

Jan. 3 Girls Basketball



Carly Wood finds her trip to the basket blocked by Robbinsville's Taylor Mayweather tonight (Photo by Mike Dill/purchase photos at www.michaeldillphotography.com).

In the midst of collapse, cool Ewell bails out Steinert with winning basket

**By Rich Fisher
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Jan. 3: Steinert was on the precipice of suffering one of those demoralizing kind of losses until Lindsay Usarzewicz and Mackenzie Ewell came to the rescue.

The two teamed up for the winning bucket with seven seconds remaining to give the Spartans a 43-41 home victory over Robbinsville tonight, improving their record to 4-2.

Steinert entered the final quarter with a seemingly comfortable 39-28 lead. But the Ravens (3-3) kept coming, tied the game at 41-41 and were in a position to take the lead.

But Usarzewicz came up with a steal and found an open Ewell downcourt. The junior converted the lay-up, giving the Spartans their lead back.

“We had to keep them from getting down the court and shooting after that,” Ewell said. “(Coach Bryan) Rogers called a couple timeouts to calm us down.”

It worked, as the Ravens failed to tie it in the waning moments.

It was a strange game for Steinert (4-2), which scored 20 points in the first quarter and 15 in the third, but tallied just four each in the second and fourth.

“We were playing tough defense throughout the game and they started coming back,” Ewell said. “We gotta play the whole 32 minutes no matter what.”

Usarzewicz led Steinert with 14 points (and three 3-pointers), while Ewell, Ashley Gonzalez and Lauren Matrisciano had six each.

It wasn't a masterpiece, but the Spartans will take it.

“It was exciting to know we came out on top, knowing we lost two leads earlier,” Ewell said. “We've still got to work on some things, but a win is a win.”

With Johnson on the bench, struggling Hornets fall to Hightstown by 20

One of the things Hamilton West never wanted to discover, is how it would fare without Alexis Johnson in the lineup.

It found out tonight.

With Johnson on the bench resting a bruised knee, the Hornets fell to Hightstown, 46-26, as the Rams improved to 2-5 and the Hornets fell to 1-5.

Tatiana Saffron, Courtney Adams and Erin Septer had eight points apiece for Hamilton, which was held to single digits in each of the first four quarters.

“We're resting (Johnson) because she had a little bit of an injury to her knee (against Steinert Friday),” coach Karla Peroni said. “We want to wait until she's a hundred percent to come back. She's resting it up a little bit.

“Hopefully, she won't be out that long. She's rehabbing now. She's putting weight on it and walking on it, so hopefully she'll be out there on Friday (against Steinert).”

Peroni was happy with the effort of some of her other players in Johnson's absence.

“We have other girls stepping up to be leaders, Courtney Adams had a great game,” the coach said. “She's starting to go to the hole a lot stronger, which is good, it's what we want to see. Erin Septer is handling the ball with more confidence. Tatiana Saffron woke up toward the end.



Hamilton's Tatiana Saffron tries to pass around Hightstown's Erin Sobkowiak tonight (Photo by Ken Weingartner).

“We’ve got to work on our chemistry, our teamwork and our hustle. There were some positives to come out of today, you just don’t want to take a loss without hustling. We want to be on every ball, win or lose.”

Reeling Nottingham suffers fifth straight loss at WW-P South

Nottingham dropped its fifth straight as West Windsor-Plainsboro South started fast and never looked back in a 78-59 victory in West Windsor.

The Pirates (5-1) led 18-7 after one quarter and 38-25 at halftime, then built on their lead in the second half.

The Northstars (1-5) wasted a big night by Imani Alston, who scored a career-high 25 points.