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St. Charles East girls basketball freezes at wrong time in tournament loss

WHEATON – You'd figure that a girls basketball game between a No. 8 seed and a No. 9 seed would be close, and for three quarters, Monday's matchup in the Bill Neibch Holiday Tournament between St. Charles East and host Wheaton North was just that.

But the ninth-seeded Falcons used a 16-0 run to break away from a 39-all tie on their way to a 57-46 victory.

During that run, the Saints (6-7) were held scoreless for nearly seven minutes of the third and fourth quarters before Amanda Hilton finally connected on a three-pointer with three minutes left in the game.

"We had a hard time getting some good looks and took some bad shots," East coach Lori Drumtra said. "We press a little bit when we get down and rather than using the clock to our advantage and taking time, we tend to rush a little bit and sometimes take not the best shot. And they're a good rebounding team. They're a lot of times only going to give you one shot, so you've got to make it a good one."

The Falcons (6-6) held a 33-30 edge on the glass, despite the efforts of East's 6-foot-1 freshman Kyra Washington, who grabbed 13 rebounds.

"We just got flustered and we stopped working as a team," Washington said of the disastrous fourth quarter. "We stopped running the plays. I just think we could have done a little better at that."

Washington finished with a double-double, scoring 10 points.

"She gets those boards and can hit from the outside," Drumtra said. "She's going to be quite a player."

Paige Jordan scored 16 points for the Saints. Her three-pointer from the top of the key tied the game at 39 with 1:30 left in the third quarter.

Wheaton North senior guard Maddie Baillie then started the decisive run with a driving basket. She also ended it with a three from the left corner. She was the game's leading scorer with 17 points.

"I was frustrated with our defense," Drumtra said. "I thought they got way too many just down the lane. Even if she didn't make it, they were able to dish it off. We were kind of reaching, rather than moving our feet."

Another problem for the Saints was free-throw shooting. They were 1-for-10 from the line and missed all eight of their attempts in the second half.

"We didn't do well from the line and didn't get there very much," Drumtra said. "A couple of times that would have brought us a little closer, but we just could not hit."

East will play a consolation bracket contest at 1:30 p.m. today.

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