

Defense sets tone as Grafton girls pick up signature win over Bay

Written by STEVE OSTERMANN
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After being held to a season-low 19 points in a December loss at Whitefish Bay, the Grafton girls' basketball team had to wait nearly two months for a shot at payback.

Although the Black Hawks didn't exactly burn up the scoreboard, they regained their shooting touch enough to scorch Bay, 43-37, in a North Shore Conference rematch last Friday.



Grafton never trailed but had to withstand a fourth-quarter rally by the Blue Dukes that pulled them within one point with five minutes left.

Junior forward Amanda Hunt went 7-for-8 at the free-throw line in the final period to help seal the victory.

"We didn't turn the ball over like we did in the first game against them, and that was a big difference," said Grafton coach Steve Reinhardt, whose team improved its conference record to 7-5.

"We also stepped up defensively and didn't give up many open shots."

The Hawks, who were coming off a two-point loss at Nicolet the previous Friday, held a 22-13 lead at halftime and took a 28-25 edge into the fourth quarter.

After the Dukes cut the margin to 30-29, Grafton responded with a decisive charge. Hunt made a pair of free throws and, following a Bay turnover, guard Haley Orlovski hit a three-point shot that put the Hawks up, 35-29, with 4:42 left.

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Bay never got closer than four points the rest of the way.

Orlowski finished with a game-high 16 points after going scoreless against Nicolet. Hunt had only one basket but contributed 13 points, including an 11-for-13 effort on foul shots.

“They both had big games for us,” Reinhardt said.

“I told Haley she had to score. She stepped up and took advantage of her opportunities.”

Bay, which fell to 8-4 and into a three-way tie for second place in NSC play, was led by Maya Jonas with 12 points. The junior forward had eight fourth-quarter points.

“Every win is big, but this should give us a bit of confidence,” Reinhardt said.

“Other than beating Cedarburg (in the conference opener Nov. 30), we hadn’t had a signature win. We finally got one.”

Grafton was scheduled to play a pair of home games this week, starting against Hartford on Tuesday. On Friday, the Hawks will face Milwaukee Lutheran at 7:30 p.m.

Image Information: GUARD HALEY ORLOWSKI scored a game-high 16 points in Grafton’s 43-37 win over Whitefish Bay last Friday. Photo by Sam Arendt