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## Girls basketball: Walter deftly guides L/P to state semifinals

Pat Ruff pruff@postbulletin.com Mar 15, 2018 Updated 9 hrs ago



Lyle/Pacelli's Brooke Walter (23) drives past Heritage Christian Academy's Taylor Schuck (10) during the Class A state quarterfinals at Williams Arena on Thursday. The senior is not a big scorer these days, but she does everything else for No. 1-ranked L/P, which advanced to the state semifinals with Thursday's win.

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This season? Well, it's been like nothing she's ever experienced. Walter has guided the Athletics all over again, pushing them to a No. 1 ranking and after Thursday's 59-43 win over Heritage Christian Academy, a spot in Friday's state semifinals.

But it's how she's NOT done it that is surprising to anyone who laid eyes on her that freshman season.

"I've had some games this year where I haven't even taken a shot," Walter said. "I don't even average in double figures anymore."



Yep, a girl who seemed certain to finish her high school career as a scoring machine, has almost abandon that element of her game. She's done it for the good of the team, one that has scoring options everywhere.

She's also done it with a smile on her face and the desire to bring home a state championship burning hotter than ever.

Thursday afternoon was another typical day on the court for Walter — another typically irreplaceable one.

Walter finished with three points. Four other Athletics scored more than her, including 6-foot-5 senior center Kristi Fett with 25 points and sophomore forward Olivia Christianson with 14.

But as L/P coach Justin Morris will tell anyone who'll listen, there likely wasn't a more valuable player on the floor for L/P, which ran its record to 30-1 and has a noon date today with No. 4 seed Minneota in the semifinals at Target Center.

And other than all-stater Fett, there likely hasn't been a more vital cog all season than Walter.

That's because she does everything else at the highest level for L/P. Thursday, that included collecting eight assists and six rebounds, deftly bringing the ball up court on nearly every possession, getting L/P into its almost unstoppable offense, and playing quick and physical defense out front in the Athletics' zone alignment.

When it comes Walter, Morris has an admission.

"I have been spoiled with her," he said.

“She’s been my point guard ever since I’ve been here. She makes coaching a lot easier.”

Walter has an admission of her own. It’s that she hasn’t minded employing this new version of herself one bit.

“It is fun to score,” she said. “But as long as my team is winning, I don’t care if I score or not. My job is to run the show. And I like that a lot.”

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## Pat Ruff

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Pat covers tennis, girls basketball, football, soccer, track and field, and baseball. He also writes about Gophers football and basketball, and the Timberwolves. He’s been reporting for the Post Bulletin since 1994.