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A cold-shooting road game isn't a good way for a struggling basketball team to get back on track.

The Grafton girls' squad was reminded of that Monday.

Scuffling offensively throughout the night, the Black Hawks fell to host Hartford, 43-34, in a nonconference contest that saddled them with their third straight loss.

"It was the same thing again for us. We're turning the ball over and breaking down at inopportune times," said Grafton coach Bob Maronde, whose team fell to 10-7 overall.

"The big thing is a lack of confidence for us right now. Our players have to experience success again to start believing in themselves."

Hartford (5-10) wasted little time cashing in on the Hawks' miscues. The Orioles broke to a 16-7 lead after one quarter and never trailed the rest of the way.

Grafton cut the margin to 22-15 by halftime, but Hartford took a 33-24 lead into the final period and wasn't seriously threatened.

In addition to struggling from the field, the Hawks hurt themselves by shooting just 33% at the free-throw line (5 for 15).

"At least four of those misses were the front end of one-and-ones," Maronde said.

Senior center Myranda Tyler led Grafton with 10 points, but none of her teammates scored in double figures. Christie Collins and Sarah Eichler each had eight points.

Hartford got a game-high 16 points from Maria Stephans and 11 from Ally Frase.

The Hawks' loss came on the heels of a pair of tough road defeats in North Shore Conference games last week.

Grafton is scheduled to resume NSC play Friday at home against Whitefish Bay and travel to West Allis Central for a nonconference game Feb. 15. Both contests start at 7:30 p.m.

Nicolet 61, Grafton 34

The Hawks had their hands full in a conference loss to the first-place Knights on Friday.

Nicolet (10-0) powered its way to a 22-6 lead in the first quarter with a combination of hot shooting and stingy defense.

Grafton was unable to pick up the pace the rest of the way as the Knights steadily increased their advantage.

“We’re just struggling,” Maronde said. “I think we’re a team in search of a personality that just hasn’t figured out what it should be.”

Sophomore forward Kim Schacht was one of the few Hawks who played well and finished with a team-high 13 points, including all of their first-quarter offense.

Guard Carley Pfannerstill added eight points but no other Grafton players had more than six.

Ashley Green poured in a game-high 25 points for Nicolet, including three three-point baskets.

Cedarburg 37, Grafton 28

The host Bulldogs scored their second win over Grafton in as many tries this season Feb. 2.

Grafton trailed by only 12-11 after the first quarter and 24-19 at halftime. However, Cedarburg outscored the Hawks, 8-0, in the third period.

Tyler led Grafton with nine points, and Eichler added six.

Cedarburg got eight points from Carly Lythjohan and seven apiece from Kelly Doedens and Rachel Ziebell.