

Foxboro 59, Mansfield 50

By SEAN T. McGUIRE
FOXBORO

— Foxboro High sophomore Katelyn Mollica scored 11 of her game-high 21 points in the fourth quarter as the Warriors girls' basketball team extended their two-point lead to eight in the opening minutes of the period and pulled out a 59-50 Hockomock League victory over rival Mansfield High.

Mansfield, which led for only eight seconds during the game, rallied back from a 12-point, third-quarter deficit behind relentless defensive pressure.

The Hornets used their full-court press to force Foxboro into six turnovers as the Warriors went four minutes without scoring a basket.

The run ultimately cut the Hornet deficit to 41-39 entering the fourth quarter before the Warriors used a 7-1 run over the opening two and a half minutes. Foxboro held Mansfield without a field goal for the first 3:08 of the fourth quarter and connected on three of their first five shots on the other end.

The youthful Warriors did not let the veteran Hornets complete the comeback.

“That’s the problem with rallying back,” said Mansfield coach Mike Redding, “You take so much to rally back and then finally get it, but then you’re tired. But, whenever we made our runs, (Foxboro) found ways to get answers.”

Foxboro junior captain Abby Hassman (eight points) connected on a jumper on the first possession of the fourth before the Warriors benefitted from a pair second-chance opportunities. The first led to a Mollica 3-pointer before junior Lizzy Davis (six points) connected on a jump shot of her own to put the Warriors ahead 48-40.

The Hornets rally was also hampered by the fact they shot 18-for-32 from the foul line despite being in the bonus for the final 7:50 and double-bonus for the final 5:32.

Mansfield twice missed both free throws while trailing by two possessions and missed the front end of a one-and-one while trailing by two points.

Senior Maggie Danehy led the Hornets with 11 points while classmate Mady Bendanillo scored 10 points.

The Mansfield defense opened the game clearing keying in on Mollica, throwing a box-and-1 defense at the sharp-shooter, who was held to just five points on one basket in the first half. However, the youthful Warriors found other ways to score. In all, seven Foxboro players scored in the first half. “That was key,” Foxboro coach Lisa Downs said. “Everyone else stepped up.”

Sophomore Yara Fawaz finished with eight points on the night, none bigger than a late fourth-quarter basket in the paint on an assist from teammate Chelsea Gibbons (five points, 13 rebounds).

Despite lacking an advantage in size, the Warriors battled on the glass to build their first half lead.

The Warriors had 10 of their 27 first-half points come after offensive rebounds while forcing the Hornets to shoot 6-for-20 in the opening half.

Sophomore Jordyn Collins finished with two points, but made the hustle plays like an offensive rebound which led to a Hassman basket in the paint, as well as a pair of assists in the

final 40 seconds of the first period, the latter of which led to an Adrienne Dunn 3-pointer to give the Warriors a 15-8 lead after the first quarter.

“For (Collins and Fawaz) to never have had varsity court time and do what they did in their first game was pretty impressive,” Downs said.

Foxboro (1-0) hosts Canton on Friday while Mansfield (1-1) will host Attleboro.

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MANSFIELD;

Daniel 1 0-0 2, Vigeant 1 3-6 5, Mulkern 0 4-6 4, M. Bendanillo 3 4-6 10, Santos 2 0-0 4, R. Hottleman 3 1-1 7, Kemp 0 0-0 0, K. Bendanillo 2 1-6 5, MacVicar 1 0-0 2, Danehy 3 5-7 11, totals 16 18-32 50.

Mansfield 8 11 20 11—50

Foxboro 15 12 14 18—59

3-point goals—Msf. 0, Foxboro 6 (Mollica 4, Dunn, Davis).