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Knights Claim Union Tourney Crown

By Bill Battle, Missourian Sports Editor
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Defenses stepped up Saturday night in the championship game of the Union Tournament.

Borgia (16-3) scored only 48 points in the game, but still managed to win the title by holding Hillsboro (16-2) to 32 points.

"This was a game we won on guts," said Borgia Head Coach Dave Neier. "We had to play very hard. They were very tenacious defensively. They made it tough for us to score. Even when we had open shots, we really weren't putting the ball down. We did a pretty good job rebounding against a team that was a lot bigger than us. We did a really good job hustling on defense to limit their number of good shots. Those things carried us through. We realize there are going to be nights where we won't shoot as good as we would like and you've got to find different ways to win. Fortunately we were able to do that tonight."

It was the third tournament title of the season for the Knights, who also won the Borgia and Washington Tournaments.

"Coach always talks about the triple crown and winning all three tournaments," said Borgia junior Nathan Scheer. "We were able to do it this year like we did last year."

Hillsboro led 11-9 after one quarter. The Knights rallied to hold a 24-19 advantage at the half.

In the second half, neither team shot very well. Both clubs struggled to put the ball into the basket. Much could be attributed to the defensive efforts of the opposing club.

"I think at the beginning of the game, we were a little more anxious," said Neier. "We had some turnovers near the start of the game. We went the first three minutes before we finally hit a shot. We were a little impatient at times trying to force the ball inside and trying to make great passes rather than just making good passes."

Another possible factor could have been fatigue as both teams were playing for the third evening in a row.

"That's just an excuse," said Neier. "Physically, I don't think our kids were in too bad of shape. I think playing three nights in a row, our focus was not quite there. We were not as sharp mentally as we would have liked to be. We did come up with the big win and a tournament championship which means a lot to our kids."

In the contest, Borgia was led in scoring by a pair of juniors. Scheer and Tyler Ressel each scored 12 points.

"They did a good job of getting us out of our normal flow of things," Scheer said. "We tried to speed it up and they kept slowing it down. It was a rough night all around, but we were happy to come out with the win."

Senior Sean Duff ended with nine points Senior Michael Dempsey scored seven points. Senior Eric Kimminau had five points. Senior Chris Unnerstall ended with three points. Others playing were senior Mac Findeiss and junior Sam Tochtrop.

Hillsboro was led by senior Keven Kramer, who scored nine points and added six rebounds.

Senior Lance Kiggans ended with eight points and had four rebounds and two assists.

Senior Zack Winchester scored eight points with four rebounds and an assist. Junior Jarrod Huskey scored four points and pulled down seven rebounds with one assist, one steal and one blocked shot.

Senior Cody Foster had two points with three rebounds and one steal.

Sophomore Tyler Ludwig ended with one point and also had three rebounds.

Others playing were seniors Chris Lehnhoff and Sam Pounds and junior Andy Lemke.

"Hillsboro is in our district and what a tough district it's going to be," Neier said. "We've seen some tough teams over here. Pacific has played tough all season. Sullivan has a tremendous record. Hillsboro played in this tournament and gave us everything we wanted tonight. If you look at the other teams, Union is capable of winning some games. St. Clair has a young team, but they're going to keep improving."

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