

Lady Eagles soar past Walkertown

By John Cate  
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DOBSON — No one questions that Surry Central can play good defense, but the Lady Eagles' offense had left something to be desired lately. The team had scored just 60 points in its last two games, combined.

Central flipped that script on Friday night against Walkertown, pumping in 38 points before halftime and cruising to a 68-40 victory.

"We were really clicking on offense tonight. We were looking for each other," said head coach Mandy Holt. "We were looking for the open spots. We had the high-low going, and when they collapsed on that, we were able to hit the outside people for the jump shot."

The Lady Eagles took the lead 34 seconds into the contest on a baseline jumper by junior Jordan Westmoreland and held it for the rest of the night. A 9-0 run late in the opening period that pushed the lead to 11 put Central (13-7, 7-3 Western Piedmont 2A) in control.

Down by nine going into the second quarter, the Wolfpack cut the gap to three on back-to-back baskets by Jordon Butterfield and a follow by Khalijah McCummings, but after Holt called time-out and adjusted the Central defense, the Lady Eagles pulled away again. Mia McMillen drove to the basket for two, then stole the ball and took it the other way for a layup. Another transition opportunity followed, on which Jaylyn Templeton rebounded a miss and put it back for a 24-15 lead. Another basket by Templeton, followed by back-to-back inside scores from Westmoreland, gave Central its biggest lead to that point at 32-17. Butterfield ended the run with a short jumper, but the Lady Eagles' Megan Atkins got in on the fun with back-to-back 3-pointers in the final minute of the half for a 38-19 lead at intermission.

Central's offense worked at a high rate of efficiency throughout the night, as the team was able to locate the open player and exploit it for easy baskets all game long. Four Lady Eagles scored in double figures, led by Westmoreland, who had a double-double with 17 points and 11 rebounds, seven of which came on the offensive end. McMillen had 15 points to go with four rebounds, four steals and three assists. Templeton had 12 points and five rebounds, and Atkins had 12 points.

The pattern continued in the third quarter, as the home team continued to spread the wealth. The Wolfpack (6-13, 4-6 WPAC) tried to keep pace, but the Lady Eagles ended the quarter with Martha Antunez finishing off a break for two and then McMillen drilling a 12-footer from the baseline at the buzzer for a

See SC GIRLS | 9A

Redeem Team



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Mount Airy celebrates after winning the Northwest 1A Conference tournament title on Saturday at North Stokes High School. The Bears won the title eight days after South Stokes ended their six-year run atop the league's dual-team standings.

MA tops S. Stokes for 7th straight tournament crown

By John Cate  
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DANBURY — Cody Atkins put a huge amount of weight, both literally and figuratively, on two of his senior wrestlers at Saturday's Northwest 1A Conference championship meet.

The Mount Airy head coach was trying to find a way for his young Granite Bears to win a seventh straight conference tournament crown, after No. 3-ranked South Stokes had ended their six-year dual championship reign by five points in a Jan. 24 meet.

"Jackson Tumbarello usually wrestles at 182, and I put him at 220. Eric Olvera usually

weighs in at about 208-209, and I put him at heavyweight. It gave us a better chance in the team race, even though heavyweight was stacked," said Atkins. "I knew I was taking a risk, but it ended up working out in our favor."

Both wrestlers delivered for the Granite Bears, and after Olvera walked off the mat a victor against a man who outweighed him by about 70 pounds, their team could call themselves champions once again.

Mount Airy won the tournament title with 177 team points, followed by the Sauras with 154.5. Host North Stokes was third with 117, followed



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Mount Airy's Connor Medvar is on the verge of completing a pin against North Stokes' Lucas Utt in the finals at 138 pounds.

by East Surry with 98 and Bishop McGuinness with 25. Winston-Salem Prep doesn't have a wrestling team.

Tumbarello and Olvera were two of the six Mount Airy wrestlers who left that afternoon with golden conference championship medals. Joining them as champions were Alex Cox (126), Aidan Horton (132), Connor Medvar (138) and Franklin Bennett (145). Four other Bears finished as conference runners-up and thereby earned automatic All-Conference honors, those being Trevin Robinson (120), Tripp Gilley (152), Luke Leonard (160), and Edwin Agabo (195). Cameron Moore (170) and Edwin Ramirez (182) earned bronze medals.

They weren't the only local wrestlers who stood out, however. East Surry had several place-winners and one individual champion. At 160 pounds, Eli Becker pulled a stunning upset over South Stokes' Kaleb

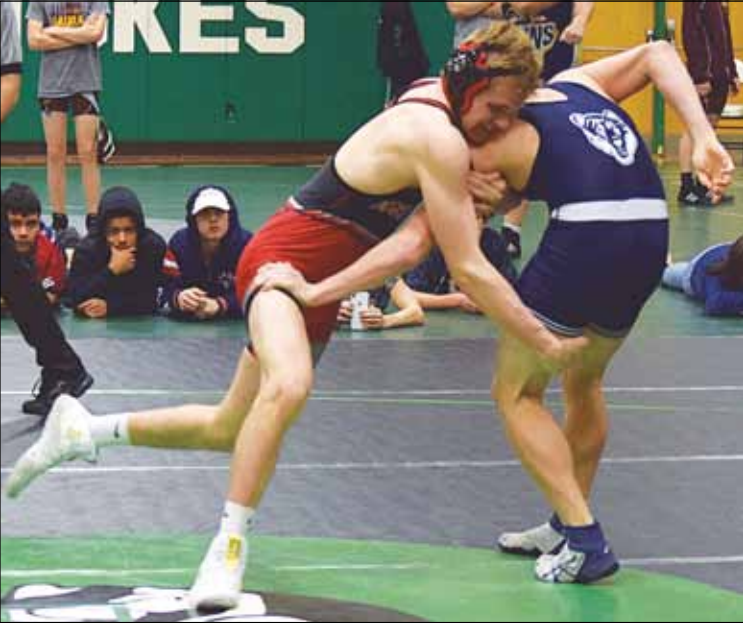
Mitchell, blanking the top-ranked wrestler in the state at that weight in a 4-0 decision. Becker then beat Leonard in the finals to take the conference crown.

Atkins didn't mind that outcome at all, though.

"I told that he actually helped us in the team race by doing that," he said. "I'm happy for him. I always liked his brother (Joe) and thought he was a great wrestler too."

Three Cardinal wrestlers placed second and earned All-Conference honors. They were Colby Stowers (113), Jacob Haywood (126), Tyson Tilley (132). Other East Surry place-winners were Dylan Myers (106), Nathaniel Pack (145), Kaleb Tilley (152), Daniel Villaseñor (170), Kevin Blakeney (182), Austin Evans (195) and Domenico Coppola (220). Myers, Pack, Tilley and Evans all got third, and the others

See NW1A | 9A



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East Surry's Eli Becker, shown here in the 160-pound final against Mount Airy's Luke Leonard, won the Cardinals' lone individual title.

Sharp-shooting Bears bounce back

Mount Airy never trails in W over North Stokes

By Cory Smith  
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DANBURY — Some teams take a quarter or two to warm up and play to their full potential. It only took Mount Airy about 26 seconds to do so on Friday.

The 25th-ranked Granite Bears traveled to North Stokes three weeks removed for the teams' first meeting. The first game saw Mount Airy grind out a 48-46 overtime win in which the Bears hit a season-low two 3-pointers. After scoring its fewest points in a win against the Vikings, Mount Airy was eager to show-off its polished offense.

In the team's best quarter of the season, Mount Airy scored the first 16 points of the game, made 6-of-8 3-point attempts (one was a half-court heave to beat the buzzer) and held North Stokes to just three field goals. The 26-point

first quarter set the pace for Mount Airy in a game the Bears would win 61-47.

Mount Airy (12-7, 4-2 NW1A) has yet to lose a game this season when the team hits at least eight 3-pointers. Dre Dobson knocked down the first triple within 30 seconds of tip-off. He did so on an assist from Jordan Newsome, who led the Bears with five assists in the game.

The Bears 16-0 run to begin the game featured two 3-pointers from Dobson, one from Brooks Sizemore, one from Grant Routh and a put-back by Caden Fitzgibbons. The Granite Bear defense was rock-solid during this span as well, forcing turnovers and offensive fouls left and right.

Isaac Wood got the Vikings (13-7,

See MA BOYS | 8A



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Kaleb Morrison (4) finishes a transition layup in Mount Airy's win over North Stokes.

# Lady Bears back on track

Mount Airy ends three-game losing streak against Vikings

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DANBURY — The Mount Airy Lady Bears bounced back from a three-game losing streak by defeating North Stokes 59-36 on Friday.

A trio of losses to quality teams didn't drop Mount Airy (10-8, 4-2 NW1A) too far in MaxPreps' rankings. The January 31 edition of the 1A rankings had the Lady Bears at No. 14 following losses to No. 3 Bishop McGuinness, No. 9 East Surry and the top-ranked 3A team in Virginia, Carroll County.

North Stokes (6-14, 2-4) kept the first meeting against Mount Airy relatively close until the Bears ran away with the game in the second and third quarters. This time around, the Vikings once again stayed neck-and-neck with their Granite City opponents throughout most of the first half before things got out of control.

North held the Bears to just three points in the first 5:30 of the game. In this time, Emma Farmer and Sydney

Mabe combined for six points to give the Lady Vikings a 6-3 advantage. Even after Mount Airy's Morgan Mayfield hit her second 3-pointer of the night, Kyia Brim and Elizabeth McBride brought the lead to 10-6 with just over a minute left in the quarter.

Mount Airy woke up and scored the next nine points in less than 60 seconds. Each of the field goals, an and-1 layup by Tessa Stovall and two 3-pointers from Addie Phipps, were assisted as the Bears went up 15-10.

The Lady Vikes fought back in the second quarter and tied the score at 16-16. Mayfield got a defensive rebound and went coast-to-coast to give Mount Airy the lead that would survive the remainder of the night. The Lady Bears scored the final seven points of the half to take a 31-22 lead.

Mount Airy showed that the second quarter was just the opening act. The offense fired on all cylinders and the defense gave up just seven points in the third quarter. The Bears outscored the

Vikings 21-7 in the third period, going on 9-0 runs twice in the eight-minute span. Elizabeth Heck and Phipps each knocked down 3-pointers in the quarter, making up two of the Bears' seven made 3-pointers in the game. Mount Airy is 5-1 this season when it makes at least six 3-pointers.

Both sides cleared the benches in the fourth quarter. Each side scored seven points in the final period to round out the 59-36 final score. The win keeps Mount Airy in the hunt for first place in the conference. The Bears are second with a 4-2 record currently, trailing both East Surry and Bishop McGuinness at 5-1.

**Stats**

Mount Airy Granite Bears: Addie Phipps 19 points, 2 rebounds, 4 assists, 2 steals; Morgan Mayfield 14 points, 3 rebounds, 4 assists; Tessa Stovall 10 points, 1 rebound, 7 assists, 2 steals; Sofia Stafford 7 points, 4 rebounds, 1 assist, 1 steal; Elizabeth Heck 3 points, 6 rebounds, 1 assist, 1 steal; Kylie Hollingsworth 2 points, 2 rebounds, 1 assist, 1 block; Brooke Lankford 2 points, 1 rebound, 1 assist; Grey Moore 2 points, 2 rebounds, 4 assists, 1 steal; Annmarie Bedsaul 2 rebounds; Alyssia Adkins 1 rebound.

North Stokes Vikings: Emma Farmer 9 points, 7 rebounds; Kyia Brim 6 points, 3 rebounds; Morgan Hairston 5 points, 1 rebound, 2 assists, 1 steal; Hannah Hicks 5 points, 1 assist; Elizabeth McBride 4 points, 4 rebounds, 4 assists; Skylar Murray 4 points, 1 assist, 1 steal; Sydney Mabe 3 points, 5 rebounds, 1 steal; Cheyenne Inman 2 points, 1 rebound; Morgan Mabe 1 rebound, 1 assist; Madey Briggs 1 rebound.



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**Grey Moore (30) adds to Mount Airy's lead with a transition layup against North Stokes.**



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**Annmarie Bedsaul (12) drives the baseline and shoots from the low block.**



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**Granite Bear sophomore Sofia Stafford (11) scored seven points in Mount Airy's conference win on Friday.**



Cory Smith | The News  
**Mount Airy's Alyssia Adkins (10) moves the ball around the perimeter in Friday's game.**



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**Tessa Stovall (5) scored 10 points and added seven assists, one rebound and a steal in Mount Airy's 59-36 win over North Stokes.**

## MA Boys

From page 6A

1-5) on the board by scoring in the post with 3:01 left in the quarter. Sizemore converted another shot from deep and Fitzgibbons scored in the paint to make it 21-2.

North Stokes battled back by attacking the basket and reaching the free-throw line. This only closed the gap to 26-10 due to struggles from the charity stripe. North shot 4-for-9 (44.4 percent) from the line in the first quarter and 17-for-30 (56.7 percent) on the night.

Newsome and Fitzgibbons scored inside and Newsome made his first 3-pointer of the game in the second quarter. The lead grew to 20 points at 35-15 and again at 37-17. Just when it looked like the game might be decid-

ed by halftime, David Anderson's squad slowed the pace of the game and scored the final eight points of the half over 2:07.

The 37-25 halftime lead for Mount Airy slowly disintegrated as North Stokes regulated the pace. Ben Chesnet scored from the low block and added a free throw midway through the quarter to make it 41-32. This was the first single-digit deficit since Mount Airy led 8-0 at the 5:55 mark of the first quarter.

The single-digit difference went away as fast as it arrived, however. Sizemore made his fourth triple of the night to bring the lead back to 12 points. Mount Airy led 46-34 at the end of three quarters.

The Bears, who flourished in a fast-paced game, slowed the game down in the fourth quarter to keep the lead alive. Mount Airy wasn't able to add to the lead, but at the same time North was unable to cut into it. Chesnet scored the first points of the quarter for either team when he made

a free throw with 5:25 on the clock. Chesnet drove at 4:17 to make it a single-digit game once again at 46-37.

Enter Fitzgibbons. The sophomore small forward finally found the bottom of the net for Mount Airy with 3:56 left to play. Fitzgibbons went on to score eight straight points for the Bears, bringing the lead to 54-39 with just under two minutes left to play.

The double-digit lead would survive until the final whistle. Mount Airy's win ties them with East Surry for second place in the conference.

**Stats**

Mount Airy Granite Bears: Caden Fitzgibbons 18 points 3 rebounds, 1 assist, 2 steals; Brooks Sizemore 12 points, 2 rebounds, 4 assists; Jordan Newsome 9 points, 6 rebounds, 5 assists, 2 steals; Dre Dobson 6 points, 3 assists, 1 steal; Jaedon Hill 5 points 4 rebounds, 2 assists; Grant Routh 5 points, 4 rebounds; Kaleb Morrison 2 points, 1 rebound; Payton Harmon 2 points, 3 rebounds; Zeb Stroup 4 rebounds, 1 assist, 1 block, 1 steal;



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**Grant Routh (24) rises above the Vikings' defense for a left-handed floater.**

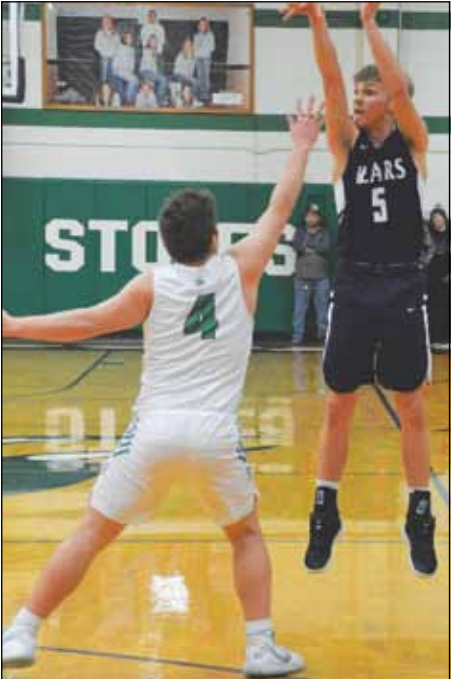
Holden Poindexter 3 rebounds; Hunter Locklear 1 rebound

North Stokes Vikings: Christian Shemo 14 points, 6 rebounds, 4 blocks; Ben Chesnet 12 points, 9 rebounds, 2 blocks; Isaac Wood 9 points, 2 rebounds, 2 steals; Mason Manuel 6 points; Treyson Mabe 6 points, 1 rebound, 1 steal; Curtis Campbell 3 rebounds, 1 steal; Dustin Bowman 3 rebounds

Reach Cory on Twitter @MaNewsSports



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**Mount Airy's Caden Fitzgibbons (23) scored 10 of his career-high 18 points in the fourth quarter of Friday's game.**



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**Brooks Sizemore (5) knocked down a trio of 3-pointers in the first quarter against North Stokes.**



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**Granite Bear Zeb Stroup (10) picks up North Stokes' Treyson Mabe as he crosses the timeline.**

# Wolfpack runs past Eagles

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**DOBSON** — For 10 minutes, Surry Central was able to limit Walkertown's transition opportunities and keep the upper hand on their Western Piedmont Athletic Conference rivals. Unfortunately, they weren't so successful in the 22 minutes that followed.

Down 17-10 with six minutes left in the first half, the Wolfpack clamped down defensively and got the game into more of an up-and-down style that favored them. Walkertown ended the half on a 13-0 run and then pulled away late for a 58-43 victory.

Central, which mounted an impressive rally against North Surry in its previous outing only to come up short, came into Friday's home game looking to build on that second half effort. Central started off well, and even gave Walkertown (8-10, 5-5 WPAC) a taste of its own medicine early on, with Dakota Mills scoring back-to-back baskets in transition and forcing Wolfpack head coach Kevin Thompson to call a quick time-out down 6-2. Nevertheless, the Golden Eagles led for the rest of the first quarter, with Mills hitting a 3-pointer later in the quarter after Walker-

town had pulled within two. That was also the margin at the end of the quarter, with Central on top 12-10.

The Eagles pushed the lead to seven at the start of the second quarter, thanks to a close-in basket by Christian Robinson and a 3-pointer by Nolan McMillen. Thompson called time-out to regroup his team, and whatever he told them appeared to work, as Walkertown turned up its defensive intensity and got the Eagles to make some mistakes on their offensive end that led to turnovers. This allowed the Wolfpack to get into transition, where they were quicker than Central and able to get easy baskets. They took the lead with 3:13 left before halftime on a scoop shot by Jalen Douglas, and scored the last 13 points of the quarter to hold a 23-17 lead at the break.

This hadn't been at all what the Eagles wanted, but a six-point halftime deficit is not insurmountable, and Central responded to begin the second half, whittling the deficit back to two on baskets by Jacob Mitchell and Mills, the latter of whom led the team with 14 points. However, once again Central couldn't stop the Wolfpack once they started running. The



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**Central's Christian Robinson gets an inside shot off against Walkertown defender Cameron Wilkerson.**

Eagles had the ball with a chance to tie or retake the lead, but Isaiah Conrad stole the ball and took it the other way for a layup. Then, after a Central miss, Bobby Grier got out and running and scored an and-one layup off a fastbreak. In just 45 seconds, the Wolfpack's lead was back to seven.

It was the start of another Walkertown run, this time of nine unanswered points, and

pushed the visitors' lead to double-digits for the first time. Central's Ryan Hazelwood scored the next four points to make it 34-25, but a 3-pointer by Cameron Wilkerson put the Wolfpack up 12, and they still were when the quarter ended, at 39-27.

The Eagles tried one more time to catch up early in the fourth quarter. With 5:54 to play, McMillen was fouled attempting a 3-pointer



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**Central's Nolan McMillen gets upended by a Walkertown defender while trying to drive to the basket on Friday night.**

and got the Eagles within eight at 41-33. The teams traded scores and at one point, Central had a possession to get even closer, but came up empty. After two free throws by Josh Pardue made the score 43-35, the Wolfpack went on another run, helped in part by an unsuccessful Central full-court press that the speedy Walkertown players were able to break easily. The

Wolfpack led by as many as 18 at one point in the stretch run.

Mills was the only Eagle to reach double figures. McMillen scored seven points, Woods six and Hazelwood five. For Walkertown, Douglas led the way with 16, followed by Oakland King with 13, and Grier had 12.

Central will host West Stokes on Wednesday night.

## NW1A

From page 6A

were fourth.

Coming into the morning, the only suspense would be who would win the title. South Stokes had taken the dual-team title, but the Granite Bears were determined to make it seven tournament crowns in a row. Each team strategically placed wrestlers in different weight classes, looking for favorable matchups. The most significant move was Atkins' daring placement of his two seniors. Tumbarello and Olvera are hard to beat on technique, but would be giving up between 30 and 75 pounds to their opponents. Both they and their coach were willing to take the chance.

"Sometimes you have to take a risk to win," Atkins said.

Olvera in particular faced a dangerous field of opponents. Any of the other place-win-

ners, Gideon Hope of Bishop, Orion Martin of North Stokes, or Nathan Woods of South Stokes, was good enough to win the title. Olvera pinned Wood in the semis and then faced Hope in the championship, beating him by decision. The performance — beating true heavyweights despite coming in at just 209 pounds — earned him Most Outstanding Wrestler of the tournament.

Cox' performance at 126 was a surprise for the Bears. Two other wrestlers in the class, South Stokes' Gage Shaffer and East Surry's Haywood, were considered more likely to win the event. Cox, a freshman, pinned Shaffer in the semifinals and then wrestled Haywood in the final, pinning him too for the title.

"I thought Alex' match at 126 was a big surprise," said

Atkins. "Him getting a pin as a freshman in the conference finals, very impressive."

By that time, the Bears had already earned their first points when Robinson made it all the way to the finals at 120 before dropping a 10-1 decision to Cody Lawson, another of the Sauras' standouts. The final at 132 was an all-Surly affair, with Horton beating Tyson Tilley. At 138, Medvar pinned North Stokes' Lucas Utt, and Bennett made it three Mount Airy titles in a row when he downed North's Levi Collins in the final.

However, the big, bad Bears wouldn't be running away with this one. At 152, South Stokes' Johnny Dotson beat Gilley in the finals, and at 160, Becker wasn't content with just beating Mitchell. In the finals, he defeated Leonard and took the gold for the Cardinals.

Mount Airy was once again represented in the finals at 195, where freshman Edwin Agabo, whose gutsy effort in the dual with South Stokes had almost saved the conference crown, took out North's Garrett Smith in the semis and faced a different Saura, Jordan Mitchell, in the finals. This one was almost a replay of the match from the duals, with Agabo scoring a reversal and nearly pinning his opponent late in the opening period. Again, Agabo couldn't quite do it, but he did go the distance, with two points at the final buzzer giving Mitchell a 20-5 win.

The titles from Tumbarello and Olvera decided it. The Sauras' wrestlers at 220 and 285 managed just a third and a fourth.

Mount Airy had its measure of redemption. The final tro-

phy presented at the awards ceremony would belong to the Bears.

"I thought we wrestled great today," Atkins said. "We won some good, close matches, even the kids that lost fought really hard. I actually think we stepped it up today more than we did the last time we wrestled South. I couldn't ask for a better day."

A handful of wrestlers who didn't finish first or second were voted to the All-Conference team by the coaches. The Cardinals' Kaleb Tilley and the Bears' Moore and Ramirez were selected to the team.

South Stokes and Mount Airy will find out their opening-round assignments for the state dual-team playoffs on Monday, and wrestle on Tuesday.

Reach John via Twitter at @johncate73.

## SC Girls

From page 6A



Jeff Linville | The News

**Surry Central's Jordan Westmoreland (32) takes a foul on the left forearm and hits both free throws in the second half.**

54-31 lead.

Surry Central led by as many as 29 points in the fourth quarter, going up 63-34 when Brittany Frausto rebounded a missed shot and took it coast-to-coast for a score. The outcome was more decisive than when the teams first met four weeks earlier and Central pulled away in the fourth quarter for a 21-point victory. Friday's meeting was never in doubt at any point in the second half.

Butterfield led Walkertown with 16 points, but scored just three in the second half. McCummings added 15, but the rest of the team managed just eight points combined.

"I thought we did a good job defensively trying to stop McCummings and (Butterfield), which is what you have to do to stop them," said Holt.

For Central, Brooklyn Lester managed just two points, but grabbed six rebounds, four on the offensive end.

The Lady Eagles are in third place in the conference standings, one game back of West Stokes (16-3, 8-2) and one behind top-ranked Forbush (18-2, 10-0). They can tie the Lady Cats for second place when West comes to Dobson on Wednesday night.



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**The Lady Eagles' Carlie Via splits four Walkertown defenders and gets airborne for a shot in the first half of Friday night's 68-40 victory.**