

Pleasant Grove ends Bingham's year

By Amy Donaldson
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It's a good thing this year's Cinderella has a friend who also wears size 10 shoes.

With a little more than a minute left in Pleasant Grove's quarterfinal game against Bingham, Viking senior Danyele Hoffman was running — although not from a handsome prince — when her foot tore through the front of her shoe.

"I actually had a dream that my shoe broke in a game," said Hoffman after the Vikings upset Bingham 61-53 Wednesday night in the 5A State Tournament at Salt Lake Community College. "It's a good thing one of my buddies wears the same size shoes. I have big feet."

Bingham called a time out and Hoffman, with some help from her teammates, changed shoes so quickly her coaches were joking that the bench felt like a NASCAR pit.

Pleasant Grove, a No. 5 seed from Region 4, wasn't expected to win its play-in game last Saturday. And now, five days later, the Vikings earned the right to face the defending 5A champs of Syracuse in Friday's semifinal.

"We're destined to play," said Vikings coach Glenn Larson. "Two years ago they (the Titans) beat us by one and last year they beat us in the



Ashton Henderson applies some tenacious defense against Pleasant Grove.

title game."

The 13-10 Vikings had to beat Layton, Lone Peak (Region 4's champions) and Bingham (a No. 2 seed from Region 3) to earn that opportunity.

Larson said he challenged the Vikings to crash the boards as they'd lost a couple of contests to poor play

in the paint this season.

Pleasant Grove outrebounded Bingham, but not by much.

It was the first-half play of center Rebecca Clement and the second-half play of Britney Johnson and Hoffman that made the difference for the Vikings.

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GAME SUMMARY

Pleasant Grove	11	10	19	21	-	61
Bingham	8	14	14	17	-	53

PLEASANT GROVE (61) – Marci Johnson 1 1-4 3, Britney Johnson 2 3-4 7, Danyele Hoffman 6 1-2 13, Janae Olson 4 6-8 14, Rebecca Clement 6 6-8 18, Ashli Schulz 0 0-0 0, Megan Wilde 1 4-4 6. Totals 20 21-30 61.

BINGHAM (53) – Summer Yack 5 2-4 12, Chantee Renouard 1 5-6 7, Katie Lloyd 0 0-0 0, Jillian Powell 2 0-1 4, Brooke Blonquist 9 0-0 18, Ashton Henderson 3 0-0 6, Lateesha Richards 0 1-2 1, Shelby Richards 1 1-2 3, Leticia Lewis 0 0-0 0, Mackenzie Bruggeman 1 0-0 2, Ana Kaili 0 0-0 0. Totals 22 9-15 58.

Total fouls: Bingham 21, Pleasant Grove 13. **Fouled out:** Henderson, Hoffman. **Three-point goals:** None.

LEFT: Summer Yack

MIDDLE: Shelby Richards

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"We couldn't find anything in the first half, and then we found Rebecca," said Larson.

Clement finished with 18 points, eight rebounds, three steals and three blocks.

"We knew the Bingham game would be hard," Clement said. "All the small things had to happen for us to win."

She said they take comfort in the fact that the state tournament can be unpredictable — in a good way.

"We knew they were doubling Danyele, so the rest of us had to step up," Clement added.

Hoffman is such an athlete, quick with incredible leaping ability, her teammates are caught off guard by her passes or moves.

"You definitely have to be ready for any pass," Clement said.

Hoffman finished with 13 points, six rebounds, six steals and three assists. Janae Olson added 14 points and four assists.

"I didn't have a good warm up and I couldn't hit anything in the first half," Hoffman said. "Every state quarterfinal, I have a bad first half. That was in my mind."

She took comfort, however, in the fact that she usually makes up for it in the second half.

"I didn't want to let my team down," she said.

Her emotional energy was as important as the points she scored.

"They took her out of her game in the first half," said Larson of Hoffman. "The second half she got going, and when she gets going, we get going."

He said he admires the fight his team has shown in this tournament run.

"These girls just find a way to win in the tournament," he said smiling. "They don't give up."

For Bingham, there is a lot to be proud of as they only had two players with minimal varsity experience.

"We played a little young," said Bingham coach Rand Rasmussen. "But I'm glad I got this far. We needed this experience for our kids."

Senior Brooke Blonquist led the team with 18 points, three steals and nine rebounds. Guard Summer Yack added 12 points and 10 rebounds.

Some of the pressure was playing at Salt Lake Community College, but some of it was the Bingham tradition.

"There is that kind of pressure on them, and when you're that young of a team, you don't always handle pressure well," Rasmussen said. "We so seldom lose that when we do, it feels like 20 (losses). If you'd have told me at the beginning of the season we'd be 18-5 with this young team, I would have taken it."