

Arlington girls coach: They'll be back

BY STEVE POWELL

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TACOMA - Joe Marsh's Arlington girls basketball team's goal was to win the state championship.

It fell just short by placing third, beating No. 1 seeded Eastside Catholic 61-57 last Saturday in the 3A Hardwood Classic at the Tacoma Dome. "It takes the sting out of it," Marsh said, referring to the loss the night before to eventual champion Garfield. "And beating the top team was a bonus."

For most of the game Arlington freshman standout Jenna Villa was quiet. But she scored 7 points in the final 1:43 to spark the win. "She didn't hesitate," Marsh said of a 3-pointer Villa made to clinch the win. "She hit a big shot on the big year. She's hit big shots all year for us."

Hitting big shots all game was junior Hailey Hiatt, who led the Eagles with 24 points. "They kept giving her open looks, and she kept knocking them down," her coach said. Another junior, Makenzie Gage, played

tough inside against taller opponents. "She's undersized but plays with a lot of fight and heart," Marsh said.

While Villa stood out at the end, it took an entire team effort to get them to that position as Marsh played everyone despite the close contest, and all contributed and gained state experience.

It took a fourth-quarter comeback to get the win. After the Crusaders scored on a putback shot to take a 52-43 lead, Arlington rallied.

Josie Stupey and Sierra Scheppele each hit 3's, Gage scored after grabbing an offensive rebound then passed to Stupey off the fastbreak to cut the lead to 54-53. Villa hit two free throws and the 3 as Arlington went ahead 58-56 with 40 seconds left.

After a Crusader made a free throw, Marsh called a timeout. The strategy worked as she missed the second foul shot. Stupey hit a free throw and Villa two more for the final score.

While others stood out at the end, the 3-point shooting of Hiatt and all-around



STEVE POWELL/STAFF PHOTOS

Hannah Rork, Sierra Scheppele and Ella Strittmatter rush the court after the upset.

play of Keira Marsh kept them in the game.

After falling behind 8-3 in the first period, Hiatt hit two 3's, and Marsh scored off a drive and fastbreak. After Hiatt blocked a shot, Gage came up with it and assisted on the fastbreak to Marsh to give Arlington a 15-13 lead after one. In the second quarter, Allison DeBerry hit a wide open Hannah Rork inside for two as the Eagles led 22-20. But then the Crusaders went on an 11-1 run to take its biggest lead of the half at 31-23. Gage scored twice inside, and Hiatt hit a jumper to cut the margin to 33-30 at halftime.

Both teams started the second half cold until Gage assisted on a bucket by Hiatt, who then hit a 3 as the Eagles took back the lead.

Hiatt, named to the all-tournament second team, made three free throws then stole the ball

and assisted to Marsh on the fastbreak. Eastside Catholic went on a 5-0 run before Hiatt hit a 3 just before the end of the third quarter, which ended with the Crusaders in front 45-43, setting up the close ending.

Hiatt made 8 of 15 shots, 5 of 11 from 3-point land. Marsh added 11 points with 6 rebounds. Gage had 9 with 5 rebounds, while Villa had 8 points. Arlington made six more 3-pointers, a big difference in the game as it was outrebounded 43-30.

The Eagles, led by Gage, held Crusader star Zaza Walton to 6 points. She had averaged more than 20 points in her first two games at state.

Shifty guard Malla Samuels led the losers with 19, and long-distance specialist Isabel Sullivan added 15, while Makena Daggett had 11 points and 13 boards.

Arlington ended the

season 23-3, while the Crusaders went 26-3.

Marsh returns most of his players next year, but he was happy for teary-eyed seniors DeBerry and Scheppele, who has been injured but got to start her last game. In the past eight years, Marsh's teams have won trophies for second, third and fourth place twice. The big one - maybe next year?

"It's really hard to win a state championship. The tournament's brutal mentally and physically. But this experience will make all the difference in the world," he said.

"It was our goal to win the state championship. We came up a little short. But we're going to turn around and do it again next year."

OTHER GAMES

Last Friday night, the Arlington Eagles lost to No. 9 Garfield 53-36 to drop into

the consolation bracket.

Arlington just couldn't hit its shots like it normally does. Josey Stupey led the way with 9 points.

The Eagles were 12 of 43 for the game for 28 percent. They were only 4 of 22 from 3-point territory for 18%.

Garfield led 34-24 at halftime, but the Eagles tallied just 12 second-half points.

Coach Joe Marsh said the Eagles had a tough time matching up against Garfield, which was big, athletic, strong and physical.

Last Thursday night, Hailey Hiatt hit a fadeaway jumper with 6.1 seconds left to spark the Eagles to a 50-49 win over Shorecrest.

Marsh drew up the play after the Eagles fell behind by one with 11.1 seconds left. Hiatt finished with a game-high 17 points, making 6 of 10 shots.

McKenzie Gage added 15, Jenna Villa 8 and Keira Marsh 7.

The Scots led for much of the contest, opening the game with an 11-4 run on the way to a 15-9 first-quarter. Arlington closed the gap by halftime to 27-25.

After both teams scored 11 in the third, the Eagles took the fourth quarter 14-11 for the narrow victory. Arlington shot just 14 of 42 from the field for 33% and 4 of 18 from beyond the arc for 22%, but the Eagles were able to get points at the foul line as they knocked down 18 of 23 attempts, or 78%. Early in the year Arlington lost at Shorecrest 58-43, but later beat the Scots 50-34.

MARYSVILLE

Maddy Grandbois of Marysville Getchell High School has been selected to play in the Baden/Cloud 9 Sports WSGBCA All State Game at King's High School in Shoreline March 21.

M-P loses to Wilson, ousted from playoffs

TACOMA - Marysville-Pilchuck gutted out a tough performance, but still was knocked out by the Wilson Rams at the 3A Hardwood Classic at the Tacoma Dome last Friday.

M-P played tough every quarter but the third, when it was outscored 25-11 on the way to a 75-66 win for

Wilson.

M-P trailed by one after the first quarter and actually led 36-32 at halftime.

Cameron Stordahl led M-P with 20 points, but only made 6 of 23 shots, 3 of 14 from 3-point land. Aaron Kalab added 17, Luke Dobler 13 and Brady Phelps 10, including a

perfect 3 for 3 from the field, all 3-pointers. All are seniors.

Another senior, Ethan Jackson, was held scoreless but led the team with 9 rebounds and 7 assists.

Treven Southard hit a 3 early to put M-P up 5-2, and three free throws by Stordahl gave the Tommies

their biggest lead of the game at 8-2. Stordahl hit two 3's and Dobler another in the first. But their hot shooting cooled off from there as M-P made just 23 of 63 shots, or 36.5%, while Wilson made 29-55, or 53%.

Later, Stordahl was named to the second all-tournament team.



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