

Feb. 3 Boys Basketball

Kevin Alexis does his best to 'foul' up Hornets in Nottingham win

By Ken Weingartner

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Feb 3: Nottingham's Kevin Alexis went to the foul line focused on repeating the same pre-shot routine.

The post-shot routine was repetitive, too, with the ball dropping through the nylon again and again.

Alexis scored a game-high 18 points thanks to 11-for-11 shooting from the foul line to help lead the Northstars to a 55-50 win tonight over rival Hamilton West in front of a large and raucous crowd at Nottingham. Alexis netted eight of his points, all on free throws, in the final 2:04 to seal the outcome.

As a team, Nottingham connected on 18 of 23 foul shots while Hamilton was 8 of 19.

"Coach (Mike Walsh) says to do a routine and they'll go in," Alexis said. "I was just thinking about finding a routine. It worked."

The win brought the Northstars within a game of .500, at 7-8, and kept them in contention for the Colonial Valley Conference Valley Division title.

"This win means a lot," Alexis said. "They beat us three times last year, so we wanted to come out hard and get the win. This keeps us in the race for the division. We want to put another banner on the wall."

Nottingham has one division title to its credit, which came in 2008.

"There's not a lot of basketball tradition here," Walsh said. "They want to build it. There's only one banner up there. They want it desperately.

"This is huge because it's a young group and for a young group to keep listening to you there has to be some success along the way," he added. "I'm proud of their resiliency as a young group. I'm not sure I would expect that from a young group. It's easy to drop your head when things don't go well, but they don't do that."

After reaching halftime deadlocked at 23, West took a five-point advantage in the third quarter, but saw it erased by a 9-2 Nottingham surge.

"That deflated us a little bit and we just ran out of steam," Hornets coach Jason Malloy said. "In the fourth quarter when needed to have a good possession, we either took a quick shot or turned the ball over. We just didn't close out the game well. We're not a very deep team right now and guys are running out of gas at the end."

Lenwood Squire led Hamilton with 12 points while Bret Stroman added 11. Dan Garcia and Will Leach had eight points apiece. Josh Giddens, who scored two points, was hit in the nose by an inadvertent elbow early in the fourth quarter and did not return.

Shaquan Worthy had 11 points for the Northstars, including a big 3-pointer with five minutes to go that gave Nottingham a 45-37 lead. Jamir Jenkins added eight points for Nottingham.

"In the first half, we were allowing penetration and they were killing us on the boards," Walsh said. "Once they penetrate and they get to someone underneath, they're going to score. In the second half, we did a better job beating them to the spot. We eliminated the penetration, we got some defensive boards and we hit our foul shots."

Hit them again and again and again.

Steinert gets past Hopewell

Despite scoring just two first-quarter points and a total of nine in the first half, Steinert came up

with a 41-33 victory over visiting Hopewell Valley to raise its record to 5-10. Steinert took control with a 16-5 third quarter.

No individual stats were available.