

## **Hackensack makes freebies**

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GLEN ROCK – For four quarters, Hackensack coach Charles McKnight flailed his arms in exasperation on the sidelines, pleading with his girls to remember the intangibles of the game.

"Good teams make free-throws," he cried from the bench.

After a 5-for-12 showing from the line in the first half, the Lady Comets (9-5) heeded their coach's advice when it counted most to beat Glen Rock, 64–60, in a double-overtime battle in the first round of the Bergen County girls basketball tournament.

"In the first half we were down by five," McKnight said. "If we make our free throws, the game is over in regulation. Those are the little things that count."

The Comets went 16-for-26 from the line in the two overtime periods. But foul-shooting wasn't the only thing that plagued Hackensack early on. It took the Comets almost six minutes to score their first basket -- a layup by center Ashlee Redmond. But by then, Glen Rock (11-5) had taken an 8-2 lead behind the play of senior guards Kiera Quinlan and Samantha Gamio, who finished with 11 points apiece.

The Panthers, who outthrusted Hackensack on the offensive glass and on loose balls, eventually took a 26-21 halftime lead. But what the Comets lacked in height and finesse, they made up for in quickness and intensity down the stretch.

With her team trailing, 40-37, in the fourth, and Redmond out of the game with five fouls, junior guard Jacquelyn Simon hit a three-pointer to tie the game. When Glen Rock's Megan Mieke got the crowd back into the game on the next possession with a long jumper from the corner, freshman Morgan Tillerson answered back with a jump shot of her own.

The seesaw regulation battle continued over both overtime periods. With seven seconds left in the first overtime, Hackensack's Renee Henry (15 points) committed her fifth foul -- swiping Glen Rock's Samantha Litt as she launched a three-pointer. The crowd erupted as Litt hit all three free throws to send the game into a second overtime, with the score knotted at 53.

Once again, Hackensack looked to Tillerson and Simon to carry the load. Tillerson (14 points) and Simon scored 14 of their team's 20 points in the overtimes.

"These girls want to win," McKnight said. "This is the most competitive the program has been in years. Morgan felt really bad for herself ... [but] there's too much time for that. You've got to fight through adversity and she came back and made plays."

Glen Rock (11-3) suffered a tough 49-47 overtime loss to Paterson Catholic on Thursday, but coach David Mosconi said fatigue wasn't a factor in his team's loss to Hackensack.

"When they lost [Redmond] I thought we had a good chance to go inside," he said. "But my kids didn't take advantage of it. ... We couldn't be more tired than Hackensack. [McKnight] played only seven kids and I had 10, so we shouldn't be tired."