

THURSDAY, MARCH 15, 2018 SPORTS

PREPS EXTRA

CLASS 3A QUARTERFINALS GRAND RAPIDS 75, HOLY ANGELS 60



Grand Rapids players from left, forward Meera Beighley, center Maggie Miska and forward Hannah DeMars celebrated their team's 75-60 over Holy Angels in the Class 3A quarterfinals Wednesday at Williams Arena.

CLASS 2A QUARTERFINALS SAUK CENTRE 67, BYRON 61

Sauk Centre rallies past Byron to stay unbeaten

Frustrated and a bit rattled, Sauk Centre players were forced to process unusual feelings at halftime.

The undefeated Mainstreeters trailed state tournament newcomer Byron by nine at halftime, then roared back for a 67-61 victory in the Class 2A quarterfinals Wednesday at Target Center.

Byron center Anyika Lee, a 6-foot force, tormented the No. 1-seeded Mainstreeters (23-4) throughout the first half. She scored 17 points, grabbed 12 rebounds and blocked seven shots in the second half. Sauk Centre stepped up its vaunted transition game to beat Lee down the floor and minimize her considerable presence.

It took a 2-2 run by the Mainstreeters to give them a 46-36 lead.

"We knew they'd pick up the pressure in the second half," Byron coach Darren Nelson said.

The pressure led to fast breaks and quick baskets. Lee was limited to 10 points and five rebounds in the second half.

"We tried to stay confident and stick to our game," said Sauk Centre's Masony Thiesen, who finished with a team-high 24 points.

Byron (19-11), which entered Wednesday on a 10-game winning streak, didn't quit.

The Bears' fourth made three-pointer of the second half, by Haley Beaman, cut their deficit to 62-59 with 1:29 to play.

From there, Sauk Centre's Tori Peschel and Thiesen went to work. A 2-2 run by the free-throw line to maintain control.

DAVID LA VAGNER

CLASS 3A QUARTERFINALS Willmar rallies to upset DeLaSalle in overtime

They're a fantastic defensive team," Alexander coach Woody Kohler said.

Northfield 49, Menasha West 46

It was the third meeting of the Big 9 Conference foes Northfield and Menasha West. The Raiders just happened to be taller and pose matchup problems.

The four 6-footers for second-seeded Northfield combined for 27 points, 10 rebounds and five blocked shots as the Raiders swept the season series. Northfield won the previous games 66-62 and 48-57.

The Raiders opened up their largest lead, 42-22 with only four minutes left. The game was trimmed to four when Scarlet junior guard Ashley Gustafson sank one of two free throws with 38 seconds left.

"When we play too fast, we get into trouble," Raiders coach Tony Mathison said. "This is the third team in a row we were playing for the shutdown. It's respect to pull away isn't going to happen."

Senior center Anyika Hoff used her distinct height advantage to lead Northfield (26-3) with 13 points, nine rebounds and three blocked shots. Hoff is only the tallest Menasha West player in 5-8.

"Our height is a huge strength for us," Hoff said. "We've gotten jarring it into the post."

Gustafson (15 points) and sophomore guard Holly Wiese (14) combined for 29 points for Menasha West (24-4).

"We tried to simulate (the height disadvantage) the best we could in practice," Wiese said. "They're so much taller than us, it was hard."

CLASS 2A QUARTERFINALS Raiders senior guard steps up at right time

That was a big motivator for us to move on with our streak."

Menasha East (24-7) used a 10-0 start to get within 30-28 late in the first half at Williams Arena. The Mustangs (22-4) responded with an 8-0 charge over the first minute of the half and the Giants never got back within single digits.

"We're always looking to push the ball. Even our center can dribble down the court if she needs it," said senior guard Kyla Breen. "She was hitting all her shots and being aggressive on offense and defense."

In other words, just what No. 4 seed Menasha (24-4) needed. Senior Jacyln Jernot had 12 points, 15 rebounds and six assists.

MATT STEICHEN

Raiders 62, Tracy-Milroy Bulldogs 56

The defending champion Rams without an upset bid by the Bulldogs, who led by as many as 14 points five minutes into the second half at Williams Arena.

The Rams (25-5) then put together a 6-2 run to tie the score. They took the lead for good on freshman guard Katie Borewick's putback basket with four minutes to go.

"We would have liked a better start, but we played calm and with experience down the stretch," Borewick coach Kelley DeLaSalle said.

Borewick finished with 17 points, the first two on a pair of one-clicker putbacks with 1:32 minutes left. Her older sister Kacie, a junior, finished with 10 points.

After putting up 20 points in the first 24 minutes, the Rams scored 15 points in the final 12 minutes.

"We started getting more defensive stops and our defense usually fuels our offense," Kacie Borewick said.

Seniors Kaylee Kirk and Evelyn Dolan each scored 10 points for the Panthers (22-3).

MATT STEICHEN

CLASS 3A QUARTERFINALS Grand Rapids wins with speed

The Thunderhawks wore down and upset the Stars.

BYRON HAGGSTROM

Neither Holy Angels' No. 2 ranking nor Arkansas-bound Dariane Oberg's star unseated Grand Rapids.

The No. 7-rated Thunderhawks got out in transition at every opportunity, exploiting the pious Stars in a 75-60 victory Wednesday in the Class 3A quarterfinals at Williams Arena.

"We know we had to push the ball up the floor," Grand Rapids coach Kris Hamling said. "This team loves to do that. Our girls played really well."

Grand Rapids (22-7) went on an 8-7 run early in the second half to open up a 47-38 lead. Meera Beighley and Liberty Blaine had hooked a while Hamling. Kris Hamling, Jr. made a three-pointer in the heat. Beighley later had a run of nine consecutive Thunderhawk points.

"We like to run the floor," Blaine said. "It was a big part of the game. It hooked us."

Not to mention a little pregame motivation. Before leaving their hotel for the game, the Thunderhawks watched a tape of their 46-44 loss to Alumnita in a last-second shot in the quarterfinals a year ago.

"We came in with a chip on our shoulder," Beighley said. "We wanted to play our best game."

They showed it until the midway point of the second half. Holy Angels (25-5), seeded third, used an 11-2 run to pull within 54-63 on sophomore guard Emma Henry.

Henry's Hamling also had eight steals and seven assists.

"We have been playing very, very well the last three weeks," Kris Hamling said. "She has it continue for three more days."

Oberg was limited to 10 points and five rebounds in 30 minutes.

"It was frustrating," Oberg said. "We were getting what we were used to on offense. We were getting worn down and couldn't get back on."

All five Grand Rapids starters finished in double digits. Hamling led the way with 18 while Beighley had 17. Henry's Hamling also had eight steals and seven assists.

"We have been playing very, very well the last three weeks," Kris Hamling said. "She has it continue for three more days."

Senior guard Megan Meyer was the lone Stars player in double figures with 16 points.

CLASS 3A QUARTERFINALS Willmar rallies to upset DeLaSalle in overtime

Willmar wasn't going to quit. No matter how ugly it looked.

The No. 6-ranked Cardinals overcame a 15-point halftime deficit to knock off No. 1 DeLaSalle 54-47 in overtime in the Class 3A quarterfinals Wednesday at Williams Arena. They scored all 10 of their points in the extra session on free throws, with senior guard Cayle Howland making six of them.

"We knew we would have to grind it out," said Howland, who had a game-high 15 points, seven coming from the free-throw line where the Cardinals were 19-for-26. "We kicked it into gear at halftime."

Teammate Hannah Johnson, a junior guard, had the other four free throws in overtime and finished with 14 points. She made nine free throws in all.

"We started dribble attacking," Willmar coach Dustin Carlson said. "We were better spaced out in the second half."

Willmar (26-2) scored the first seven points of overtime before DeLaSalle senior guard Anyssa Gardner made a three-pointer.

Gardner, who had 10 points, had scored on a runner down the middle of the lane with eight seconds left in regulation after grabbing an offensive rebound to tie it at 42-41. The Islanders quickly forced a turnover, but missed a last-second three-pointer so it went to overtime.

"It comes down to you have to make shots," DeLaSalle coach Tatyasa Scott said. "We were getting our shots."

DeLaSalle (29-9), seeded fourth, went 5-for-34 from the field in the second half and overtime.

The Cardinals, who trailed 29-31 at halftime, were held without a basket for the first 8:45 of the game. They shot 24 percent from the field and turned the ball over 12 times in the first half.

"There was nothing positive to talk about at the offensive end in the first half," Carlson said. "We had to be ourselves, be normal."

BYRON HAGGSTROM

Cooper 54, Alexandria 41

Hawks senior Jada Buford came into the state tournament averaging nearly eight points per game. It turns out, the big stage agrees with her.

She scored a season-high 20 points in her team's victory over Alexandria. It was the Cooper's 20th consecutive victory.

"I play better when I'm kind of just in my zone," Buford said.

After a first half when the top-seeded Hawks (27-0) shot only 24.4 percent, Buford made one of her three three-pointers to start the second half.

Buford's older sister, Kiana Buford, coaches the team and acknowledged some jitters for her team in its first state trip.

"Missed a lot of layups (Wednesday)," the coach said. "That's our bread and butter."

Freshman Andrea Tribble added 18 points off the bench, including going 3-for-4 from three-point range. She made one of them with 15 seconds left in the first half for a 25-24 lead at the break.

"I really just had to contribute to the team," Tribble said. "We could lead her team with 17 points. The Cardinals (22-4) led for much of the first half and kept it close. Cooper just hit the big shots when they needed them."

CLASS 2A QUARTERFINALS Sauk Centre rallies past Byron to stay unbeaten

Anyika Lee, center, and Tori Peschel, forward, of Sauk Centre celebrate their victory over Byron in the Class 2A quarterfinals Wednesday at Target Center.

CLASS 3A QUARTERFINALS Willmar rallies to upset DeLaSalle in overtime

Willmar's Cayle Howland, senior guard, celebrates with teammates after scoring a game-winning free throw during overtime in the Class 3A quarterfinals Wednesday at Williams Arena.