

Foxboro 43, Mansfield 37

MANSFIELD — In a back-and-forth game such as the girls' basketball clash between Mansfield High and Foxboro High Tuesday night, momentum can swing on the strangest things.

So it seemed with 2:26 left in the Hockomock League game at the Hornets' gym when 6-foot-3 Mansfield center Meg Hill raced down a loose ball into the right corner and unleashed an accurate 3-pointer — not her bread-and-butter shot — to draw the Hornets back into a 37-37 tie.

But the momentum shift never materialized. Those were Mansfield's last points of the game, as Foxboro scored the last six to take a 43-37 triumph and earn its first win of the season.

"I was very happy with the way we played because I knew we had to work hard and get maybe a little more physical than we had been because Hill is such a dominant player in the paint," said Foxboro coach Lisa Downs, who got some strong outside shooting from Grace Tamulionis and Shannon Smally to minimize the threat posed in the paint by Hill.

"We didn't do a very good job finishing inside," said Mansfield coach Mike Redding, whose Hornets (1-1) hit just two of 10 shots in the fourth quarter, including a frustrating sequence of four fruitless shots in the paint in the waning seconds.

"I don't know how many bunnies we missed, but there were a bunch that should have been in," Redding said.

Mansfield (15-53) and Foxboro (14-52) had similar shooting success, but Foxboro had a distinct edge at the foul line, hitting nine of 14 tries while the Hornets went to the line just three times, making two — somewhat amazing, in that the fouls were even (11 apiece) and Foxboro appeared to be more aggressive in trying to prevent Mansfield's guards from exploiting 6-footers Hill and Maggie Danehy in the paint.

The game was close throughout. Mansfield scored the first and last baskets of the first half, and those gave the Hornets their only two leads of the 16-minute stretch.

Foxboro got out to 9-2 lead and led 11-8 at the first stop on Tamulionis' 18-footer, while Mansfield outscored Foxboro 8-2 over the last 5:37 of the second quarter, the last three baskets by Hill, to lead 20-19 at the break.

Three straight 3-pointers (two by Ann Maher and one by Mady Bendanillo) put Mansfield up by three (31-28) entering the final quarter, but the teams would battle through three lead changes and two ties early in the final quarter.

Trailing by three, Foxboro guard Lily Sykes hit a three off Smally's assist with 5:17 left for a 34-34 tie, and a free throw by Sampson with 3:20 left gave Foxboro the lead. With three minutes left, Sampson (held to eight points) kicked the ball out to Smally at the foul line for a 37-34 edge. Then after Hill's surprise trey, Sampson hit a free throw and then executed the same kick-out pass to Smally for another basket with 1:30 left. The Warriors added three more free throws to cement the victory.

Hill had 11 points, 15 rebounds and five blocked shots to lead the Hornets. Tamulionis topped Foxboro with 11 points and six rebounds, Sykes threw in nine, and Sampson and Smally had eight apiece.

Mansfield visits Canton on Friday, while Foxboro entertains King Philip.

FOXBORO (43)

Sykes 3-12 0-0 9, Mollica 0-6 2-2 2, Smally 3-7 2-2 8, Tamulionis 4-11 1-2 11, Hassman 1-4 0-2 2, Sampson 2-11 4-6 8, Gibbons 1-1 0-0 3, totals 14-52 9-14 43.

MANSFIELD (37)

Daniel 1-1 0-0 2, Vigeant 1-5 1-1 3, Mulkern 0-6 0-0 0, M. Bendanillo 2-10 1-2 6, Santos 0-0 0-0 0, Kemp 0-0 0-0 0, Maher 3-11 0-0 9, K. Bendanillo 0-0 0-0 0, Hill 5-10 0-0 11, Danehy 3-10 0-0 6, totals 15-53 2-3 37.

	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	Final
Foxboro	11	08	09	15	43
Mansfield	08	12	11	06	37

3-point goals—Foxboro 6-21 (Sykes 3-9, Mollica 0-4, Tamulionis 2-4, Sampson 0-3, Gibbons 1-1),

Mansfield 5-16 (Mulkern 0-3, M. Bendanillo 1-3, Maher 3-9, Hill 1-1).

Rebounds--Foxboro 32 (Tamulionis 6), Mansfield 47 (Hill 15).

Assists--Foxboro 11 (Sampson 4), Mansfield 11 (M. Bendanillo, Maher, K. Bendanillo 3).

Total fouls--Foxboro 11, Mansfield 11.

Fouled out--None.

JV:

Foxboro, 45-38