

# East lady cagers avenge league loss

by **PATRICK J. NAGY**  
Reporter

The Williamsville East girls basketball team limited its turnovers and made shots when needed to avenge an early-season loss to Hamburg, 44-40, last Thursday at East.

In the teams' first meeting on Dec. 20, won by Hamburg, 36-33, East committed 27 turnovers. This time around, East made only 13 turnovers.

East was up, 7-2, to start the game, but did not retake the lead until 1:30 was remaining in the fourth quarter. East outscored Hamburg, 15-7, in the final quarter.

Hamburg led, 13-9, after the first quarter, 24-17, at halftime and 33-29, after the third quarter.

Senior leadership, led by Jessica Kowalski and Bridget Steele, pushed East ahead in the fourth. Kowalski scored all seven of her points in the fourth and Steele hit 3 of 4 free throws in the last minute to finish with a team-high 12 points. She also grabbed 10 rebounds, seven on the offensive end, and made three steals. Steele finished 5 of 9 in the fourth from the foul line.

"She was all over the court," said East coach Chris Durr.

Durr said his team made two huge stops on defense in the last 2.5 minutes and his team either came back and scored or made a couple of free throws.

"We held them to three baskets in the second half," said Durr. "The rest of their

points came on free throws. We mostly used a man-to-man defense and I think our ability to run the floor and rotate in a lot of kids tired them down the stretch."

Hamburg's best player, Katie Medina, was held to seven points. She made a basket in the first quarter; the rest came on free throws. She scored 15 points when the teams met last time. Durr said Neha Bakhai guarded Medina the most but when she got in foul trouble, Steele defended her.

Bakhai finished with four points. Taylor Klun (eight points, six rebounds), Anna Stolzenberg (eight points), Becca Rumschik (three-pointer) and Aleece Burgio (two points) rounded out East's scoring. East made 14 of 38 two-point baskets and 2 of 7 three-point attempts.

East opened this week with a 52-21 victory on Monday at Williamsville South.

The Lady Flames led, 10-4, after the first quarter, 25-11, at halftime, and 36-18, after the third quarter.

East's full court press man-to-man defense held South to 15 percent from two-point range and no threes.

"We forced them into a lot of shots inside 10 seconds left on the shot clock," said Durr.

Bakhai and Steele held South's leading scorer, Sarah Marcus, was held scoreless. Marcus had three two-point attempts and one three-point try.

Burgio led the Lady Flames with 10 points and eight rebounds. Rumschik scored eight points.

Klun, Jordan Kowalski and Steele each had six points. Jordan Kowalski also grabbed six rebounds. Steele dished out seven assists.

Bakhai chipped (four points), Courtney Hawkins and Ally Kotz (three points each) and Jessica Kowalski, Kristin Ostanski and Stolzenberg (two points each) rounded out the East scoring.

East shot 47 percent (22 of 46) from the floor. Seventeen of the 22 baskets came on assists. They committed a season-low six turnovers.

Cassiana Hyppolite led South with 10 points. Allison Couche (four points), Joanna Ostroot (three points), Claire Licata (three points) and Heather Caputi (one point) also scored for the Lady Billies.

South's only game last week was a contest they should have won, losing last Tuesday against Starpoint at home, 57-53.

The lead switched back and forth. South was ahead, 14-11, after the first quarter, Starpoint led, 21-19, at halftime, and the Lady Billies were up, 44-38, after the third quarter.

South coach Erik Solomon attributed Starpoint's offense in the fourth quarter for his team's so-so defense.

"We hit one three in the fourth quarter," said Solomon. "The rest were free throws."

"I think our legs were tired in the fourth," he added.

Five Starpoint players scored in the fourth, including two threes by Katie

Colton.

"They're a well-coached scrappy team," said Solomon. "They did a good job of taking us out of our rhythm."

Solomon said his team had opportunities to tie the game with under a minute to play. Down by three, Marcus was fouled and hit 1 of 2 free throws. South got the ball and missed a shot that would have tied the score up.

South, like in its recent win over Iroquois, was on fire in the third quarter shooting the ball. Marcus scored 10 points, Ostroot had six and Hyppolite chipped in five.

"We started to attack the post with Joanna. She got a quick six points," said Solomon. "If there was single coverage, Sarah would punch it in to Joanna. If not, Joanna would kick it to Sarah. Starpoint did a good job doubling down on that in the fourth quarter."

Marcus finished with 19 points. Hyppolite added 14 points and five steals. Ostroot had 10 points and five rebounds. Licata added two points and nine rebounds. Couche tossed in two points and hauled in seven rebounds.

South shot 29 percent from twos, 31 percent from threes and 50 percent from the foul line.

South (7-12, 5-6) hosts Lake Shore at 7:30 p.m. on Wednesday.

East (12-6, 8-3) hosts Iroquois on Wednesday and North Tonawanda on Friday. Both are 7:30 p.m. starts.

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# Sweet Home girls hoops still unbeaten in league

The Sweet Home girls basketball team improved to 10-0 in ECIC Division II and 14-3 overall with a 53-48 win at Iroquois last Tuesday and a 72-26 victory over Lake Shore last Thursday at home.

The Lady Panthers' defense was a key in both games. Sweet Home held Iroquois to 15 first half points and Lake Shore to 16 first half points.

Sweet Home led Iroquois, 26-15, at halftime and Lake Shore, 35-16.

"The key to our success down the stretch will be our defense and how well we play together," said Sweet Home coach Matt LaRoach. "I think the girls are making strides in practice each day. We need to keep working so that we will be playing our best basketball as we close out league play and regular season this week. I am happy with our progress, but am realistic about the fact that we have to work to get better."

Sweet Home went ahead, 46-35, over Iroquois after the third quarter.

"I thought our defense in the

first half was a big factor in putting us in a position to get the win," said LaRoach. "In the second half, we had some defensive lapses but in the end, pulled out the win. It was not always pretty at times, but down the stretch we found ourselves in another close game that we did a good job of playing our game."

Ellie Allen led Sweet Home with 22 points, eight rebounds and six assists.

"She did such a nice job of setting the tempo on both ends of the floor," said LaRoach.

Bianca Smiley added 11 points and six rebounds. Amanda Cannizzo added eight points and three assists.

"We also received strong efforts from Amanda Cannizzo, Gleniesha Ferby, and Rachel Cimerman," said LaRoach. "I just think that our guards continue to progress and get better every game. Whatever a team throws at us defensively, they do a nice job of handling different situations."

Iroquois was led by Grace Cunningham's 14 points.

Unlike the Iroquois game, LaRoach felt his team put four

quarters of consistent basketball together against Lake Shore.

"I thought we did a nice job of dictating the tempo of the game based on our defensive pressure," said LaRoach. "When we play with intensity on the defensive side of the ball, it leads to so many opportunities for our offense."

Sweet Home led Lake Shore, 52-21, after the third quarter.

Sweet Home was led by Smi-

ley's 18 points, seven rebounds, and seven steals.

"She played a complete game on both sides of the ball," said LaRoach. "This is the way she needs to play for us all of the time."

Allen added 15 points and six assists and was great on the defensive side of the ball, said LaRoach.

Ferby scored 10 points and

dished out four assists. Cannizzo added seven and Cimerman, Heather Kolbas, and Nadia Durmo each scored six.

The game was senior night for Sweet Home.

Lake Shore was led by Sam Rosario-Ritts with nine points.

Sweet Home plays at Hamburg on Wednesday and Williamsville North on Friday. Both games start at 7:30 p.m.

## Clarence's experience trumps North's youth

Clarence's experience and Williamsville North's youth showed in the Lady Spartans' 51-41 girls basketball loss at Clarence last Thursday.

Tied at 35-35 near the end of the third quarter, Clarence, with 10 seniors on its roster, went on a run to lead 43-36.

"We're young and when things started to go south, we lost our composure," said North coach Mike Del Valle.

Del Valle said his team was beaten badly on the boards. Clarence center Brianna Nemmer scored 17 points and held North's Katie Kubala scoreless. Ten of Nemmer's points came in the third quarter.

Clarence led, 9-4, after the first quarter and 23-21 by halftime.

Allie Ahern (12 points) and Leslie Ahern (10 points) led North. Allie Ahern hit two threes. Corrin Genovese and Megan Klansky each scored six. Corrin and her older sister, Maddie, each hit a three. Nikki Attea added four points.

Holly Travis scored 11 for Clarence. Katie Lancelotti was held to six points. Del Valle said Leslie Ahern and Emily Helwig guarded her.

North (8-10, 5-6) play at Jamestown at 7:30 p.m. on Wednesday and host Sweet Home at 7:30 p.m. on Friday.

# Panther boys can clinch share of ECIC II with win

by **PATRICK J. NAGY**  
Reporter

Sweet Home has played some of its worst basketball of the season lately but because of a competitive ECIC II division, the Panthers can still clinch a share of the league crown with one more home win.

Sweet Home (10-8, 7-4) hosts Hamburg (14-5, 8-3) at 7:30 p.m. on Thursday. A Panthers' win gives them a share of the division.

"It's kind of fitting," said Sweet Home coach Paul Schintzius. "It seems like every chance we have to get the league title we've thrown it away."

That includes the Panthers' 61-55 home loss to Lake Shore last Tuesday.

Sweet Home had a 31-19 halftime lead shrunk to 43-37 after the third quarter. The Panthers were outscored, 23-12, in the fourth quarter.

In the fourth, Lake Shore went to the line eight times in the fourth quarter and 14 times in the second half. They also made three-pointers in the second half courtesy of Kyle DeNisco, who nailed four of them. DeNisco scored all 15 of his points in the second half.

"They made some shots and their defensive intensity was far greater than ours," said Schintzius. "They deserved to win."

Sweet Home jumped out a big lead in the first half thanks to seven threes. Jamel Werts, Brian Pappagallo and Richard Rush each made two. Casey Kacz also hit a three. The Panthers did not hit a three in the second half.

"Lake Shore played a zone defense in the second and they packed the lane, basically daring us to shoot," said Schintzius.

Ali Ramadan was the only Panther in double figures with 20. Despite playing with four fouls, ten of his 12 points came in the fourth quarter.

Pappagallo and Werts did not score in the second half.

It was Sweet Home's first home loss of the season.

The Panthers got back on the winning track after routing West Seneca East, 69-26, last Friday at West Seneca East.

Ahead 17-10 after the first quarter, Sweet Home outscored the Trojans, 24-2, in the second quarter to lead, 41-12, by halftime. The Panthers went up, 55-18, after the third quarter.

All 10 Sweet Home players who dressed scored. Ramadan led with 16 points. Werts and Will Reese each had 12. It was a career-high for Reese.

Sweet Home's other game this week was against Frontier at home on Tuesday but the result was unavailable before The Bee went to press.

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