

## Jan. 31 Boys Basketball

### Notre Dame's four-minute surge is enough to sink scrappy Steinert

By Ken Weingartner

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**Jan. 31:** It was only a four-minute span in the first half, but it was too much for Steinert to overcome. The Spartans trailed powerful Notre Dame by only two points, 13-11, late in the first quarter when the Irish's Isaiah Johnson connected on a 3-pointer to spark a 13-3 burst and send the Spartans on their way to a 55-40 setback.

Ryan LaMarca's driving basket had Steinert within 19-14 in the second quarter, but Josh Williams drained the second of his two 3-pointers in the period and Mark Maksimow made consecutive buckets as the Irish, who are ranked No. 16 in the state, extended their lead to 26-14.

The Spartans played fairly evenly from there. They got within seven points, but could get no closer as Notre Dame's advantage hung in the low double-digits until late in the fourth period.

"If there is such a thing as a good loss, I guess this would be categorized as one," Steinert coach Dave Perry said. "They're a great team. They're well coached, they play well, they hit the threes. I have the utmost respect for Notre Dame. For my boys to hang in the way they did and never give up is a pat on our back a little bit.

"We got beat by 15, but we could have gotten blown out the way they're dominating teams."

James Locklear led Steinert, which dropped to 4-11, with 23 points. Notre Dame improved to 15-2.

"Everything is about a game of runs in basketball," Perry said. "I tell the boys, they get a run, you've got to get a run; they get a run, you've got to get a run. We tried to do that, but we just don't have the talent to keep up with Notre Dame, West Windsor South, Trenton – all in our conference, of course – and they're all great teams. I'm just proud of my boys the way that they hustled."

### Hopewell foul shot with one second remaining defeats Hamilton

This one hurt like heck.

After Dan Garcia tied the game on a 3-pointer with 30 seconds remaining, Hamilton fouled John Croak with one second remaining. The Bulldog made a free throw to end the game and give HoVal a 45-44 victory over the visiting Hornets tonight.

Hamilton trailed 31-21 at halftime but managed to cut the deficit to three entering the final quarter and eventually pulled even on Garcia's trey.

Lenwood Squire led Hamilton (6-10) with 15 points while Tyleer Wrenn chipped in with nine. HoVal raised its record 5-11 as it won for the third time in four games.

### Nottingham overmatched in loss to Ewing, cast eye to near future

Ewing overpowered Nottingham, 78-51, to improve it's record to 12-4 while the Northstars



*James Locklear drives against Notre Dame's Josh Williams for two of his 23 points tonight (Photo by Ken Weingartner).*

slipped to 6-8.

“Too big, too strong . . . bad match-up for us,” coach “Irish” Mike Walsh said.

Kevin Alexis led the Northstars with 14 points while Jamir Jenkins added 10.

Despite the loss, Walsh is anxious for what comes next.

“We are excited for the next two-and-half weeks,” the coach said. “Big Valley Division games, Mercer County Tournament games and the state tournament. I can’t wait to see our guys compete.”