

Lady Hawks use 16-0 fourth quarter run to end Calhoun's season

by John Hough, Sports Writer
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CARROLLTON - For 28 minutes the basketball seemed like it couldn't find the bottom of the net for the Carrollton Lady Hawks.

Then something clicked in the last four minutes of the game.

It suddenly all went right for the Lady Hawks.

Carrollton went on a 16-0 run in the fourth quarter to defeat the Calhoun Lady Warriors 34-23 in the semifinals of the Class 1A Carrollton Regional on Wednesday night.

The Lady Hawks will meet the Greenfield-Northwestern Lady Tigers who beat Bunker Hill 61-52 in the other semifinal.

"assistant said girls this is your season. I didn't have to say it. They responded well." Carrollton head coach Blaine Hartwick said.

Both teams struggled mightily to get baskets all game long and by the time the fourth quarter began the score was knotted at 18 apiece.

Calhoun scored the first five points to go up 23-18, which was the biggest lead of the game for either side at the time. The Lady Hawks got stops and scored two straight baskets to get back within one. Then Hannah Krumwiede and Claire Williams combined to make 10-of-11 free throws to break away from the Lady Warriors.

“Unfortunately we tightened up. That’s been our big bugaboo all year,” Calhoun head coach Mark Hillen said. Hats off to Carrollton. They played a good game down the stretch. They got the big buckets, and we didn’t.”

Krumwiede led all scorers with 13 points, and Williams added 11. Freshman Ava Uhles scored all four of her points in the final couple of minutes, which was a vital importance.

“Ava made some huge shots. She was open the whole game. She’s kinda timid, but I’m glad she stepped up and made a difference at the end,” Hartwick said. “I thought we did a lot of things right other than just make the shots,” Hartwick said.

Sophie Lorton and Emily Baalman each finished with seven points. Junie Zirkelbach was the leading scorer coming into the game and had scored over 20 points against the Lady Hawks in their two previous games. She was limited to five.

“We struggled too, and they knew who our top scorer was in Junie. They were dedicating two or three players to her on ball-screens,” Hillen said. “We didn’t have an answer for it. We didn’t have anybody rotating to an open spot, and in the open spots we weren’t hitting .”

“That was the emphasis. If you could stop then you’ve got a good shot to win,” Hartwick said. “I would’ve never dreamed we would’ve held her to five.”

Carrollton led 4-2 after the first quarter and upped it to 6-2, but Calhoun would go on a 9-2 run and force an 11-11 tie at halftime.

“These girls have been working so hard this year, and they didn’t want their season to end. That’s what it came down to.”

With the loss, that ends Calhoun’s remarkable run of three straight seasons with a regional championship, including final four appearances.

“You think about those Calhoun seniors, and they’ve never lost a regional game. That’s tough to compete with that experience,” Hartwick said. “Lucky for us we’ve come short a couple times in big games. Just getting that experience is huge for us.”

“The effort was great. We hustled, we grinded it out, but in the end, we didn’t hit enough shots,” Hillen said. “Our defensive effort was the best we had all year. To hold a team like that you expect to win. Even on our bad scoring games, we’ve scored more than that.”

Carrollton now has less than 24 hours to prepare for Greenfield-Northwestern. The Lady Hawks previously beat the Lady Tigers in overtime 54-49 all the way back on Nov. 30. It will also be another chapter in the longtime Carrollton-Greenfield rivalry.

“It’s going to be a battle. going to be amped up and ready for us and to get a little payback. We gotta be ready to play and make a few shots.” Hartwick said. “ girls have never won a regional so it would be huge. Not just for these girls, but for the state of our girl's sports programs here at Carrollton would be huge,” Hartwick said.



