

BAKER BOYS BASKETBALL

Third-quarter surge sends Baker past Nyssa

BY JAYSON JACOBY

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In the span of about 2 minutes, everything that hadn't worked for the Baker boys basketball team in the first half Tuesday, Feb. 1, at Nyssa began to yield riches.

Steals.
Layins.
Points.
Lots of points.

Isaiah Jones scored the first 9 points of a 12-0 Baker run early in the third quarter that rapidly turned a close game into a rout.

Baker scored 20 of the last 22 points of the third quarter and breezed to a 62-40 win.

It was the eighth straight win for the Bulldogs, who are 14-3 overall and ranked sixth in the Class 4A standings.

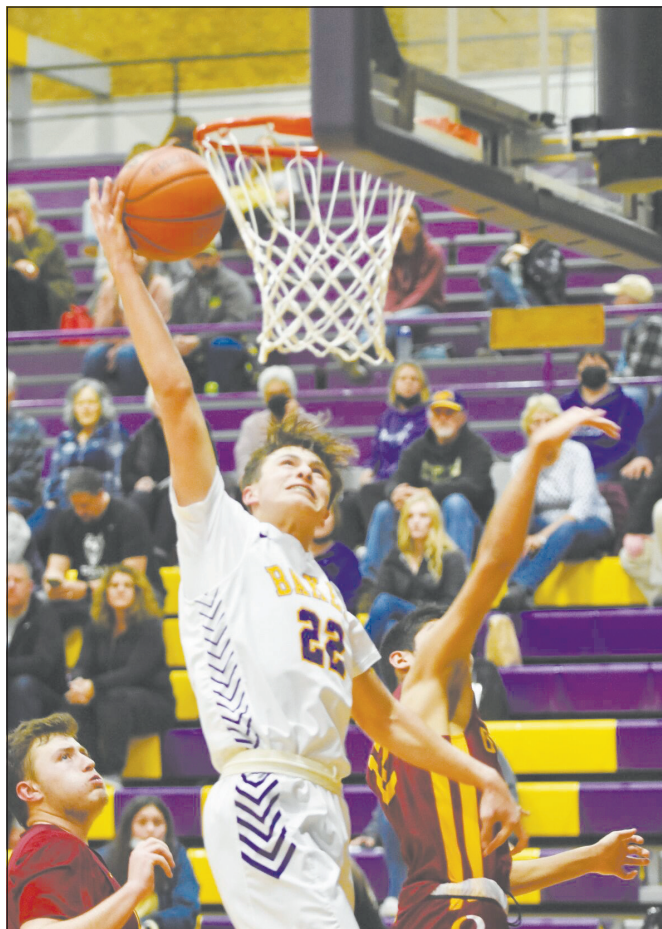
The key to the game-changing stretch in the third quarter was defense, Baker coach Jebron Jones said.

Specifically, his decision to switch from the fullcourt press that Baker deployed, with little effect, in the first half, to a half-court trap.

Nyssa was perplexed by the latter tactic.

After Zack Kausler hit a 3-pointer to cut Baker's lead to 32-29 early in the third quarter, the combination of Baker's defense and Isaiah Jones' array of offensive moves quickly shifted all the momentum to Baker.

Jones hit a tough turnaround jumper from 15 feet, and he followed less than 30 seconds



Baker's Paul Hobson, shown here against Ontario on Jan. 21, 2022, scored 12 points in Baker's 62-40 win over Nyssa on Tuesday, Feb. 1, 2022.

later with a layin to give Baker a 36-29 lead, its largest of the game to that point.

Jones completed his personal 9-0 run with a layin off a steal, and, after a Nyssa timeout with 5:48 left in the third

quarter, he twisted through the lane for a basket, drew a foul and made the free throw.

Baker led 41-29 with 5:41 left in the quarter.

Paul Hobson scored on a breakaway after another steal,

and Grant Gambleton made a free throw to push the lead to 44-29.

Kayno Flores ended the 12-0 run with a 15-footer, but Baker then scored the final eight points, with four players scoring two points each — Drake Harper, Hudson Spike and Hobson each had baskets, and Jones capped the quarter with a pair of free throws as Baker led 52-31 after three quarters.

The final period was anticlimactic as Nyssa never mounted a comeback.

Jebron Jones said he changed to the halfcourt trap after Baker's fullcourt press "wasn't doing anything productive in the first half."

Jaxon Logsdon had an early steal on the press that led to Hobson's layin and Baker's 4-0 lead.

But for the rest of the first half Nyssa handled the Baker press with aplomb, although there were multiple plays when a Nyssa player barely managed to grab a somewhat errant pass.

"They beat us to all the 50-50 balls, and they outthusted us," Jebron Jones said. "That was a point of emphasis at halftime. I challenged the guys to step it up or we'll lose."

After Isaiah Jones' inside basket gave Baker a 10-8 lead late in the first quarter, the lead changed hands nine times during the remainder of the first half.

The score was tied three times as well, the last time on Andrew Enders' 3-pointer for Nyssa with 1:33 left in the half.

Hayden Younger's basket in the lane gave Baker a 30-26 lead at halftime.

Jebron Jones said he had "no complaints" about Baker's performance in the decisive third quarter, outscoring Nyssa 22-5.

"I was just disappointed it took so long for the kids to want to play hard," he said.

But he noted that despite the first-half struggles, Baker still had the lead at halftime.

"Even though we didn't play our best half, we still scored more points than they did, and at the end of the day that's what matters," Jones said.

"Some games are pretty and some games are ugly. This game was ugly."

Jones said the absence of freshman guard Jaron Long, who injured his knee in Baker's 67-41 win at La Grande on Jan. 28, had a noticeable effect against Nyssa.

Long might have the quickest hands on the team, and he's usually responsible for a significant share of the team's steals. He's also adept at driving into the lane and creating his own shot.

"He's a big part of the machine," Jones said. "We definitely missed Jaron. It left a hole on our team."

Jones said Long will miss Baker's two upcoming home

BAKER (62)

Logsdon 0 0-0-0, Harper 1 0-0-2, Gambleton 2 1-2-5, Quintela 0 0-2-0, Younger 1 1-2-3, Molina 2 0-2-4, Spike 6 1-2-13, Jones 9 3-3-21, Hobson 6 0-0-12, Charbonneau 0 2-2-2, Mitchell 0 0-0-0. Totals 27 8-15-62.

NYSSA (40)

C. Ramirez 0 0-2-0, Fales 1 0-0-2, Zuniga 1 0-0-2, Enders 5 2-2-15, Flores 1 0-0-2, E. Ramirez 0 0-0-0, Iniguez 1 0-0-2, Kausler 4 0-0-11, Bueno 1 0-0-2, Sanders 1 0-1-2, Vela 1 0-0-2. Totals 16 2-5-40.

games — Friday, Feb. 4, against Mac-Hi (7:30 p.m.) and Saturday, Feb. 5, against Powder Valley (5:30 p.m.).

Long could return next week. Baker plays host to La Grande in a game that could decide the Greater Oregon League title on Tuesday, Feb. 8, at 7:30 p.m.

Isaiah Jones led all scorers with 21 points at Nyssa. Spike added 13 points and Hobson 12. Eight Bulldogs scored.

In a curious statistical anomaly, Baker didn't make any 3-pointers, while Nyssa had six. Baker's 27 to 10 advantage in two-point shots more than made up the difference.

BAKER GIRLS BASKETBALL

Nyssa snaps Baker's win streak at 6 games

Nyssa's 6-foot-5 Gracie Johnson has key rebound basket late

BY JAYSON JACOBY

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Nyssa's Gracie Johnson didn't dominate the game against the Baker girls basketball team on Tuesday, Feb. 1, at Nyssa, but at a key juncture late, the junior used every bit of her 6-foot-5 frame to make the decisive play.

After Baker, which never led, had cut the lead to 45-42 with 2:12 left in the game, Nyssa's Laney Hartley went to the free throw line for a one-and-one. Hartley missed the shot, but Johnson reached above the Baker rebounders, grabbed the ball and banked it in to push the lead back to 47-42 with 1:55 left.

Nyssa then made 9 of 11 free throws to hold off Baker for a 58-48 win that ended the Bulldogs' winning streak at six games.

Nyssa, ranked third in the Class 3A standings, improved to 18-2.

Baker, which hadn't lost since Jan. 8 at Crook County, fell to 14-5 and dropped to fifth in the Class 4A rankings.

Baker coach Jason Ramos said Johnson's rebound basket was the last in a series of crucial plays that Baker failed to make.

"There were a lot of little things," Ramos said.

And it started from the opening minute.

Nyssa scored the first 5 points of the game and extended its lead to as much as 11, at 19-8, on Hartley's 3-pointer late in the first quarter.

Baker narrowed the lead to 25-22 on Macey Moore's two free throws with 11.1 seconds left in the first half. That was as close as Baker had been since early in the game.

But this was followed by the first of the sequences in which Baker seemed poised to seize the momentum, only to have Nyssa respond almost immediately.

Nyssa's Clarita Arizmendi banked in a 3-pointer with 5.5 seconds left to boost the lead back to six, 28-22, at halftime.

"I thought the key early on was they hit some key shots and got a cushion," Ramos said of Nyssa. "We played hard to come back but we couldn't overcome that early deficit. We came close a couple times."

The first time was in the



Baker's Rylee Elms, seen here in a December 2021 game, had 13 points in Baker's 58-48 loss at Nyssa on Tuesday, Feb. 1, 2022.

opening minute of the second half.

Moore and Taylor Gyllenberg each scored to cut the lead to 28-26.

But Nyssa scored 4 straight points — on two buckets by Johnson — to get back to a 6-point edge. Nyssa led 36-31 after three quarters.

After Nyssa took a 39-32 lead early in the fourth quarter, Baker rallied again.

Brooklyn Jaca swished a 3-pointer from the corner to get Baker to within 41-38 with 5:18 left.

But Nyssa went on another quick 4-0 run to push the lead back to five, at 43-38.

Baker's final rally, led by Jozie Ramos' four free throws, cut the lead to 45-42, but Johnson followed with the back-breaking rebound basket off the missed free throw.

Jason Ramos said Johnson influences games in multiple ways.

Her presence in the key on defense forced Baker out of its normal offensive rhythm, he said.

"We struggled a little bit offensively," he said. "She's a factor."

Baker squandered multiple chances to keep the game closer with free throws, making just 18 of 34. Nyssa was 14 of 22 from the line.

Nyssa also had an advantage from longer range, with five 3-pointers to Baker's two.

"We need to have better free throw shooting down the stretch," Ramos said.

BAKER (48)

Elms 5 3-6-13, Flanagan 2 1-6-5, Gyllenberg 1 1-2-3, Pierce 0 1-2-1, Ramos 3 7-9-14, Roy 1 0-0-2, Jaca 1 0-0-3, Moore 1 5-9-7. Totals 14 18-34-48.

NYSSA (58)

Hartley 2 2-3-8, Johnson 8 6-9-22, B. Johns 3 0-0-6, Trinidad 0 0-0-0, Clarita Arizmendi 4 0-0-11, M. Johns 0 0-0-0, Long 2 5-6-10, Vineyard 0 0-2-0, Torres 0 1-2-1, Medrano 0 0-0-0. Totals 19 14-22-58.

Baker 11 11 9 17 — 48

Nyssa 19 9 8 22 — 58

Despite the disappointment of a loss, the nonleague setback has no effect on Baker's playoff prospects, as the Bulldogs remain atop the Greater Oregon League at 3-0.

"We talked about it in the locker room, that we have to have some takeaways from this, and we will," Ramos said. "Having games like this down the stretch is always good preparation for what's coming."

Jozie Ramos led Baker with 14 points, although Johnson's presence inside contributed to Ramos having just three field goals, including a 3-pointer. Rylee Elms had 13 points, Moore added seven and Makenzie Flanagan five.

Johnson led all scorers with 22 points.

Baker returns to GOL play Friday, Feb. 4, when the Bulldogs play host to Mac-Hi at 6 p.m.



Tampa Bay Buccaneers quarterback Tom Brady waves to fans while walking off the field after the Tampa Bay Buccaneers defeated Philadelphia Eagles 31-15 Sunday, Jan. 16, 2022, in Tampa.

Tom Brady retires after 22 seasons, 7 Super Bowl titles

BY ROB MAADDI

AP Pro Football Writer

TAMPA, Fla. — Tom Brady walked away from the NFL on his own terms, still at the top of his game.

Brady, the most successful quarterback in league history and one of the greatest champions in professional sports, has retired after winning seven Super Bowls and setting numerous passing records in an unprecedented 22-year career.

"This is difficult for me to write, but here it goes: I am not going to make that competitive commitment anymore," Brady wrote in a lengthy post on Instagram. "I have loved my NFL career, and now it is time to focus my time and energy on other things that require my attention."

The 44-year-old Brady has long stated his desire to spend more time with his wife, supermodel Gisele Bundchen, and three children despite his unique ability to perform exceptionally well at an age when most athletes are way past their prime.

Brady goes out after leading the Tampa Bay Buccaneers to a Super Bowl title last season and NFC South championship this season.

News of Brady's pending retirement leaked Saturday, Jan. 29, but he said Monday night, Jan. 31, on his SiriusXM podcast he wasn't ready to finalize his plans.

That came Tuesday morning, Feb. 1.

"Right now, it's best I leave the field of play to the next generation of dedicated and committed athletes," Brady said.

Brady thanked the Buccaneers organization, his teammates, ownership, general manager Jason Licht, coach Bruce Arians, his trainer Alex Guerrero, agents Don Yee and Steve Dubin and his family in his nine-page post. He didn't mention the New England Patriots, where he spent his first 20 seasons and won six Super Bowls playing for Bill Belichick. But Brady thanked the Patriots and their fans on Twitter, saying: "I'm beyond grateful. Love you all."

Brady said he's still figuring out how he'll spend his time, but he plans to be involved in his TB12 health and wellness company, Brady clothing line and NFT company.

"I know for sure I want to spend a lot of time giving to others and trying to enrich other people's lives, just as so many have done for me," he said.

Brady led the NFL in yards passing (5,316), touchdowns (43), completions (485) and attempts (719) in 2021, but the Buccaneers lost at home to the Los Angeles Rams in the divisional round.

Brady leaves as the ca-

reer leader in yards passing (84,520) and TDs (624). He's the only player to win more than five Super Bowls and was MVP of the game five times.

Brady won three NFL MVP awards, was a first-team All-Pro three times and was selected to the Pro Bowl 15 times. He was 243-73 in his career in the regular season and 35-12 in the playoffs.

"To finish a 22-year career while still performing at his peak was nothing short of extraordinary," Licht said. "I wish we had more time with Tom, but I understand and respect his decision to leave the game in order to spend more time with his family."

Brady went from 199th pick in the 2000 draft to replacing an injured Drew Bledsoe in 2001 and leading New England to a Super Bowl victory over the heavily favored Rams that season.

He led the Patriots to consecutive Super Bowl titles following the 2003-04 seasons. No team has since repeated as champions.

But New England wouldn't win another one for a decade, twice losing to the New York Giants in the Super Bowl, including a 17-14 defeat on Feb. 3, 2008, that prevented the Patriots from completing a perfect season.

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