Roberson sparks run as Manual pulls away

By JIM TERHUNE
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Emily Roberson is in the early stages of the flu. Congestion. Sluggishness.

"It makes it so hard to breathe," she said.

The 5-foot-10 senior didn't practice Tuesday, so she didn't start for the Manual High School girls' basketball team last night. Two other regulars also were out of the lineup because of coach Mina Todd's no-practice/no-start policy.

But try convincing Male that the Lady Crimsons weren't up to par in the Republic Bank/Coca-Cola Louisville Invitational Tournament game at Jeffersontown High.

In one stretch in the second and third quarters, Roberson and her teammates put their old rival in intensive care. Two three-pointers by Nneka Irons made sure the Lady Bulldogs wouldn't get up.

And Manual advanced to the quarterfinals with a 67-55 victory.

Roberson seemed to be running a fast-break layup drill, mostly triggered by turnovers, that gave the Lady Crimsons the last six points of the second quarter and the first eight of the third.

The 14-0 spurt pushed Manual (12-8) to a 41-27 lead. Male rallied within four twice, but Irons stabbed the Lady Manual will play Marshall County (17-1) in the quarters at Louisville Gardens at 7 p.m. tomorrow.

"We started the second half strong, which is crucial in any game," Todd said. "We kept our composure when Male made its run, then started to tighten up, and Nneka hit two big-time shots. She has the green light any time."

Roberson entered the game midway through the first quarter and went on to hit 10 of 17 shots and score 22 points. Nine of her baskets were layups, something you'd expect from a pickpocket guard.

That's often where the longtime front-liner is now.

"We pulled her back onto the floor, and she's comfortable there," Todd said. "Now she's everywhere."

Roberson was moved outside a couple of games ago and scored 25 points against Fort Thomas Highlands and 22 against Seneca.

"We're trying to work on moving the ball a lot faster," she said. "Now I'm facing the basket, and things have opened up."

Irons added 16 points. Melissa Karrer topped Male with 16, but she hit just 6 of 20 shots.

"They came running at us at the start of the second half, and we didn't get back, [illegible] said. "W[illegible] out more and finally did some funda-

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