

# Lady Hawks fall short of Waverly Tournament championship

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WAVERLY - Falling behind 10-0 to start a game is never ideal, especially in a tournament championship.

The Carrollton Lady Hawks fell behind early, fought back from multiple deficits in the second half, but ultimately lost to the Auburn Trojans 45-38 in the championship game in the round-robin Waverly Tournament.

“Our kids didn’t give up, and I don’t expect them too. It took us a little bit to get going. We didn’t have school today, but we can’t make excuses. We gotta come and be ready to play,” Carrollton head coach Blaine Hartwick said. “I’m not disappointed tonight we just didn’t make some shots. They played hard, and we got beat by a good team. I don’t mind getting beat by good teams, and that’s what are.”

Through virtually the entire first half, Auburn led Carrollton by 8-10 points, but the Lady Hawks always came up with a stop just when it seemed the Trojans were a possession away from pulling away early. The defense allowed 13 points for the rest of the half, but Carrollton’s offense struggled at times to produce points, and if they did score then they wouldn’t go on any runs. That was because Auburn set up a strong half-court trap that caused numerous turnovers or forced the Lady Hawks to take quick, off-balance shots.

“We’re going to use our speed to get out in front of you, and that’s what that’s supposed to do. designed to slow you down and it did,” Hartwick said. “We weren’t able to run the floor like we usually do. We practiced against it, but it didn’t happen tonight.”

Kaylee Rhoades made it a single-digit game with under five seconds to play as she scored on a short jump-shot, which gave Carrollton some momentum down 23-14 at halftime.

The Lady Hawks would come out strong to start the second half.

Claire Williams scored six of her 12 points in the third quarter on a pair of assists from Hannah Krumwiede and Libby Mueth, who saved a pass from going out of bounds by knocking the ball to Williams who was perfectly settled under the basket for the layup. Carrollton went on an 8-4 run and cut the deficit to 27-22, but Auburn erased it and went on a 5-0 to get the lead back up to ten at 32-22.

Rhoades would sink another shot right before the sounded, and the Lady Hawks trailed 32-24.



At the start of the fourth quarter, Carrollton made their run.

Auburn's 6-foot-0 center, Katriyel Clark scored 12 points in the previous two quarters and gave Carrollton all sorts of fits, but was limited in the final frame as the Lady Hawks made defensive adjustments to double and sometimes triple-team her whenever she touched the basketball in the paint. She finished with 16 hard earned points.

The Lady Hawks are a quick, athletic team and as soon as they grabbed a defensive rebound, they would be off to the races to the basket, while simultaneously beating Auburn's half-court press. Including Rhoades' basket at the end of the third quarter, Carrollton went on a 10-2 run that cut the deficit to 34-32 and midway through the fourth quarter they had all the momentum.

Perhaps the play of the game occurred right after Auburn called timeout with 4:53 to play. They responded immediately as Hannah Smith drained a wide-open three-pointer to put the Trojans back up by two possessions at 37-32. Smith would finish with 16 points.

“That was absolutely crucial. We can’t let their best player come out and bury a three-pointer on us. That by far was the nail that did us in.”

It would be rough sledding for Carrollton after that.

After two minutes of no scoring, the Trojans began to slowly chip away as they made a combination of free throws and layups, but the Lady Hawks produced one last run.

Carrollton scored two baskets and with 36 seconds to play they were trailing 42-38, but they were forced to foul, and Auburn put the game to bed by making their free throws.

This was the Lady Hawks first loss of the season, and they drop to 4-1, but Hartwick is positive about the outlook he see’s within the team going forward.

“We’re quick, athletic, these girls work hard and play together. We’re going to be a good team this season,” Hartwick said.

