

Neb. State Boys Basketball

Area Teams Go 2-2 On Day One



JAMES D. CIMBUREK/P&D

Crofton's Dakota Miller goes in for a layup during the first half of the Warriors' matchup with Sutton in the opening round of the Nebraska State Class C2 Boys' Basketball Tournament on Thursday at Lincoln East High School. Sutton rallied to a 37-24 victory, ending Crofton's season.

Top-Ranked Sutton Rallies Past Crofton In Class C2 Action

BY JAMES D. CIMBUREK

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LINCOLN, Neb. — Crofton fans had waited 85 years to make a trip to the Nebraska State Boys' Basketball Tournament.

Austin Rath made sure that the Warrior faithful would have to wait a little while longer for their first state tournament victory since 1928.

Rath scored 22 points, two above his team-leading 20.2 points per game, including seven points in a key third quarter when Sutton took control on the way to a 37-24 victory over the Warriors in the opening round of the Class C2 Tournament on Thursday at Lincoln High.

Sutton held the Warriors without a field goal for a stretch of just over 10 minutes, as the Mustangs went from down 14-10 to up 18-15. The Warriors used a five-point possession — an off-the-ball foul on a three-point attempt and a basket on the in-bounds — to take an early 9-5 lead, and held the upper hand until Rath's steal and layup at the end of the first half gave the Mustangs a 16-15 halftime lead.

The Warriors held the upper hand early thanks to preparation, according to head coach Todd Strom.

"We scouted them hard," he said. "We like to play man, but we knew their quickness would make it tough for us to stick with them. We'd seen some teams have success against them with a zone, so we had to figure out what type of zone we could best play against them."

Crofton's aggressiveness offensively was also paying dividends, said senior Justin Janssen.

"It was a whole team effort. We passed the ball around and were unselfish," he said. "We got the ball inside, took it in hard and got fouled."

CROFTON | PAGE 8A

Kaiser Leads Cedar Catholic To C2 Win



KEVIN HENSELER/FOR THE PRESS & DAKOTAN

James Kaiser of Hartington Cedar Catholic barrels over a North Platte St. Patrick's defender for a layup during their Class C2 first-round game Thursday at the Nebraska State Boys Basketball Tournament in Lincoln, Neb. The Trojans won 56-49.

BY KEVIN HENSELER

For the Press & Dakotan

LINCOLN, Neb. — For three of the four quarters of basketball Hartington Cedar Catholic and North Platte St. Patrick's played in the first round conclave of the Class C2 State Basketball Tournament on Thursday, the teams each scored 40 points.

But it was Cedar's ability to outscore their foes in the second quarter, and right a minor stumble that sustained them in their 56-49 victory.

Twenty-one points from James Kaiser certainly didn't hurt the Trojans, either.

As one would expect in a matchup of No. 4 and 5 seeds, the two teams were evenly matched, and the first quarter indicated the fans at Lincoln High were in for an exciting, close game. After St. Patrick's scored the game's first bucket, the Cedar boys answered with 8 unanswered points, including a steal and layup by Logan Feilmeier midway through the opening frame.

But St. Pat's fashioned its own little run, 8-0 over the next three minutes, grabbing a 10-8 lead at the 51-second mark of the first stanza. A perfectly-executed in-bounds play that enabled Taylor Kathol to slip in for a layup tied the game at 10-10 with 35 seconds on the first period clock.

St. Patrick's broke that tie with the first 4 points of the second stanza, for a 14-10 lead, but the Trojans went on a tear, sparked by Kaiser's 3-point shot at the 6:45 mark, and launched a 13-2. When Kaiser stole the ball at midcourt and dropped in the layup, at the 1:40 mark of the second half, Cedar held a 23-16 lead.

St. Pat's tallied the final 3 points of the half, but the Trojans were in front, 26-19 at the midway break.

First Round, March 7
Lincoln, Neb.

CLASS C2

Sutton 37, Crofton 24
Hartington Cedar Catholic
56, North Platte St. Patrick's 49

CLASS D2

Spalding/Spalding Academy
65, Wausa 62
Wynot 55, Giltner 40

One of the keys to the lead was Cedar's defense, which refused to allow the ball to get inside, especially to Joe Clinch, who came in to the tourney averaging 15.3 points per game. Cedar head coach Matt Steffen said the Cedar practices in the days leading up to the tourney were all about denying the ball to St. Pat's dangerous inside players. Clinch was limited to 3 first half points.

"We execute our offense the best when we execute as a team," Steffen noted of his 21-7 Trojans. "We did that quite well in the second quarter, and that, plus defense, gave us the lead."

But just as a leaky dam eventually breaks, Clinch found the bucket in the third period. The 6'2" St. Pat's senior scored 10 of the Irish's 14 third period points, including hitting their first four buckets of the second half.

But Cedar answered every basket Clinch and his mates made. Using a balanced scoring attack that saw five players find the scorebook, the Trojans let the Irish edge no closer than five, and at four times during that frame, nudged their lead to seven. And that was the margin when the third period buzzer sounded, 40-33.

TROJANS | PAGE 8A

Wynot Exacts Revenge Against Giltner, Wins In D2

BY JAMES D. CIMBUREK

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LINCOLN, Neb. — For the past two years, the Wynot Blue Devils have seen their quest for a state title upended by eventual champion Giltner in the semifinals.

This year, the teams met in the quarterfinals, and it was Wynot that did the upending.

Wynot jumped out to a 15-6 lead after one quarter and held the Hornets at bay the rest of the way in a 55-40 decision in the Class D2 opening round at the Nebraska State Boys' Basketball Tournament.

Nathan Wieseler and Davis Wieseler each scored 14 points for Wynot (23-3), which will play Falls City Sacred Heart today (Friday) at 3:45 p.m. at Pershing Auditorium. Jackson Sudbeck added 10 points in the win.

Dylan Hinrichs led Giltner (21-5) with 16 points. Dustin Hastings added 12 points.

Wynot first went inside to 6-8 Nathan Wieseler for the team's first two scores,

then the Blue Devils went outside for three three-pointers, two by Davis Wieseler and another by Cody Stratman. Another Nathan Wieseler basket gave Wynot a nine-point lead after one period.

"We wanted to come ready to play," Nathan Wieseler said. "We wanted to play together."

Wynot scored just two field goals in the second quarter, but expanded their lead by hitting five of seven free throws on the way to a 24-13 halftime advantage.

"We got off to a strong start," said Wynot head coach Lee Heimes. "They switched up defenses. When they trapped us, we lost our composure a little."

The Blue Devils led by as many as 15, 30-15, before Giltner got hot from outside. Jared and Dustin Hastings each hit three-pointers to start the run, closing the gap to nine.

Combined with the outside shooting, the Hornets started to trap on defense.

"They used a 1-3-1, a 1-2-2, also ran a man-and-chaser," Heimes said. "It con-



JAMES D. CIMBUREK/P&D

Wynot's Nathan Wieseler, 11, erases a shot attempt by Giltner's Garrett Poppen during the first half of their Class D2 quarterfinal at the Nebraska State Boys' Basketball Tournament on Thursday at Lincoln High.

WYNOT | PAGE 8A

Wausa Falls In D2 Opener

BY JAMES D. CIMBUREK

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LINCOLN, Neb. — Down 11 in the fourth quarter and with two starters fouled out, the Wausa Vikings' bench learned how to deal with adversity in a high-profile game.

Unfortunately, the Vikings will have to wait until next year to apply those lessons.

Spalding-Spalding Academy held off a late surge by Wausa, scoring just enough to claim a 65-62 victory over the Vikings in the opening round of the Nebraska Class D2 Boys' Basketball Tournament on Thursday at Lincoln North Star High School.

Wausa got within two points several times in the final two minutes, but the victorious Knights answered each volley with just enough to move on to a semifinal matchup with top-seeded Leyton.

"I was really proud of the guys that came off the bench," said Wausa head coach Tylor Fincher. "They hit some big shots."

Wausa's need for a comeback was created midway through the second half.

With Wausa leading 36-34, SSA senior Kyle Bloom got loose for a three-pointer. Then another. And another. And another.

Bloom scored half of his game-high 24 points and all of his three-pointers during a six-



JAMES D. CIMBUREK/P&D

Wausa's Austin Conn, right, passes around the defense of Spalding-Spalding Academy's Michael Glaser during the second half of their opening round game in the Nebraska Class D2 Boys' Basketball Tournament on Thursday at Lincoln North Star High School.

minute stretch that saw the Knights go from two points down to a 54-43 lead with 5:27 to play.

"I thought we played some good defense," Fincher said. "We just had some miscommunication."

Trailing 58-47 with 3:44 to play, Wausa's Trevor Wakeley went to the bench for good. His

replacement, junior Devin Munter, responded with a three-pointer. Austin Conn followed with another triple, but picked up his foul as he was trying to work the Knight ball handler.

On the next Wausa possession, Marcus Clausen drained his

WAUSA | PAGE 8A

Wilson Provides Spark For USD Women; Coyotes Open Tournament Action Sunday

BY CHRIS RILEY

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VERMILLION — When Tempestt Wilson steps onto the court at the Sioux Falls Arena on Sunday afternoon to open Summit League play, the USD senior will be making her 77th consecutive start for the Coyotes — 36 more than second on the current roster (fellow senior Alexis Yackley with 41).

Wilson, who will have started 90 of her 92 career games for the Coyotes after transferring to Vermillion for the 2010-11 season from Iowa Western Community College, was named to the All-Summit League Second Team on Thursday.

After losing 60 percent of the team's offensive production from a year ago to graduation, Wilson met with new head coach Amy Williams before the season started and said that her number one goal for her final year on the court was to be more consistent.

"She didn't want to have a great game here or there," Williams said. "She has really sparked us offensively."

In addition to her offensive exploits — Wilson finished second on the team in scoring with 12.9 points per game and led the squad in three pointers and free throws — Wilson was also a menace to opposition guards.

"I can hardly explain what she's meant to our team offensively and defensively — just carrying us,"

"It took me awhile, but my confidence and my game is where it should be."

TEMPESTT WILSON



Wilson

Williams added. "That scoring punch that she brings and being able to defend the opposing team's best players are huge for our team."

The soft-spoken Wilson admits that it took some adjusting to not being the "featured" player on the team's roster at first, but eventually she grew into that role.

"When I first started playing basketball I felt like I was always that leader and always taking over in the last minute of the game," Wilson said. "The transition (not always being that go-to player) was hard at first. It took me awhile, but my confidence and my game is where it should be."

Wilson has steadily raised her scoring average from 8.4 points per game during her 2010-11 campaign to nearly 13 points per game this season while also grabbing more rebounds and committing fewer turnovers. She finished the year posting double-digit points in 17 of the final 19 regular season games — scoring a career-high 26 points at

IUPUI on January 26.

Making the NCAA tournament in USD's first year of eligibility is the ultimate goal this year according to Wilson. The journalism/mass communication major said that regardless of how this season ends, she still sees herself being heavily involved in the game she loves.

"I really do want to keep playing if I can," Wilson said. "I'd love to play overseas and eventually pursue coaching."

Wilson's current coach summarized what Tempestt has meant to a fledgling Coyotes squad this season outside of the box score in two short sentences.

"Tempestt is so reliable and consistent," Williams said. "In every drill and every practice she goes as hard as she can."

Williams, Wilson, and the rest of the Coyotes begin Summit League Tournament play this weekend in Sioux Falls.

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