

Hamilton girls rally to beat North Mercer at NCMC Holiday Hoops

KTTN/KGOZ Sports

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Posted on : 2012/12/31 9:50:00

The Penney High School girl's basketball team received a sparkling performance from senior guard Elsie Greenwood and a game-winning bank-shot from sophomore forward Morgan Prather on Friday night, with the Lady Hornets taking a 56-54 victory over previously unbeaten North Mercer in a Holiday Hoops girl's basketball game from the Ketcham Community Center, broadcast on Hot Country Z 101.7 and www.kgozfm.com.

Mercer controlled the first half, with University of Missouri bound forward Sierra Michaelis spurring the Lady Cardinals to a 29-25 halftime lead with 15 first half points, with Courtney Owens adding six and Hayley Sample six points courtesy of a pair of three-point field goals.

The Lady hornets surged in the third quarter, drawing the fourth foul against Michaelis in that frame and outscoring North Mercer 18-11 to take a 43-40 advantage, with Greenwood netting 10 points in those eight minutes of play.

Michaelis returned in the fourth quarter, but fouled out with three minutes to play. Mercer was able to take a brief lead with four straight free throws made by sophomore forward Chantel Robinson, but one final rally from Hamilton ended with the Prather bucket. A potential three-point winning shot by North Mercer missed the rim from 20 feet away at the fourth quarter buzzer.

Greenwood's 29 points paced Hamilton, with Prather adding 11 for the KCI Conference Tournament champions. Hamilton is the only team, other than Jefferson, to defeat North Mercer's senior class over the past four seasons (Mercer has lost to Jefferson in the first round of the playoffs for three consecutive years). For North Mercer, now 6-1 on the season, Michaelis had 26 points, with Sample and Owens both scoring nine.

It was also announced on Friday that Courtney Owens, the daughter of North Mercer girl's basketball coach Dan Owens, has committed to play basketball at Central Methodist University in Fayette. CMU is coached by former North Central Missouri College women's basketball coach James Arnold.

In Friday's late game from the Ketcham Community Center in Trenton, the Warrenton boys beat Savannah by a score of 46-32.