

THE INDEX-JOURNAL

Sports

Senior Guard Helps Team By Playing Point

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Published: Friday, February 13, 2009 12:40 AM EST



Emerald's Amber Green (11) dribbles past an opponent earlier this season. During the Region 1-AA season, Green assumed the point guard role because the Vikings were beset by injuries. (Staff file photo by T.M. James)

Almost always a dependable scoring threat for Emerald High School's girls basketball team, senior guard Amber Green was forced to reluctantly take a step back from that role late this season when she was thrust into the Vikings' point guard position. As difficult a transition as that might have been at times, it has allowed Green to show multiple dimensions as a player. While her scoring decreased during the Vikings' Region 1-AA schedule, Green made up for it in other ways with her speed and athleticism, allowing her to find open teammates and play tenacious defense. "Sometimes it might take away from her scoring if she's playing out there, but if she plays good defense out front, she's going to get some steals and she's going to get some easy baskets," Emerald coach Anarie Duckett said.

Point guards Terra Callaham and Courtney Scurry went down with injuries in January, forcing Green to temporarily move to the new position. During that stretch, Green went five out of seven

games scoring in single digits while deferring to her teammates on offense and elevating her defensive play. "She didn't really want to (play point guard), but she stepped up, especially the past few games," Duckett said.

"In fact, we had our (Region 1-AA) meeting at Pendleton (Wednesday) and the Crescent coach said that she thought Amber playing the point guard had made us a better team."

With Callaham healthy, Green has returned to her regular role of shooting guard, where she's averaging 10.2 points per game and 5.1 steals. She's also scored 10 points or more in 14 of Emerald's 24 games. Comfortable being a role player on last year's veteran-laden team, Green tentatively stepped into a leadership role this year. "I'm not sure it's really a role she wanted to take on, but being a senior and one of the few returning players we had coming back in a starting role, that's kind of fallen on her shoulders," Duckett said. "She's carrying the weight pretty well."

Green credits Duckett with the progress she's made over her three years on the Vikings' varsity squad. "I think I've improved a lot, especially with it being my senior year. That's had a lot of influence on how I've been playing," Green said. "(Coach) Duckett has had a big impact on how much I've improved over the past three years playing for her."

Green first began playing basketball when she was only 4, but she didn't become serious about the sport until middle school. "When I got to middle school, I knew it was something I wanted to do for the rest of my life," Green said. "When I got up here and started playing for Duckett, she showed me what basketball could really be. It became a lifestyle."

At Emerald, Green has evolved into one of the more athletic players Duckett has coached. "She has the best jumping ability of anybody I've ever coached," Duckett said. "It's a shame she's not about three or four inches taller because of her jumping ability. She could probably really do some damage somewhere."