a team, the Lady 'Jackets had 26 rebounds, 14 steals and a dozen assists. But the hosts suffered 29 turnovers.

"I'm a little disappointed at the score because our girls really did play hard."

Belicia Mullins poured in 20 points for Montgomery County and the Lady Indians four three-pointers.

Brimes dished a team-best four assists for Nicholas County. Heather Howard led the girls in blue-and-white on the boards with seven rebounds and Massey grabbed six. Treadway snagged four steals.

Smoot's bunch was inaction Wednesday night at Mason County and tonight (Thursday) at home versus Augusta.