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PREPS

GIRLS' BASKETBALL SECTION FINALS

ROUNDUP

White Bear gets to state for third year in row

White Bear Lake defeated East Ridge for the first time in three tries this season, winning 52-49 on Thursday in the Class 4A, Section 4 championship at Hastings High School to advance to the girls' basketball state tournament for a third consecutive year.

The Bears led by four with under two minutes to play, but the Raptors forced three turnovers while the Bears tried to preserve the lead and forced overtime.

In overtime, Alexa Molin hit a three-pointer with under 20 seconds remaining to give the Bears the lead.

Raptors leading scorer Noelle Tomes had a chance at the buzzer to tie the score after Molin hit a free throw on the following possession, but Tomes' shot was blocked.

Minnetonka 45, Edina 40: After being down 40-35 with 4:20 left, the top-seeded Skippers scored 10 straight points to beat the No. 2 seed Hornets and win the Class 4A, Section 2 final. Neither team led by more than six points. Six players scored for the Skippers while the Hornets relied on Annika Jank's game-high 27 points.

Lakeville North 46, Rochester Mayo 41: The Panthers overcame a three-point halftime deficit to defeat the Spartans in the Class 4A, Section 1 final at Mayo Civic Arena in Rochester. Temi Carda led the Panthers with 18 points, and Caitlyn Peterson had 12.

Holy Angels 48, Bloomington Kennedy 33: For the second straight season, the Stars defeated the Eagles in the final of the Class 3A, Section 3 tournament at Bloomington Jefferson and remained on course to defend their state title. Destinee Oberg led the Stars with 13 points and 13 rebounds. Megan Meyer contributed 13 points and Megan Thompson scored nine points and made seven steals. Zaraya March led the Eagles with 11 points. Honour Finley and Samantha Husting scored eight points each.

DeLaSalle 84, St. Anthony 51: The fourth-seeded Islanders pulled off their second upset victory of the Class 3A, Section 4 playoffs. Ayanna Gardner scored 23 points to lead the Islanders past the third-seeded Huskies. Olivia Travis had 12 points and Dacoda Speidel 11 for the Islanders. Samantha Sibbet led the Huskies with 19 points, and Bonnie Zeller had 12.

Elk River 84, Moorhead 73: The top-seeded Elks pulled away from the third-seeded Spuds in the second half to win the Class 4A, Section 8 final. Ava Kramer led the Elks with 20 points. Brooke Tonsfeldt scored 29 points for the Spuds. Lydia Haack, Danielle Lachmiller and Gabi Haack had 14 points each and Kelsie Cox had 13 for the Elks. Sam Halby had 19 points for the Spuds.

Winona 59, Northfield 40: Eden Nibbelink scored 24 points and had seven rebounds and six steals to lead the Winhawks past the Raiders in the Class 3A, Section 1 final at Mayo Civic Arena in Rochester. Maria Appicelli had 14 points and five steals for the Winhawks. Grace Touchette had 14 points, six rebounds and five steals and Annika Hoff had nine points and four blocks for the Raiders.

STAFF REPORTS

ORONO 66, HUTCHINSON 62

RENEE JONES SCHNEIDER • renee.jones@startribune.com

Senior Tori Andrew led Orono with 18 points against Hutchinson. All five starters scored in double figures for the Spartans, who improved to 24-5.

Orono ousts No. 1 seed

Orono coach Lavesa Glover smiled at the scoreboard after the Class 3A, Section 6 championship game Thursday at Chanhassen High School.

It wasn't just because of her team's 66-62 victory over rival and top section seed Hutchinson.

All five starters scored in double figures, including some who average just a few points a game. It was something the first-year coach proudly pointed out.

"You can't dream of a better stat line," Glover said. "I'm just so proud of these girls. They've worked so hard."

Senior Tori Andrew led the Spartans with 18 points and junior Madeline Loder scored the go-ahead layup with about a minute left as second-seeded Orono (24-5) rallied to defeat the Tigers (22-6).

"This game means the world to us," Loder said. "We weren't supposed to be here. It's just such an awesome experience to be here with this team."

Orono lost six seniors from last year's team, including three starters. The team started the season 7-4 but won of 16 of 17 games heading into Thursday, losing only to Hutchinson in that stretch.

The Tigers took a second-half lead Thursday with an 11-0 run, spurred by seven points from MaKenzie Rensch. Orono tied the score with less than three minutes left before Loder's game-winning layup.

Tori Wortz led Hutchinson with 16 points. Gabby Hahn added 15 points and Rensch scored 14. The Tigers had won 16 consecutive games before Thursday and were looking for a second consecutive state tournament appearance.

NATE GOTLIEB

PARK CENTER 53, CENTENNIAL 46

Park Center rallies, wins 14th in a row

Top-seeded Park Center trailed at halftime and throughout much of the game Thursday night against Centennial. The Pirates missed a few three-pointers and didn't get their first second-half field goal until nearly seven minutes in.

Luckily for them, senior captain Ann Simonet made five three-pointers. Her final one came with 4 minutes, 45 seconds left in the game to put her team up for good on the way to a 53-46 victory over the Cougars in the Class 4A, Section 5 girls' basketball championship game at Anoka High School.

"I felt our momentum going down, and once I hit that three, I just felt everyone's energies just pick up," Simonet said. "And I knew right then, there was a turning moment."

She led her team with 15 points while senior Mikayla Hayes had 10. The Pirates (24-5) are on a 14-game winning streak.

They knew this would be a close game, Pirates coach Chris Vander-Hyde said. "It's like a boxing match," she said. "You've got to keep slugging at each other. We kept slugging. We didn't fall down."

The Pirates are headed back to the state tournament for the fourth consecutive year. They won back-to-back Class 3A titles in 2014 and 2015 before moving to Class 4A last season, when they lost in the state quarterfinals.

Cougars senior captain Sarah Grow led her team with 13 points. Centennial led 26-23 at halftime. .

HEATHER RULE

RICHARD TSONG-TAATARII • Star Tribune

Park Center's bench celebrated the Pirates' 53-46 victory over Centennial in the Class 4A, Section 5 final.

MARK HVIDSTEN • SportsEngine

Hopkins' Dlayla Chakolis stepped over Wayzata's Kalie Theisen during the Royals' 81-74 victory Thursday.

HOPKINS 81, WAYZATA 74

Hopkins responds to halftime scare

Hopkins girls' basketball coach Brian Cosgriff's message to his team at halftime was clear.

The undefeated Royals, who hadn't trailed at the half all season, faced a 12-point deficit to Wayzata in the Class 4A, Section 6 championship game. Cosgriff kept his message short.

"Let's see what kind of team we are," Cosgriff said he told his team Thursday.

The Royals (29-0) responded. Top-seeded Hopkins mounted a comeback and defeated Wayzata 81-74 at Minneapolis Roosevelt High School to win its sixth section title in seven years.

"We just thought, 'We don't want to lose,'" said freshman guard Paige Bueckers, who led the Royals with 28 points. "We wanted to go to state and finish our journey."

Hopkins was down 37-22 midway through the first half and 41-29 at the start of the second, but took a 46-44 lead with 14 minutes, 50 seconds left in the game.

Leading 75-72 with 1:01 left, the Royals finished a 6-2 run behind two free throws each from DeAnna Winston, Bueckers and Raena Suggs.

"This was a complete team win," Cosgriff said. "It was a good win for Hopkins basketball."

The matchup was much closer than the last meeting between the teams on Feb. 16, when Hopkins won by 37 points. The Royals have not lost to Wayzata since Feb. 21, 2011.

Suggs, a junior guard, added 18 points for the Royals. Hopkins had four players score in double figures.

Sydney Franks led Wayzata (22-7) with 22 points.

MIKE HENDRICKSON

EASTVIEW 59, ROSEMOUNT 49

Eastview stands tall in reaching state for sixth year in a row

Eastview appears primed to make another state tournament run.

The Lightning used a height advantage to dismantle Rosemount 59-49 in the Class 4A, Section 3 championship Thursday at Hutton Arena at Hamline University. It's Eastview's sixth consecutive section title, the last three after final victories over the Irish.

Andrea Abrams, a 6-0 junior forward, scored 11 points in the first seven minutes, making three three-pointers. The last two came during an 11-0 run that gave Eastview a 22-12 lead.

"It helps having three 6-footers who can defend and shoot the ball well," Eastview coach Molly Kasper said. "We wanted to use our height to protect the paint on defense."

The No. 5-ranked Lightning (23-6) then went to work on the interior offensively, led by 6-1 senior guard Rachel Ranke and 6-2 junior forward Megan Walstad. Eastview closed the half on a 22-1 run to take a 33-13 lead at the intermission. Walstad finished with a team-high 15 points, and Ranke wound up with 14.

"It was really important for us to get off to a good start," Walstad said. "We're playing our best right now."

Rosemount (17-12) got no closer than 10 points in the waning seconds of the second half. Senior guard Maddy Olson led the Irish with 16 points.

The matchup marked the return of Rosemount coach Chris Olson, who suffered a heart attack while running with his physical education class last Friday morning, to the Irish sidelines. He sat on the bench in a less active role as Kirstee Rotty took over the team.

Kasper served as an assistant coach under Olson before taking over the Eastview program two years ago.

"We have a friendly rivalry," Olson said. "It's not a rivalry until you beat them, right? Well, we haven't beaten them since 2006."

RON HAGGSTROM

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