

## Defenders' Fisher steps up to beat Wildcats

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TURBOTVILLE—There was a time when any Jon Weaver nightmare would have had to include Steph Shamburg fouling out of a game that was still in doubt.

Just the thought was likely enough to send shivers down the Warrior Run coach's spine.

So you can imagine how Weaver felt Thursday when his senior all-star jointed him on the bench with more than a quarter to play in the Defenders' game with visiting Mifflinburg.

"I said, 'Now, girls, we're going to have to play with-out Steph and that's fine...'" Weaver recalled, "and Chloe (Eisenhuth), our team captain, stepped up and said, 'We will. We've got this, girls.'

"They were fine."

Freshman Madi Welliver scored five of her nine points and grabbed half of her game-high 12 rebounds, and Abby Fisher added four of her game-high 19 points in the fourth period as Warrior Run posted a Heartland crossover win, 55-37.

The Defenders (3-0), with an improved supporting cast around Shamburg—bolstered by a pair of beyond-their-years freshman—closed out Mifflinburg with a strong quarter that had positively no one looking for the Daily Item's Preseason Player of the Year.

"What's nice about this year is, when she isn't on the floor—not that it's a good thing—we were able to play with-out her," said Weaver. "It's not like if Steph's not on the floor, we're done."

Last season, Shamburg averaged a double-double (16.5 points, 10.7 rebounds). She was right on that scoring average through two games this year.

Thursday she sat out almost two quarters with four trouble (the last 7:20 of the first half and final 8:22 of the game), finishing with six points and seven boards—and her team beat the much-improved Wildcats by 18.

Mifflinburg (1-1) had a similar problem with Daily Item preseason all-star Kayla Kline saddled with two fouls less than three minutes into the game. The Wildcats managed to hang around at 7-all for a short while, but then Warrior Run caught fire from the perimeter and pulled away.

"(Kline is) our point guard, so when she's out we do (miss her)," said Mifflinburg coach Kelly Griffith. "She helps us bring up the ball, distribute the ball and get our offenses running ... keeps us in the flow.

"They hit a lot of shots when she was out, also."

Freshman guard Emily Webb hit two 3-pointers in a series of three possessions, and Fisher knocked down a pair for a 21-11 margin before the first quarter ended. The Defenders' run extended to 18-4 early in the second for a 14-point lead.

However, that was around the time Shamburg went to the bench with two fouls, and the Wildcats cut their deficit to 27-21 in just five minutes. Sophomore forward Julia McArdle-Coe, a force following a growth spurt and the refinement of her low-post moves, scored seven of her team-high 18 points in a 10-2 run.

Laura Bastian (seven points, five rebounds) ended Warrior Run's five-minute scoring drought with a put-back, and

"Our inside game struggled because they were double- and triple-teaming (Shamburg). (But) they left us open and we hit 21 points in the first quarter because of our outside shooting," he said. "What made it easier is when I took (Shamburg) off the floor, because they spread out (defensively)."

Kline, who had 20 points in the Wildcats' opener, finished with six to go with 10 rebounds. Emily Hess matched her with 10 boards, one behind McArdle-Coe.

"We got good shots, we just missed," said Griffith. "We did not shoot well at all (28.9)percent). We missed ones