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## Boys Basketball

# Hudsonville Boys Shoot Past Rockford 68-55 For Cancer Benefit

By Jonathan Kollnot  
on February 07, 2014 11:04 p.m.

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02/07 - 7:45 PM Boys Basketball	Final
<b>Rockford</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>Hudsonville</b>	<b>68</b>

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Reid Kelley (No. 22) of Rockford launches a shot above No. 2 Mark Dieterle of Hudsonville.

(BRIAN FORDE/MLIVE.COM)

By JONATHAN KOLLNOT

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HUDSONVILLE – Some causes are greater than sports, and basketball fans at Hudsonville High School let their generosity shine on Friday night.

Hudsonville’s basketball teams hosted the Hoops and Hope event, with all proceeds going towards the fight against all forms of cancer. Additionally, each

player on the Eagles girls and boys basketball teams played in honor of a cancer survivor or in the memory of a lost loved one.

There also was a key O-K Red boys hoops game to be played, and the Eagles flew back into first place with a commanding 68-55 victory over Rockford. With the win, Hudsonville moved to 4-1 in the Red, 7-6 overall.

This game was closely-fought in the early moments, with the Rams taking advantage of four early Hudsonville turnovers to jump out to a 14-7 lead just over five minutes into the game. The Eagles responded by pounding the paint in a 6-0 run to trail 14-13 after the first quarter.

The two teams battled nip-and-tuck early in the second quarter, but then Hudsonville's defense took over. Rockford hit just three field goals in the stanza, while Eagles junior Brent Hibbitts scored nine of his game-high 24 points to help lift his team to a 27-20 advantage at halftime.

It was a lead and momentum that Hudsonville would never again relinquish.

"I thought we played well," said Hudsonville coach Eric Elliott. "We had a little bit of a slow start. I think they got up seven or eight on us, but I'd rather see that than us get up and get complacent like we have a couple times. So I'm very happy with the focus of the mindset. Our defensive effort was obviously very good.

"They (Rockford) didn't shoot the ball as well as they are capable of, so we were fortunate of that. But overall, a great win for us,"

No. 3 Mason Opple of Hudsonville drives against No. 22 Reid Kelley of Rockford.  
*(BRIAN FORDE/MLIVE.COM)*

Early in the third quarter, the Rams kept their deficit at eight (34-26) after a pair of clutch inside baskets by junior Jacob VanCuren and senior Christopher Sunday. But the hot-shooting Eagles exploded out to an 8-0 run, capped by 3-pointers from Hibbitts and senior Logan Magsig. Magsig drained a trio of triples in the third as the Eagles took a decisive 52-31 advantage into the fourth

quarter.

The Rams worked to crawl back into game in the fourth quarter on the strength of their outside shooting. Senior Nathan Woznick hit a pair of threes and fellow senior Casey Watters hit another, but Rockford couldn't pull within 11 points. A late dunk by Hibbitts put an exclamation point on the Eagles decisive win.

Hudsonville's defensive intensity made the difference in taking over the game in the second quarter.

“Early on they (Rockford) were getting to the basket, they were getting rebounds,” said Elliott. “We were turning it over. We'd get a rebound and somebody would take it out of our hands. That kept them in it and we got some stops. At the same time, we made a couple shots ourselves. That always makes things a little easier.”

Hibbitts finished with a game-high 10 rebounds to go along with his 24 points. Magsig scored 19 points for the Eagles, junior Mason Opple had 10 points with nine boards, and senior Mark Dieterle had five points. Junior Jordan Kuipers nabbed seven rebounds.

Rockford (2-4, 4-8) was led by Watters with 18 points, followed by Reid Kelley with 12 points and seven rebounds. Both Woznick and Sunday scored six points for the Rams.

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