

Jan. 27 Girls Basketball



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Steinert's Olivia Peate tries keeping the ball away from Nottingham's Annisa Holman during tonight's Klockner Klash at Steinert (Photo by John Blaine/purchase photos by e-mailing jbsportsphoto@aol.com).

Revitalized Steinert tops Nottingham for fourth straight victory

By Rich Fisher
Fish4Scores.com

Jan. 27: All is right with the Steinert world again.

The frustration of a four-game losing streak has turned into the confidence of a four-game winning streak for the Spartan girls' basketball team, which had little trouble in a 43-26 home win over Nottingham tonight.

Steinert rolled to an 11-5 lead after one quarter and blew it open by outscoring Nottingham 14-0 in the second for a 25-5 halftime advantage.

It never got better for the Northstars, who took a step back from their strong showing against Robbinsville Tuesday.

Granted, Nottingham played better after intermission but by then it was too late.

"The second-half team was completely different from the first-half team," coach Lauren Kelly said. "This team was completely different from the team in the Robbinsville game. We need to put two solid halves together."

Steinert (9-6) is learning to do that by spreading the ball around on offense and stifling the opponent on defense. The Spartans have allowed an average of 31 points per game in its three wins and have held two of their last three opponents to 26 points.

It's a far cry from two weeks ago, when wins were tough to come by.

"I think we just started to get frustrated with ourselves and we were putting too much pressure on ourselves," said Mackenzie Ewell, who led Steinert with nine points along with Lindsay Usarzewicz. "We were rushing the ball up the court, not taking our time."

"Now we're back to normal."

And what turned it around?

"Confidence I would say," noted Ewell.

"I think the girls are learning," coach Bryan Rogers said. "They're getting better every single day, working hard at practice and learning the game. With that you obviously see the results."

"Our defensive effort and intensity have picked up and provided easy opportunities for us, and we're running our sets pretty well."

Steinert had no one in double figures tonight except for the team itself, as a whopping 10 different girls scored points. Adrianna Boucher, Lauren Matrisciano, Ashley Gonzalez, Taylor Wright and Kaitlyn Wolfsgruber all had four.

"The last few games we've really been able to work the ball inside," Rogers said. "Lauren and Ash have done a very good job working inside and it frees up the girls from the outside and gives us a pretty good game down low."

The Northstars (2-11) could not contend with any of it, despite getting 11 points from Imani Alston and eight from Dalia Lopez.

Once Steinert broke it open in the second quarter, Nottingham was reduced to moral victories in the second half.

"Exactly," Kelly said. "And that gets old."

Two-girl attack not enough to save Hamilton from loss to WW-P North

Alexis Johnson and Courtney Adams combined for 37 points, but the remainder of the team

combined for just one as Hamilton West dropped a 44-38 decision at West Windsor-Plainsboro North.

Johnson, fresh off becoming Hamilton's all-time leading scorer, added to her total with 23 points and Adams had 14. But no one else could chip in as the Hornets fell to 3-11 and WWPN improved to 6-7.