

Memphis Central girls pick up win in Turkey Jamm

Nina Davis paces Lady Warriors to win over Whitney Young

Staff Reports

Sunday, November 28, 2010

Memphis Central High girls basketball coach Niki Bray decided she would try something a little different during halftime of Saturday night's game against Whitney Young of Chicago in the final game of the Turkey Jamm tournament at Central.

Instead of holding her players in the locker room for nearly the entire eight-minute intermission, Bray cut straight to the point.

It took all of 30 seconds. However, it was time well spent, considering her nationally-ranked Warriors made the necessary adjustments to rally from a 46-42 halftime deficit to grind out an 82-79 victory.

"We came in and talked about the No. 1 thing and that was rebounding," Bray said. "They've been under a lot of mental stress after a loss. They hate to lose. They were in anguish. So you don't want to go in and beat a dead dog. They were in a two-hour video session today, so the last thing they needed was to hear me talk."

Roughly 24 hours after its 20-point loss to Bolingbrook (Ill.), the No. 4-ranked team in the country according to ESPN, Central (4-1), exhibited a masterful effort on the boards in the second half against the Lady Dolphins (1-1) and got a brilliant offensive display from sophomore Nina Davis to pull off Saturday's win.

Whitney Young and Central last met two years ago in a holiday tournament in Phoenix, where the Dolphins dealt the Lady Warriors one of their two defeats, 51-50. But on Saturday, Central, ranked No. 5 in the nation, slowly chipped away at an early 11-point deficit, even on a night in when two of its star players --- Aaliyah Whiteside and Danielle Ballard --- weren't consistent offensively.

Davis' 25 points led the Lady Warriors. Whiteside, a four-star recruit and the 35th-ranked prospect in the country for the Class of 2012 by ESPN, managed 10 of her 16 points in the second half. Ballard, also a four-star player and the tenth-ranked recruit nationally for the Class of 2012, finished with 14 points in her second game of season since aggravating her right shoulder. However, her team-best six rebounds

were pivotal, most notably her offensive board in the lane with 2:37 remaining in the fourth period over a much taller Taylor Brame of Whitney Young with the Lady Warriors in front, 77-74.

Senior point guard Kiana Johnson finished with a game-high 26 points, Chanise Jenkins had 20, and Linnae Harper added 16 for the Dolphins, which is ranked No. 1 in Illinois Class 4A.

Other Turkey Jamm scores from Saturday

St. Benedict 56, H.W. Byers 41

Forrest Park 58, West Memphis 41

Bolingbrook 58, Hillsboro 43

Hoover 60, Clarksville 45

Overton 56, Potters House 53

Ridgeway 50, Oldsmar 49



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