

**Jan. 17 Boys Basketball**



*Hamilton freshman Tyler Wrenn held up his end of the bargain in tonight's win over Princeton, as he scored a team-high 14 points and played standout defense despite being bothered by foul trouble (Photo by Ken Weingartner).*

## **Steinert comes up one agonizing point short in upset attempt of Lawrence**

**By Ken Weingartner  
Fish4Scores.com**

**Jan. 17:** After battling Lawrence down to the wire, but falling one basket shy of victory, Steinert coach Dave Perry knows his players can learn a lot from the contest. But even if they take only one thing away from the game, he believes it will be a step in the right direction.

“Hopefully, they understand we had our opportunities,” Perry said after the Spartans’ 54-53 setback tonight against a Lawrence team that improved to 8-3. “We’ve got to make free throws, we’ve got to box out, we’ve got to run the plays and we’ve got to be patient. If they can take one of those things out of the game, we’re good.”

Steinert brought a 2-7 record to the contest, but pushed the Cardinals from the start. The Spartans used a 14-0 run bridging the first and second quarters to build a 21-10 lead, with James Locklear scoring six of his game-high 22 points during the outburst and Ryan LaMarca adding four.

Lawrence, which got a team-high 19 points from Bloomfield-bound Bobby Brackett, chipped away. Bert McCallum’s basket to begin the third quarter pulled the Cardinals even, 30-30, and was part of a 13-2 run that gave them a 37-32 lead with 3:08 to go in the period.

“We got them to play our game early,” Perry said. “We wanted to run a controlled offense. Obviously, they’re very talented and very well coached. We took them out of their game a little bit in the first quarter, but then we started to play their kind of game and they got back in it and then it was a battle.”

Steinert would not go quietly. Nick LaBelle’s 3-pointer with seven minutes to play gave the Spartans their final lead, 42-41, and even after falling behind by six points, 52-46, with 1:42 to go they took the game to the last possession. Locklear’s traditional three-point play made it 54-53 with 18 seconds remaining and Lawrence missed two free throws moments later.

The Spartans called timeout with nine seconds left, but were unable to get a good look at a game-winning shot at the buzzer.

LaBelle finished with 10 points while LaMarca and Jarrett Varanyak added eight apiece.

“At times we looked good, and then we would turn the ball over,” Perry said. “(Lawrence is) a really good ball club. I’m proud of my boys; to lose by one point to somebody that’s supposed to blow us out by 30 or 40 points, I’m proud of them.

“We’ve felt defeat, but this is one that really hurts. You’ve got to learn how to win games. The last couple years we’ve been down and we don’t know how to win games. We play not to lose the game rather than playing to win the game. We’ve had a tough schedule here, a tough run. Hopefully we can learn from this, pull it together and get some Ws.”

## **Hornets improved second-half play helps seal the deal in win at Princeton**

**By Rich Fisher  
Fish4Scores.com**

Hamilton West snapped a two-game losing streak and won for the third time in five games by taking a 45-39 victory at Princeton.

The Hornets (4-7) were in a dogfight throughout, and were not able to put away the Little Tigers (5-7) until Lenwood Squire, freshman Tyleer Wrenn and sophomore Dan Garcia all hit clutch free throws in the final 30 seconds.

“We finally closed out a game,” coach Jason “Still Nicknameless” Malloy said. “Hopefully we made strides to build confidence at the end of games, knowing we can win them.”

West was up by two after one quarter and one at halftime, but Malloy wasn’t happy with the performance at that point.

“I didn’t think we were playing well,” he said. “Too many missed layups and turnovers. But our guys responded well after halftime though.”

Hamilton limited the Little Tigers to just 14 points, including six in the final quarter.

“We rebounded extremely well in the second half and didn’t give them second-chance opportunities,” Malloy said.

Wrenn “had a phenomenal game” according to the coach.

“He was hampered with some foul trouble and was still able to score 14 points and play some great defense, which he’s been doing a lot lately,” Malloy said.

Squire added 11 points and Bret Stroman chipped in with eight.

## **Nottingham’s game at Hightstown – fuhgettabout it!**

Nottingham, which has been playing well of late, had a relapse at Hightstown as the Rams took a 55-38 victory. That put Hightstown coach “Doctor” Don Hess, a Steinert graduate, just two wins away from 400 for his career.

For “Irish” Mike Walsh, it was just one of those nights.

“This was an old-fashioned stinker,” Walsh said. “We were two steps behind the Hightstown players all night. This is one we want to forget.”

The Rams trailed 13-5 after one quarter and 28-12 at halftime and, well, it just became one to forget. Nottingham fell to 4-6 and Hightstown improved to 5-7.