

Dec. 16 Girls Basketball – Township 3-for-3 on opening night Taylor stars in Nottingham's opener but had plenty of help in the win

By Ken Weingartner
Fish4scores.com

Dec. 16: Jalliet Taylor showed she will be a force to be reckoned with as Nottingham High's girls basketball team opened its season with a 43-24 win tonight at Princeton, but the Northstars were more than just a single shooting star.

Taylor, a sophomore, scored 20 points and grabbed 17 rebounds to lead Nottingham, but she got more than a little help from her friends as the squad made a winner of head coach Leo Mahon in his debut on the bench.

Kelsey Ignace, a freshman, added 12 points for the Northstars while senior Shauntell Penix had seven points and pulled down nine rebounds. Junior point guard Imani Alston handed out six assists.

"The key was working together as a team," Ignace said. "That's really working out for us. Our passing was good and we were getting good looks at the basket.

"It feels great. We've been working hard in practice and it feels really good to come out with a win."

Nottingham never trailed against Princeton, bursting to a 10-2 in the first quarter. Four Northstars scored during the spurt, which was fueled by 5-for-8 shooting from the floor.

The only downside to the opening minutes was the eight turnovers committed by Nottingham as it often pushed the tempo in transition.

"It was first-game jitters," Mahon said. "But we settled in."

Princeton got within 15-12 with 2:57 remaining in the second quarter, but never any closer. In fact, by the time the third period ended, the Northstars had scored 20 of the game's next 24 points. That run included the first 11 points after intermission, with Taylor tallying eight.

"After we got the lead, we calmed down," Ignace said. "We realized we didn't have to rush; the clock is our friend and we want to use it to our advantage.

"We just really stayed positive and kept our heads in the game."

The Northstars limited Princeton, which had 19 turnovers, to 18.3 percent shooting from the field (9 of 49). Nottingham shot 38 percent from the floor (19 of 50) and committed only 10 turnovers over the final three quarters of the game.

"I think we did awesome," Taylor said. "It's only the first game of the season, but we showed we're coming back."

Nottingham finished last season with an 8-14 record. Mahon was not ready to make any



Nottingham's Jalliet Taylor goes up for a shot over Princeton's Marie Shane during tonight's season-opening Northstar win in Princeton (Photo by Ken Weingartner).

predictions about the future, or read too much into winning the season opener.

“I don’t try to forecast,” he said with a smile. “It’s just day to day. It’s all about the next one.”

Ignace was a little more forthcoming.

“I know we’re going to have a strong season to look forward to,” she said.

One built around strength in numbers.

Usarzewicz gets in a groove and Steinert gets a win over Allentown

By Rich Fisher

Fish4Scores.com

Lindsay Usarzewicz is an admitted streak shooter.

When it ain’t going good, it can be a struggle.

But when it’s all working, it’s a beauty to behold.

Tonight was on the beautiful side of things, as Usarzewicz drained four 3-pointers en route to 16 points as Steinert opened with a 45-36 home win over Allentown tonight.

“I guess you could say I had a hot streak,” Usarzewicz said with a laugh. “Once I get one I do get in a rhythm and they just seem to fall.”

With Steinert holding a slim 14-12 lead, Usarzewicz was 4-for-5 in a decisive second quarter in which the Spartans outscored the Redbirds 17-3.

Adrienne Boucher added eight points for the Spartans, while freshman guard Gabbi Bennett chipped in with seven.

“The team looked great,” said Usarzewicz, now pondering a career in journalism as well as basketball. “We were all so excited to start the season. We had so much energy and anxiousness, we just wanted to get out there and play because we’ve been working so hard and it really showed tonight.

“Everyone did great. The younger classmen were a little nervous but even I was nervous. Everyone gets nervous. But everyone stepped up and everyone shined in their own way.”

What made the victory important is that it could set a tone for Steinert, which has several holes to plug after a 10-15 season last year. The Spartans proved something to themselves and the rest of the CVC tonight.

“This was a huge win,” Usarzewicz said. “We started the scrimmages off not to well and we wanted to show everyone we were going to always play 110 percent and we’ll give our opponents a game.”

And give themselves a win.

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Hamilton West opened with a 38-25 win at Notre Dame, although no other details were available.