

At Region III tournament . . . Eagles' playoff run comes to end

Fairfield high school Eagles cagers exited the post season playoffs Friday evening after a hard fought loss to the Hardin-Jefferson Hawks at the Region III tournament in Huntsville.

The Hawks were eliminated Saturday night by Silsbee, which advances to the Class AAA state basketball tourney this week in Austin.

"The kids played really well and gave themselves a chance," FHS head coach Joey Worley says.

Final tally in the Eagles-Hawks matchup was 53-50.

Hardin-Jefferson opened the contest with a 3-point shot by junior guard Grayson Sutherland, but Fairfield got points from four players to stay close through the first period, 14-16.

Second period play is what hurt the FHS quintet when they were out scored 7-14 to put themselves in a 21-30 hole at intermission.

But, as they have all season, the Eagles fought back.

Fairfield put 18 points on the board in the third period to pull within three points, 39-42.



EAGLES JUNIOR POST Dominique Owens protects the basketball as he makes a move under the basket in region tournament action.



FAIRFIELD EAGLES SENIOR guard LaDarius Brackens brings the ball down the court in the region tournament matchup against the Hardin-Jefferson Hawks.

FHS coach points out that the team held the Hawks' scoring down from its norm of more than 70 points a game.

"They scored 78 points coming into the region tournament and we knew we wouldn't survive if it got that high," Worley says. "I think we did a good job dictating the tempo."

Fairfield scoring was spread among four players who got into double digits—Brackens led with 13 Green got 12, Owens tallied 11 and Tatum got 10.

Also scoring were: Simpson, 6; and Anthony Price, 1.

The free throw count was a little lopsided—the Hawks stepped to the charity stripe 14 times and the Eagles took nine shots.

Pacing Hardin-Jefferson was senior guard Jacoby Turner who burned the nets for 21 points.

"Overall, we were really pleased with the way they battled back against one of the top teams in the state," Worley says.

The Eagles closed out the season with a 24-8 record, winning the District 20-AAA crown and an area championship.

An early 7-point run included a 3-pointer and field goal by senior guard Willie Tatum and a bucket by junior post Dominique Owens to get within four.

Senior post Tevin Green and Owens added a field goal each at the end of the period to get within three points of the Hawks.

Hardin-Jefferson went on its own short run early in the fourth period, scoring six quick points, to extend the margin to seven

points, but the Eagles battled back.

Senior guard Evan Simpson hit a 3-pointer and Brackens connected on a pair from long range to help the cause, but the Hawks managed to stay just out of reach.

Worley reports that the Eagles turned the ball over five times in a row in the second period, which resulted in the lead widening before the half.

On the other hand, the

Lady Eagles eye district softball season

The Fairfield high school Lady Eagles softball team wraps up its pre-season this week and starts District 20-AAA competition Tuesday when they host the Palestine Westwood Lady Panthers.

With a pair of tournaments and three other games under their belts, the Lady Eagles are posting a 5-8 record.

The Lady Eagles were co-champions in district last season and won the bi-district playoff game, but lost about half the team to graduation.

Chief among the losses was pitcher Courtney Nelson, the district defensive MVP three years and Newcomer of the Year as a freshman. Miss Nelson is now playing softball at Lubbock Christian College.

Taking her turn on the

mound this season is Kayse Kirgan, moving from infielder positions where she is a repeat All-District player.

"Kayse is doing a real good job. She came in this year and didn't plan on pitching," head coach Kerry Hand says.

"Because of ineligible players, she has had to step up and take over pitching duties," the coach adds.

Seniors on the team, and all 4-year lettermen, are Miss Kirgan, catcher Becca Lyles, shortstop/outfielder Jessica Gallegos, outfielder Mia Mayo, and first baseman Riley Jo Davidson.

The junior class is represented by pitcher Erica Flori and outfielder Felicia Lopez-Simmons.

The lone sophomore on

the varsity squad is Lyndsey Ranson at second base, who played in Wortham last year.

Freshmen players are second baseman Cassie Floyd, infielder Amanda Drake, third basemen Katie Gardner and Sarah Sloat, and outfielder Katie Berger.

Making up the junior varsity team are Amanda Missildine, Courtney Davidson, Natalie Neill, Ashley Johnson, Jillian Peterson, Jermaca Brown and Amy Lansford.

The Lady Eagles started the season with a 6-0 loss to Slocum, then played the Elkhart Tournament, losing in pool play to Slocum 7-1 and Tyler Lee 8-0, and in bracket play to Brownsboro 8-4 and Elkhart 7-3.

In the Brownsboro tourney, the FHS team

beat Elkhart 5-3, beat Tylker Lee 5-1 and lost to Van 9-1 in pool play.

Moving into the bracket portion of the tourney, the Lady Eagles beat Frankston 15-0 and Marlin 10-0, to face Jacksonville for the championship, losing that matchup 9-2 to place second.

The Lady Eagles also fell to Mexia in a close game 4-3.

Their last outing, against Bosqueville,

turned into a close contest in which Fairfield hung on for a 4=3 win.

In the first inning, Misses Kirgan and Lyles each reached first on a dropped third strike and were scored with a single by Miss Gallegos.


Miss Mayo led off the third inning by reaching first on a dropped third strike and scored on an error. Miss Davidson singled and worked her way around the bases before being thrown out at home.

The final score came in the eighth inning when Miss Davidson doubled, moved to third on a bunt by Miss Gallegos and scored on a force play to first.

Miss Kirgan struck out 12 batters, walked two and allowed two hits.


The Lady Eagles were scheduled to play West early this week, compete in the Bi-Stone Tournament on Thursday and Saturday, then start district Tuesday.

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