

Riverton drops region thriller to rival

Big crowd watches
Bingham hold off
second-half rally

By Bruce Smith
Matchup

Thursday night's game at Bingham had a chance to be pretty special for the Riverton girls basketball team.

The junior varsity squad kicked it into a gear with a win as the huge crowd formed on Bingham's "Senior Night."

However, Bingham's varsity remained undefeated and clinched the Region 4 crown with a 42-35 victory in a game filled with several anxious moments.

"Our hard work is paying off," Bingham senior guard Jilian Powell said. "We have some great teams in our region. We are still focused on keeping our streak going."

Bingham (20-0, 9-0) allowed just one basket in the final 3:30 to pull away after Riverton trimmed a double-digit halftime deficit. Shelby Richards' layup midway through the fourth quarter had fans from both teams on their feet, but that was as close as Riverton could get.

"At halftime, I lost my composure," recalled Riverton coach Ron Ence. "I was totally frustrated, specifically by our lack of disciplined basketball. To the girls credit, they climbed back in the game, but it was not



Shelby Richards drives between two of her former Bingham teammates for a basket.

to be this night.

"Even in losing this game, the girls showed they could do amazing things when hard work combines with teamwork."

Powell, who eventually was named the region's MVP, scored a season-high 22 points after being one of eight seniors honored in a pregame ceremony.

The Miners forced 18

turnovers on the night and held Riverton to just 4-of-24 shooting in the opening half to build a 23-10 lead.

"I said at halftime that [Riverton's] going to make a run and you have to answer," said Bingham coach Rand Rasmussen. "We did to a point. When you're playing Riverton,

Continued on next page

RIVERTON BASKETBALL: Bingham 42, Silverwolves 35



Continued from previous page

you're playing somebody that's preparing you for the tournament.

"Playing their kids with how good a defense they play is going to help us down the road."

Jamie Smith hit back-to-back three-pointers as the Silverwolves chipped away, only to have Powell connect for two of her four treys.

Smith finished with 13 points. She was the only Riverton player to reach double figures. Richards had with six points and Gerika Ballard five.

The loss dropped Riverton to 17-3 overall, but it would be the team's last defeat of the season. Bingham captured the region's top seed and advanced to the 5A semifinals before losing to Layton. Rasmussen later retired from coaching girls basketball after a long career.

GAME SUMMARY

Riverton	3	7	14	11	-	35
Bingham	10	13	5	14	-	42

RIVERTON (35) – Mallory Bostic 0 2-4 2, Jamie Smith 4 2-2 13, Gerika Ballard 2 1-2 5, Shelby Richards 2 2-6 6, Whitney Saunders 1 1-2 3, Tess Campbell 1 0-0 2, Tiena Afu 0 0-0 0, Pume Currie 2 0-1 4, Elyssa Marchant 0 0-0 0. Totals 12 8-17 35.

BINGHAM (42) – Madi Aulai-Roe 0 2-2 2, Ashton Henderson 3 0-3 6, Mackenzie Bruggeman 3 1-2 7, Jilian Powell 6 6-11 22, Sheradyn Parker 1 1-2 3, Mo Washington 1 0-0 2, Cheril Lyman 0 0-0 0, Whitney Daniels 0 0-0 0. Totals 14 10-20 42.

Total fouls: Riverton 17, Bingham 14. **Fouled out:** None.

Three-point goals: Riverton 3 (Smith 3), Bingham 4 (Powell 4).

TOP LEFT: Elyssa Marchant gets off a shot with a defender nearby.

TOP RIGHT: Players on the Riverton bench react to an exciting play near the end of the game.

MIDDLE: Pume Currie reacts to an official's call after diving for a loose ball.

MIDDLE RIGHT: Tiena Afu grabs a rebound and looks for something to do with it.