

## Hs Sports

# WIAA DIVISION 1 STATE CHAMPIONSHIP: Horlick falls short of first state title

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MADISON — The pain was excruciating.

For the Horlick High School boys basketball team, the dream of winning the WIAA Division 1 state title — the first one in school history — faded into oblivion late Saturday night.

And it hurt.

After the Rebels lost 56-41 to Madison Memorial in the Kohl Center, the 13 young Rebels who comprised this tournament's team walked disconsolately toward the locker room.

Their pain was felt. Rebels fans, who cheered wildly for their team during the game, wore somber looks as they left the premises.

As disappointed as the Rebels players and coach were, they also harbored a distinct sense of pride. And rightfully so.

Consider some of their many achievements this season:

- The Rebels posted an impressive 24-2 record.
- They became the first Rebels boys' basketball team to advance to the state tournament in two decades.
- They became the first Racine school to advance to the Division 1 championship game since 1999, when Case beat Milwaukee Bay View 73-68.

Horlick coach Jason Treutelaar, who set the bar high for his team at the start of the season and

guided them to attaining every one of their goals, including a Southeast Conference championship, tried to keep Saturday's loss in perspective.

"There's no shame in losing to the team we did," Treutelaar said. "They're the top-ranked team in the state. I have to give credit to Madison Memorial and coach Steve Collins. That's one heck of a basketball team.

"We had a great season. It was thrilling. It was really a thrilling season. I think we made our mark."

The Rebels came into the game against Memorial, last year's state runner-up, with title aspirations.

They had played well through regional and sectional competition and played well in their first two games in the state tournament.

But against Memorial, nothing seemed to go well for the Rebels from the get-go.

The Rebels fell behind 5-0 in the first couple of minutes and it never got better. The Spartans, led by their dynamic duo of Jeronne Maymon and Vander Blue, took a 15-5 lead after the first quarter.

The Rebels were plagued by cold shooting, making just 2-of-14 shots from the field in the opening quarter.

In the second quarter, it was more of the same. By halftime, the Rebels had converted only five field goals in 25 attempts.

And, again, the Rebels couldn't knock down a shot beyond the arc. They went to the locker room 0-for-11 on 3s.

Compounding matters was the foul trouble by Rebels star Jamil Wilson, who drew two fouls in the first period and then picked up his third just 2 minutes into the third quarter.

Wilson sat on the bench for almost the next five minutes before returning to the game. And that's when disaster struck: Wilson picked up his fourth foul on an over-the-back foul with 1:13 left in the half.

"I was little surprised he came back in there," Collins said. "I told the guys to go right at him. He's just such a great basketball player. I've seen him make shots that were unbelievable.

"I think that threw them off (when he was out of the game)."

Without Wilson, who has made a verbal agreement to attend the University of Oregon, the Rebels couldn't generate much offensively or defensively.

The combination of poor shooting and Wilson's foul issues put Horlick in a 27-11 hole at halftime.

Because Wilson was only one foul away from fouling out, Treutelaar kept him on the bench until midway through the third quarter, hoping someone else might step up and fill Wilson's shoes.

Antwon Oliver, Wilson's good friend and fellow senior, tried his best to get the Rebels back into the game.

In one stretch, Oliver scored six straight points and got the Rebels within 41-19.

But at the end of the quarter, Memorial reestablished itself and took a 44-26 advantage.

The Spartans got 25 points from Maymon, who signed a national letter of intent with Marquette University, and 19 points from Blue, a junior who has made an oral commitment to attend the University of Wisconsin.

Oliver led Horlick scorers with 13 points.

"Just getting here to state — I'm not saying that was good enough — but leaving here with second place is a good feeling," Oliver said.

Wilson also felt the Rebels had exceeded expectations by advancing to state for the first time in two decades and being just the second Horlick team to compete for a state championship, the other time being in 1985, when the Rebels were runners-up to Milwaukee Washington.

"We got here and that was one of our goals," Wilson said. "I think it was a great journey."