

## Xavier girls stopped by Hempstead

Written by Randy Krejci

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The IGHSAU rankings came out this week and in Class 4A the top two teams on the charts were Harlan and Cedar Rapids Xavier, perhaps thinking about a potential rematch of the state finals from a year ago.

There is a lot of time before the postseason begins and though Xavier fans certainly remember last year's classic in Des Moines, it was time Friday night to have a regular-season encounter between the Saints and the Hempstead Mustangs.

Hempstead came to town and left with a 38-31 victory after holding the Saints to just seven points in the first half.

The Saints (4-2, 2-2) under Coach Tom Lilly fell behind the taller Mustangs 14-2 after the first quarter and never recovered. Hempstead improved to 3-2 overall and 1-1 in the MVC after losing to Washington and Waterloo West earlier this season.

Hempstead was paced by all-around standout athlete Hope Koerperich, who scored 10 points, and Kiah Kimble finished with nine.

Hempstead Coach Justin Smith had goals of "Taking care of the basketball and playing good half-court defense." He was proud of both accomplishments.

"We were really befuddled early," commented Lilly as he examined his team's offensive output. "We passed up some good opportunities on shots and weren't very smart at times."

Xavier was behind 22-7 at halftime and did get within five points in the final minute of the game, but fouls to try and catch up were met with some key free throws made down the stretch by

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Hempstead.

Neither team was stellar from the line. Xavier was 6 for 10 on the evening and Hempstead shot 9 of 22 from the charity stripe.

"Their size did us in. We can't simulate that in practice," said Lilly. "You can't practice with the boys and this takes away the opportunity to practice against taller individuals when your own team doesn't have that kind of height to work against."

Six-footers Haley Van Cleave (signed with Bradley), Ashley Dolan, Gabby Riley and Koeperich all dictated the direction of play for the Mustangs.

Haley Deutmeyer, the usual leading scorer and rebounder for Xavier, scored 18 of the total 31 points for the Saints.

"I was pleased at how we moved the ball, we still have a long ways to go, but we have been confronted with many players that are three or four-year varsity starters and that makes a difference," said Lilly.

"We have a lot of kids who have been around basketball, but a lot of them haven't had a great deal of time on the floor. Two starters didn't score and another had three points."

Hempstead jumping off to a 9-0 lead early in the game really aided their cause, and other than a small scoring spurt by Xavier in the third and fourth quarters they couldn't make up the early deficit.

DUBUQUE HEMPSTEAD (38): Kiah Kimble 3 2-6 9, Haley Van Cleave 2 0-2 5, Danielle Wagner 0 2-4 2, Ashley Dolan 3 1-4 7, Jessica Brown 0 0-0 0, Hope Koeperich 4 2-2 10, Gabby Riley 1 2-4 4. Totals 13 9-22 38.

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XAVIER (31): Morgan Breitbach 1 4-4 6, Lizzy Bailey 0 0-0 0, Haley Deutmeyer 7 2-4 18, Claire Christianson 1 0-0 2, Jenny Dickes 0 0-0 0, Abby Watson 0 0-2 0, Maddie Bertsch 1 0-0 3, Meghan Joens 1 0-0 2. Totals 11 6-10 31.

Halftime - Hempstead 22, Xavier 7. 3-point goals - Hempstead 3 (Kimble 2, Van Cleave 1), Xavier 3 (Deutmeyer 2, Bertsch 1).