

THE INDEX-JOURNAL

Sports

Greenwood Routs EHS

By KEVIN FIORENZO/Index-Journal sports writer

Published: Wednesday, December 10, 2008 12:41 AM EST

Emerald High School's boys basketball team hadn't faced a team in its first two games with as much speed or defensive pressure as Greenwood and it showed.

The Eagles limited Emerald to seven first-quarter points and never faced any serious adversity in a 71-50 victory Tuesday over the Vikings at Lander University's Finis Horne Arena. Emerald won its first two games against Ninety Six and Mid-Carolina without much trouble, but Greenwood, a top 10 Class AAAA team, spread the floor and beat the Vikings' on both ends. "I thought our press was real effective, and we were able to force some turnovers off the press," Greenwood coach Hob Chandler said. "Normally, when we do that we get some easy baskets. So I thought our press and our defense caused a lot of opportunities in transition for us."

It wasn't until late in the second quarter that Emerald began making any strides scoring points. "It took us like a quarter and a half to get any semblance of offense," Emerald coach Robin Scott said. "That's because with their defense, they play that little matchup thing. They get out in the passing lanes, and (that) makes it tough."

Ahead by 18 at the half, Greenwood's Javaris Rhode scored a few easy buckets in transition to extend the Eagles' lead early in the third quarter, but Emerald began finding its rhythm from behind the 3-point line to pull within 12 points. "That's the first time we've shot the 3 at all, but you can't depend on that," Scott said. "You live by it, you're going to die by it every time."

Emerald was forced to go outside, because Greenwood dominated the paint with a better matchup than it had previously seen against Emerald. "We felt like we needed to get more and more into the halfcourt, and we did that a good bit in the first half, trying to get the ball down low," Chandler said. "We knew we had a size advantage, and that's not something we've had in the past."

Following Emerald's run in the third quarter, Greenwood converted turnovers into a couple transition baskets on dunks by Damarcus Harrison and Rhode, helping the Eagles regain some momentum.