

Bendanillo fuels Mansfield comeback against Feehan

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Mansfield 66, Bishop Feehan 50

MANSFIELD — Mady Bendanillo has shown the potential to be a leader of her Mansfield High girls' basketball team for the past two seasons.

Friday night, she confirmed that status.

The 5-foot-5 junior guard scored 15 of her game-high and career-high 22 points in the fourth quarter, leading Mansfield to a 30-12 advantage over Bishop Feehan in the final eight minutes and a 66-50 non-league triumph at the James Albertini Gym.

"She was money at the free-throw line, she hit some big threes, and handling the ball ... and I think she played more minutes than anybody," said Mansfield coach Mike Redding. "She just never gets tired. She's definitely coming into her own and getting some confidence."

In bringing Redding his first win over the Shamrocks in either regular-season or postseason play over a 20-year coaching career; Bendanillo shot 5-of-9 from the field (3-4 in threes) and 9-12 at the foul line. She also grabbed four rebounds and tied Ann Maher for the game high in assists with five.

With the 4-1 Hornets looking to replace the backcourt leadership provided by the graduated Jen Peel, Bendanillo's sterling performance against a respected rival may have solved that issue going forward.

"We know Meg (Hill) is going to get some points inside and Ann is going to hit some threes, but when Mady goes double-digits, then we become a really good basketball team," Redding said.

"Give Mansfield credit, that little lefty guard really hurt us," said Feehan coach Mike Deady. "She hit some big foul shots, and also those threes. She's improved a lot."

The Hornets needed every bit of it, too.

The Shamrocks, undergoing a retooling of their own with several new faces in the starting lineup, got out to a 9-2 start and led after a quarter, 17-12, behind six points from Anna Shaughnessy and four from Riley Lahiff.

Mansfield appeared to be relying heavily upon Hill, the 6-foot-3 center, for its offense. She had eight points in the first quarter, but the Shamrocks started to pay more attention to her in the paint and held her to just one basket in the second and third quarters.

Lahiff (foul-line jumper), Sarah John (3-pointer) and Brie Gillen (lay-in) combined for an early 7-0 lead to extend the Feehan lead to 24-12, but that snapped the Hornets out of their doldrums.

They outscored Feehan 14-2 over a 3 1/2-minute stretch, Bendanillo accounting for the last five on a steal and drive and a trey on a feed from her sister, Kara, to draw even at 26-26 with 25 seconds left in the half. Gillen's lay-in with 10 seconds to go put Feehan up by two at the break.

"Mike did a good job," Deady said. "He switched defenses on us and the girls were not as quick to react to the changes as they will be in the games to come. We just didn't match their intensity."

"With that run, that gave us some confidence to start the second half," said Redding.

There were four lead changes to start the third quarter, but Shaughnessy scored twice in the paint and Nicole Smith dropped in a three to put the Shamrocks up by two at the last stop.

But the Hornets jumped out with seven unanswered points to start the final quarter. Bendanillo's three with 7:36 left put the Hornets in front 39-38, she followed that with two free throws, and Maggie Danehy scored on a baseline drive to make it 43-38 after a minute and a half.

Smith stopped the surge with a drive at 6:16, but Maher hit a three, Bendanillo netted two at the foul line and Bendanillo hit her second three off a Maher rebound and dish for a 51-43 lead with 4:57 left.

It was 54-47 inside the 4-minute mark when the Hornets put the game away with a 12-3 run. Maher, Hill and Bendanillo combined for five points before Smith netted a three with 2:20 left to cut the deficit to 59-50, but those were Feehan's last points.

Smith had 15 points, Lahiff 12 and Shaughnessy 10 points and seven rebounds for the 1-2 Shamrocks, who resume play Friday at home against Attleboro.

Hill had 14 points and a game-high nine rebounds toward Mansfield's 39-28 rebounding edge, and Maher added 12. The Hornets entertain Franklin on Thursday.

MANSFIELD, Mass. – Trailing by two points entering the fourth quarter, Mansfield knew that it would need a spark on the offensive end to come out on top against non-league rival Bishop Feehan in Friday night's meeting in the James Albertini Gym.

The Hornets put the ball into the hands of junior point guard Mady Bendanillo and she delivered, personally outscoring the Shamrocks 15-12 in the final eight minutes. With Bendanillo leading the way, Mansfield, which had scored 36 points over the first three quarters, put up 30 as a team in the fourth.

Bendanillo finished with a game- and career-high 22 points and added five assists to lead the Hornets to a 66-50 victory over Feehan, which head coach Mike Redding said afterwards was his first coaching win against the Shamrocks.

"She put on a show tonight," said Redding of Bendanillo. "She was money at the free throw line (9-of-10 in the fourth quarter), hit some big threes, and handled the ball. I think she played more minutes than anybody and never gets tired, never takes a possession off, and she's definitely coming into her own getting confidence scoring."

He added, "We know Meg's going to get some points inside, Ann will hit some threes, but when Mady goes for double digits then we become a really good basketball team."

Bendanillo got the fourth quarter started with a three-pointer to give the Hornets a one-point edge. After she hit a pair of free throws, junior Maggie Danehy got into the act with a baseline drive and finish to make it 43-38. Feehan scored, but Ann Maher (12 points and four assists) nailed a step-back three from the left wing to push the lead to six.

The speed of Bendanillo allowed her to break the Feehan press and turn any rebound into a quick break and her ability to get to the rim led to five different trips to the line in the quarter. She buried a three (her third of the night) off a Steph Kemp assist for a 51-43 lead then assisted on a Maher three that pushed the lead to nine.

Meg Hill (14 points and 10 boards) had a pair of baskets in the fourth, one off a Maher assist and the other on a putback, and Danehy added a layup, as the Hornets stormed to the final whistle.

"It was just a lot of different contributions when we needed it," said Redding about the difference on this night compared to other meetings with Feehan in the past. "Where in the past we may have gone flat for a couple minutes and no one would make a play. Tonight we had a bunch of kids making plays to extend it and make it comfortable."

The game looked similar to recent meetings between the two teams midway through the second quarter. With the Hornets struggling to make shots and with Hill, who had kept Mansfield in the game with eight points in the first quarter, on the bench with her second foul, Feehan built a 24-12 lead and looked poised to break the game wide open.

Instead of the game getting out of hand, the Hornets grabbed hold of the momentum and closed the half with a 14-4 run. Erin Daniel (seven points) drained a three that cut the lead to seven and Bendanillo followed with a steal and layup and then a three off an assist by her twin sister Kara.

After a Kemp steal, Kara Bendanillo scored her only basket of the night to tie the game at 26-26. Although Feehan added a bucket to lead at the break, it was the Hornets that went into halftime happier.

“When Meg got her second [foul], we sat her and said okay we just have to survive these last two [minutes] and we went on an 8-0 run with the subs,” Redding explained. “That really kind of set the tone going into the second half.”

He continued, “All of a sudden we have that run and it’s a ballgame and we came out with some confidence to start the second half.”

Sydney Mulkern hit a three after the break, her only points of the game, to give Mansfield its first lead since it was 2-0. Nicole Smith (15 points) answered with a three for the Shamrocks, but Maher stepped into a kick out pass by Hill to bury a three on the next possession. Daniel added four points in the quarter to keep the Hornets within two heading to the final eight minutes.

“It was a great game,” said Redding. “We’ll have our hands full over there and this will probably end up being the first of three of them. So, they’re all going to be fun to watch. It’s a high level of basketball for both teams.”

Mansfield (4-1, 2-1) will get a few days off before facing Franklin on Dec. 28 with a rematch against Bishop Feehan slated for Jan. 3.

BISHOP FEEHAN (50)

John 2-2 0-0 6, Smith 5-9 2-2 15, R. Lahiff 5-11 2-2 12, Gillen 2-7 0-0 4, Shaughnessy 5-15 0-2 10, Jolin 0-1 0-0 0, Rapose 1-3 0-0 3, Pearlstein 0-0 0-0 0, totals 20-48 4-6 50.

MANSFIELD (66)

Daniel 3-7 0-0 7, Vigeant 0-2 0-0 0, Mulkern 1-3 0-2 3, M. Bendanillo 5-9 9-12 22, Kemp 0-1 0-0 0, Maher 4-12 1-2 12, K. Bendanillo 1-4 0-0 2, Carney 0-1 0-0 0, Hill 7-13 0-0 14, Danehy 2-6 2-2 6, totals 23-58 12-18 66.

Team	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	Final
Bishop Feehan	17	11	10	12	50
Mansfield	12	14	10	30	66

3-point goals—Feehan 6-13 (John 2-2, Smith 3-6, Gillen 0-1, Shaughnessy 0-2, Rapose 1-2).

Mansfield 8-25 (Daniel 1-5, Vigeant 0-1, Mulkern 1-1, M. Bendanillo 3-4, Maher 3-11, K. Bendanillo 0-2).

Rebounds—Feehan 28 (Shaughnessy 7), Mansfield 39 (Hill 9).

Assists—Feehan 15 (John 4), Mansfield 17 (M. Bendanillo, Maher 5).

Total fouls—Feehan 17, Mansfield 10. Fouled out—R. Lahiff.

JV: Bishop Feehan, 45-28.