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Grafton girls use tough defense to take control in impressive NSC victory

The girls' teams from Grafton and Port Washington may have been billed as the open act for a coed basketball doubleheader last Friday, but host Grafton showed it was intent on being the headliner.

The result was a 46-21 win for the Black Hawks.

"Nothing we do comes easy," said Grafton coach Steve Reinhardt, whose team rolled to its third consecutive win.

"We played great team defense in the first three quarters, and that took the wind out of Port."

Grafton played a steady game from the start, taking an 11-5 lead by the end of the first quarter.

The Hawks continued to play dogged defense the rest of the half and held a 20-7 lead at intermission.

Grafton found a higher gear in the third quarter, using a diverse offense and stifling defense to outscore the visiting Pirates, 20-3.

Angie Mann led Grafton in scoring with 15 points. The long-range marksmanship of Amanda Hunt also kept the Port defense honest, as she tallied a trio of three-point

baskets.

“Everyone is finding Amanda is difficult to defend. When she is hitting threes, we can be pretty tough,” Reinhardt said.

Rachel Ruona and Haley Orlowski each added seven points for Grafton.

No Port players scored in double figures, with Stephanie Volesky taking top honors with seven points.

Reinhardt said keeping Port’s Mikayla Hilton in check was the key to the victory. The senior finished with just five points.

“She is a big part of their offense. When Hilton doesn’t score, they are pretty much in trouble,” he said.

Port coach Brian Johnson had a different explanation for the loss.

“It was our third game during the week and we just hit a wall,” Johnson said.

“This game is difficult enough with a full roster, but by the end of the Grafton game we were down to seven players. The girls just ran out of gas.”

The Pirates had reason to be emotionally drained, too.

They lost a nonconference game to Waukesha North, 64-20, on Jan. 8, and fell to Germantown, 81-49, in North Shore Conference play Jan. 9.

“They were both high-powered teams, and we found it hard to keep up with them,” Johnson said.

Grafton improved its season record to 9-4, including a 4-3 mark in the conference.

This week, the Hawks will travel to Cedarburg on Friday for a 5:45 p.m. NSC game and to Greendale on Saturday from a 4 p.m. nonleague contest.

Port, which fell to 3-9 overall and 1-6 in the conference, will play a 7:30 p.m. North Shore game at Milwaukee Lutheran on Friday.

On Jan. 22, the Pirates will host Kiel, also at 7:30 p.m.

Image Information: Volesky and teammate Brianna Ahner tried to keep Audrey Dickmann from driving to the basket. Photo by Sam Arendt