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Sports

Callaham Lifts EHS To Victory

By KEVIN FIORENZO/Index-Journal sports writer

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The Emerald High School girls basketball team didn't have its best shooting night Saturday, but that cold touch didn't extend to the Vikings' Marissa Callaham. The sophomore reserve forward scored a game-high 16 points and the Vikings broke out in the fourth quarter for a 48-36 non-region victory over Mid-Carolina at Westview Middle School.

Callaham came off the bench as well in Emerald's season-opening win over Ninety Six on Tuesday and Vikings coach Anarie Duckett has been pleased with the second-year player in that role. "I think it's working OK. She understands her role on the team," Duckett said. "As long as they all understand their role on the team then everything's fine." With Emerald ahead 29-28 and less than a minute remaining in the third quarter, Callaham hit a 3-pointer from the left wing and was fouled at the same time.

She made her shot from the free-throw line and moments later hit a jumper from the left side of the key to give Emerald a five-point lead and some momentum entering the final period. "It helped us a lot. Coach (Duckett) told us to get some intensity so when I shot the 3-pointer and it went in, I was like, 'There it is,'" Callaham said.

In the fourth quarter, Emerald outscored the Rebels 13-8 to maintain its lead. "Once they got the momentum, they just wanted it more than we did," Mid-Carolina coach Gary Wilbanks said. "They outhustled us, they beat us on the glass, they got every loose ball and like I said, they just wanted it more."

Along with senior guard Amber Green, who had 14 points, the duo accounted for 30 of Emerald's 46 points. Callaham also scored all five of Emerald's points in the second quarter to help the Vikings maintain a 20-20 halftime score. "I felt like we started out pretty well and then we went on a little lull there in the second quarter," Duckett said. "We got out of everything we had been doing and weren't running the offense right. It was almost like we hadn't practiced."

The Vikings started the game in a zone defense that worked initially, but the Rebels began finding success driving the ball inside. Emerald then switched to a 1-3-1 and eventually went to a full court press, which they struggled with before finally causing some turnovers. "We tried to put a lot of pressure on their point guards," Duckett said. "All three of their point guards were real weak going to their left so we tried to force them to go their left and that seemed to work out real well. They turned the ball over quite a few times."