

Girls lose heartbreaker to state-ranked SMC

Written by Deb Egenberger
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Eagles win first-round thriller at home tourney.

After scoring just three points in the first quarter, the Brady girls caught fire in the second period and went on to make a nail-biter of a game in the championship of the Maxwell Booster Tournament on Dec. 22.

It came down to the free throw line for both the Eagles and the No. 9 state ranked Stapleton-McPherson County Cyclones.

Unfortunately for Brady, SMC made a bucket and two charity shots in the final 15 seconds of the game to win 39-37 and remain unbeaten on the season.

The Eagles struggled to score in the opening period, hitting three free throws to trail 10-3 at the end of one.

It wasn't until two minutes into the second quarter that Brady finally hit a bucket and began a comeback effort.

With four seconds left in the first half, Eagle senior Shaunna Scarrow banked a three-point shot to tie the score at 25-25.

Momentum swayed back and forth throughout the second half with no margin wider than five points for either team.

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The Eagles played through foul trouble much of the second half with three starters carrying four fouls into the final period.

With two minutes left on the clock, Brady led 37-35.

The Eagles forced a turnover but couldn't get the ball inbounds in the required five seconds so returned the ball to SMC.

Brady freshman Dakota Terry got a steal on SMC's inbounds play and drew a foul but missed the front end of a one-and-one.

Then Cyclone Julia Houser drew a foul and made her first free throw. When she missed the second attempt, SMC got the offensive rebound and a pair of put-back attempts, finally scoring the go-ahead points on a short jumper by Houser.

With 6.9 seconds remaining, Brady trailed 38-37. Headed to the basket for a final shot attempt, Brady was called for an offensive foul that sent Ashley Bessmer to the line for the Cyclones.

She missed the first shot but made the second, leaving only three seconds for the Eagles to try and tie.

The desperation attempt fell short leaving Brady to accept the runner-up trophy.

The Eagles played for another championship in their home tournament Tuesday night against Wauneta-Palisade after pulling out a 37-36 win over Paxton in the first round Monday.

The score was tight the whole game and came down, once again, to the free throw line.

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Trailing 36-35, Brady senior Megan Pfeifer found herself on the free throw line with 1.8 seconds left on the clock.

She sank both shots to seal the victory.

Look for complete Brady Holiday Tournament coverage in next week's issue of The Times.