



SPORTS

THE CANADIAN CHAMPION

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Cross-town clash in senior hoops sees ...

'Stangs battle back to best Bishop Reding

By **MURRAY TOWNSEND**

Special to The Champion

Chalk one up for the Milton District Mustangs as they defeated cross-town rival Bishop Reding 51-35 in senior girls basketball play at MD Thursday.

The two teams are opposites in many ways, besides being on opposite sides of town. The Mustangs are a big team that controls the boards and gets a lot of their points by going inside and driving to the net. The Royals are a smaller but very quick team, relying on forcing turnovers, ball control and getting their points from outside shots. As well, MD relies on their starters to play much of the game, while the Royals generally alternate two five-person units.

At the start of the game, it looked as if Bishop Reding might be able to build up a big lead. Vanessa Bouskill opened the scoring, and then Alicia New got her first of 10 points on a great pass from Amy Prisniak, who made a habit of that all game long. The Royals point guard was like a waterbug, darting here, there and everywhere to set up shots or steal the ball.

The Mustangs couldn't get anything to fall and missed at least their first eight shots, most of them from close range, as the Royals defenders were on them like butter on popcorn.

Sharalee Dempster took a nice feed from Jessica Simpson to finally get Milton District on the board, but then Chantal Deroches came right back with a three-pointer to put Bishop Reding up 7-3.

Bishop Reding held onto the lead well into the second quarter, controlling the ball, getting more turnovers, and building a 15-11 lead.

Henderson sparks comeback

But, then Milton District's Chrissie Henderson looked like she had taken an overdose of Gatorade and went on a rampage. With just over three minutes remaining in the half, she went coast-to-coast, and dished off to a wide open Dempster to give them the lead for the first time, and the last time. Then she stole the ball and went all the way to the hoop by herself, following that up with another basket and another pass to Dempster. Henderson was responsible for eight straight points and turning the game around.

The Royals were clearly rattled, and needed a couple of time-outs, before Carolyn Coates helped stop the bleeding by hitting nothing but net. Henderson replied yet again with one of her own to give MD the 26-19 half-time lead.

Joanna Sitarz, who had eight points, helped get Bishop Reding back in the game with some feisty play in the third quarter, helping her sister, Eva Sitarz, get four points, and waging her own private war with Stephanie Lees of MD. Eventually, they both backed off and got their own sandwich.

Lees was a tower of power for the Mustangs. She used her height advantage effectively to dominate the rebounding and wasn't afraid to mix it up under the basket.

The Mustangs ran away with it in the fourth quarter with both Simpson and Dempster making some picturesque forays to the hoop. Henderson finished with 20 points, followed by Lees with 11, Dempster with eight and Simpson with five.

Milton District Coach, Jill Harper, had a reason for the Mustangs getting out of the box slowly. "They're a fast team. They threw a full court press at us from the start and slowed us down in the beginning."



Photo by GRAHAM PAINE

Mustangs Jessica Simpson (left) and Ashley Elliott guard against Bishop Reding's Alicia New during senior girls basketball play at Milton District High School Thursday. MD won the cross-town clash 51-35.

Harper said that they were able to pick up on what defense Bishop Reding was playing and adjust to it. She agreed that they had a distinct height advantage and were able to use it, while Simpson and Henderson on their defense were able to force bad passes and steal the ball.

The Mustangs are 2-1 in league competition, while Bishop Reding fell to 1-3.

Bishop Reding coach, Bob Surge said, "Both of us (other coach Dwight Jonker) were really pleased with the game the girls played.

"They worked hard, did most of the things we wanted to do, and except for a couple lapses when they ran some points on us,

we played them pretty even."

"Give credit to the other team," added Surge. "They played well and have kids that are good players.

Surge added that they tried to counter the huge size advantage with pace and pressure, but for that to work they have to be able to hit their shots when they get the opportunity, otherwise all their hard work goes for naught.

The Royals exacted a measure of revenge at Milton District's tournament on the weekend, defeating the Mustangs, who were missing two starters, 31-21.

Neither team, however, was able to make it to the championship final.

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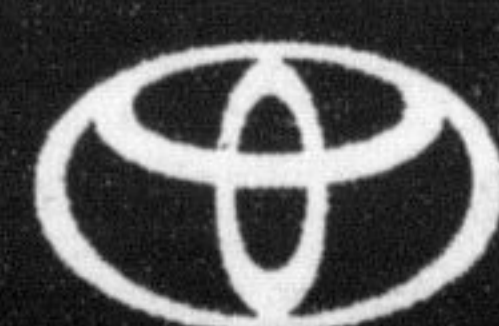
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