

Freshman shines for Minford

By **JOSH HICKLE**
PDT Sports Writer

MINFORD — Sure, she wasn't the leading scorer Monday night, yet Whitney McManus made an impression in front of the home crowd.

Starting in her first varsity game as a freshman, McManus nearly recorded a double-double, finishing with eight points and grabbing 11 rebounds as the Lady Falcons picked up a 50-44 victory over Huntington Ross.

"I was real nervous, especially starting as a freshman," said McManus. "I was surprised to get so many open looks, because they are a great defensive team. They have three really good players (Chelsea Eblin, Lydia Bridenbough and Courtney Jenkins) so I knew that I had to box out and get some rebounds and step up for the team."

It didn't appear that anyone would score double figures on either team, as both teams' shooting touches appeared to be off. The Lady Huntsmen were just 7 of 29 in the first half, and 14 of 48 in the game for 29 percent. Minford wasn't much better as the Lady Falcons connected on just 19 of their 50 shots for 38 percent.

"I think we got a little too excited a few times offensively," said Lady Falcons coach Kim Conley. "We have a tendency to want to hurry and score and play defense. I think we were a little impatient toward the end of the game, but going up against a team like Huntington Ross, we held our own. We developed a lot of character toward the end of the game when we finally settled down and came out with the win."

Both teams traded buckets in the first quarter, but a 3-pointer by Kara Cayton at the end of the second quarter put Minford up by four, 23-19. The Lady Falcons increased their lead to 36-21 in the third quarter. The Lady Huntsmen went on an 11-2 run to close out the quarter down six, 38-32.

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Scott Osborne ■ Daily Times

Minford's Whitney McManus puts up a shot against Huntington Ross in the second quarter at Minford on Monday.

Minford

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Huntington Ross got within two at 39-37 in the fourth, but Minford managed to keep the Lady Huntsmen at bay for the win. Much of the credit, according to Conley, went to sophomore Jeni Spradlin, who provided the Lady Falcons with nine points off the bench along with

four big rebounds.

"There was our spark," said Conley. "That was the spark that we needed in the third quarter, because we were choking a little bit and she came in and did fantastic. You look for that in someone coming off the bench."

Cayton led Minford with 13 points, and added six steals. Shaye Berry also scored in double figures, pumping in 10 points and grabbing four re-

bounds.

Eblin and Bridenbough each scored 13, and Jenkins had nine, with Eblin pulling down 14 rebounds and Jenkins 10. Huntington Ross coach Steve Bridenbough said the poor shooting in the first half made the difference.

"They were pretty good looks, right at the basket," he said. "The ball just didn't fall in for us. Sometimes that happens,

especially early in the season like this."

JOSH HICKLE can be reached at (740) 353-3101, ext. 241.

Hunt. Ross	8	11	13	12	—	44
Minford	8	15	15	12	—	50
Huntington Ross — Eblin 5 3 13, Bridenbough 3 6 13, Jenkins 4 1 9, Gibson 1 3 5, Kellough 1 0 2, Fraley 0 2 2. Totals 14 15 44.						
Minford — Cayton 4 2 13, Berry 5 0 10, Spradlin 4 1 9, McManus 3 2 8, Brigner 2 0 4, K. Martin 0 3 3, Butcher 1 0 2, Roberts 0 1 1. Totals 19 9 50.						
3-pointers — Huntington Ross 1 (Bridenbough), Minford 3 (Cayton 3).						
Records — Huntington Ross 0-1, Minford 1-0.						