

USA women's hockey wins gold medal

MILAN (AP) A last Olympic goal for Hilary Knight, a gold medal-winning overtime one for Megan Keller, and the Americans cemented their reputation as one of the most dominant women's hockey teams to take the ice.

After romping through their first six outings at the Milan Cortina Games, the U.S. overcame the final test by rallying to beat Canada and earn its third gold medal with a 2-1 win Thursday night.

"This team's got so much resolve. Never quit. Always ready to fight and go to battle," Knight said. "It's just a testament to the prepa-

ration of our group and the love that we have in that room, and the way we found a way to get the job done at the end of the night."

Knight, appearing in her fifth and final Olympics, forced overtime by tipping in Laila Edwards' shot with 2:04 left in regulation — and with goalie Aerin Frankel pulled for an extra attacker. The goal was her 15th and 33rd point of her Olympic career, setting U.S. records for both categories.

The sides were playing 3-on-3 to finish a game where fans alternated chants of "USA!" and "Canada!" Keller secured the win on a backhander

4:07 into overtime, breaking up the left wing and pushing past Claire Thompson, driving to the net and beating Ann-Renee Desbiens over her right pad to spark an emotional and teary-eyed celebration.

"I'm lost for words," Keller said. "This is an incredible feeling. I love these girls so much. This group deserves it. Just the effort and the faith that we kept through this four-year journey is something very special."

Frankel stopped 30 shots.

Kristin O'Neill scored a short-handed goal for Canada and Desbiens finished with 31 saves.

Canada pushed the



The USA women's hockey team celebrate after a goal medal game against Canada at the 2026 Winter Olympics, in Milan, Italy, Thursday.

U.S. to the brink just nine days after it was beaten 5-0 by the Americans in the preliminary round.

O'Neill's goal 54 sec-

onds into the second period ended the Americans' shutout streak of 5 hours, 52 minutes and 17 seconds, dating

to the second period of a 5-1 opening win over Czechia. The U.S. had not trailed in the tournament.

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also had to throw her to the wolves because of injuries. But, in the long run, it's paid off, and having that experience is big."

Gulley has averaged 13.3 points and a team-high 8.7 rebounds per game so far this season, as she continues to contribute, but this time as a senior leader.

Gulley said she's built confidence over the years as a starter, which has helped position her for her current role with the Kittens.

"At first, it seemed really scary, like it would be a lot of pressure," Gulley said of starting so young. "But I took it as an opportunity to help the girls grow. When I was coming in, I never really had time to adjust because I automatically started. But it was good because I was just there playing a role, and it worked for me."

"Now, it's good that I've been in these younger girls' position," Gulley continued. "I'm a good outlet for them to get their feet settled and understand the game. I've really enjoyed being a leader and someone these girls can look up to. It makes me feel better knowing I can play a huge role in how their game grows."

Davis sees Gulley's growth centered on a big boost of self-confidence that has shown through this season.

"She's stepped up big time," Davis said. "The biggest part is her self-confidence. A lot of times, she was her own worst enemy. If she missed a shot



Ashland's Aryanna Gulley shoots a short jumper against Boyd County on Jan. 12.

or made a mistake, she would shut down. As she's gotten older, she has been able to play through those mistakes and elevate her game instead of letting it take her backwards. Sometimes the hardest part is having the confidence in yourself to know you belong out there. She knows that now."

Gulley credits a lot of her growth as a player to those she'd played alongside over the years. Those players, including her sister Jaidyn, helped her understand that staying mentally prepared paid dividends on the hardwood.

"I definitely learned a lot of patience, not just from Jaidyn, but from Ella and so many," Gulley said. "They were such great leaders for me. They taught me that while I was still young and trying to get into the groove, they were there for me. They were great mentors and confidence boosters, getting me to understand that my

time would come and that me being out there was helping."

Gulley reflects on how she built patience over the years and how it went hand in hand with helping her be more energetic on the court.

"I've been able to learn how to see the court better and be better energy-wise," Gulley said. "We thrive off that, because I have a very loud personality. Being the 'hype girl' really brings everyone together. I've been making sure I'm consistent with that because it definitely can up someone's game. Even my own; when I'm getting myself hyped, you can tell that energy follows into the game."

Her coach echoed those sentiments and saw Gulley's playing time alongside her older sister as a prime example of how that energy lifted the team.

"She's the energy of our team," Davis said. "She brings

so much energy on and off the floor, and you can tell when it's there because it lifts everybody else up. Ary was the most supportive cheerleader for Jaidyn. I think there were times she was more worried about how Jaidyn was playing than herself. At first, it's tough playing with your sister because people try to compare siblings, but they are different players."

"I never saw them bicker or fight. ... Ary only got mad at Jaidyn when she passed up a shot," Davis added with a laugh.

Both Gulley sisters will have a chance to play together again next season after the younger Gulley signed to play at Indiana Tech.

But before that time comes, Gulley and the rest of the Kittens crew have their sights set on another 16th Region title.

If Ashland makes a run in the postseason, it'll likely be

due in part to the physical nature of Gulley's gameplay.

"You don't see a lot of physical post play in high school anymore," Davis said. "The game has changed to dribble-handoffs and shooting 3s; you don't see many true back-to-the-basket players. This year, Ary has used her body to get positioning and realized that a lot of people don't like that physicality. That's what has elevated her game: being able to record double-doubles and score under the basket because of how physical she's become. Since I've been here, she has probably recorded the most double-doubles of anybody."

Gulley credits her physical toughness to being in the right headspace.

"For me, it's all mindset," Gulley said. "I have to go into the game telling myself that I don't want anyone to get the ball other than me. I have to consistently tell myself that even if I'm not the biggest or strongest person out there, I need to play like it to really produce. Having an attitude of, 'I want the ball. I'm stronger than these people on the other team,' really helps."

"We just have to keep working hard," Gulley added. "We need to make sure we're focused in practices and fixing the little mental mistakes we have in games. We aren't a perfect team; we do struggle in some aspects, but in practice, we focus on those little things so we can outgrow them and become more successful."

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rebound in a Boyd County jersey.

"I'm truly blessed to have played since my eighth-grade year," Spurlock said after the game on the Total Media Sports streaming broadcast. "I give credit to coach (Randy) Anderson for trusting me and credit to my teammates for finding me, getting me open and setting good screens. Throughout the years, I've had really good teammates and really good teams. I give them all the credit

because without them, this would be really hard to do."

Caleb Rimmer started the overtime period with one of his five blocks, igniting the Lions' transition. Boyd County (22-6) had five players in double figures. Malachi Payne finished with 22 points, Gunnar Woods contributed 13 and Clark Huff and Rimmer each had 10. Rimmer's point total included career No. 1,500.

Noah Lewis had 34 points to lead George Washington, which suffered just its second loss of the season. Sprouse added 28 points.

Boyd County reached the century mark against Huntington Expression Prep 24 hours earlier in a 102-80 win. Once again, the starters stacked the scoring column. The Lions hit 16 from long range. Spurlock posted five during his 29-point night. Payne (22), Woods (18), Rimmer (12) and Ethan Rardon (15) all netted double figures.

Boyd County opened its third game in three nights with a 30-12 first-quarter lead against Elliott County and never looked back. Payne led all scores with 34 points. Spurlock added 22 to his growing career point list. Huff supplied 15 points.

The Kentucky Association of Basketball Coaches named Spurlock its 16th Region Player of the Year Friday. The senior has averaged 28 points and nine rebounds a game this year while hitting 121 3s.

Ashland's Gabby Karle earned the girls Player of the Year. The guards leads the Kittens in scoring at 14.8 points a game.

Both are nominated for the prestigious Mr. and Mrs. Basketball awards. The winners are announced on March 22.

G. WASH. 18 19 14 28 11 — 90
BOYD CO. 20 19 14 26 12 — 91
George Washington (90)—Welch 1, Maddox 7, Lewis 34, Kelly 7, Castle, Browning 10, Mullen Sprouse 28, Clark. 3-pt FGS: 5 (Maddox, Lewis, Sprouse 3) FT: 9-17. PF: 20.

Boyd County (91)—Spurlock 31, Woods 13, Rardon 5, Payne 22, Rimmer 10, Huff 10. 3-pt FGS: 7 (Spurlock 3, Woods, Rardon, Huff 2) FT: 22-29. PF: 11.

HUNT. PREP 19 17 24 20 — 80
BOYD CO. 34 24 25 19 — 102
Huntington Expression Prep (80)—Starcher 31, Kabongo, McCreath

4, Brown 7, Castillo, Frazier, Wess 11, Cox 14, Lee 11, Bachar. 3-pt FGS: 12 (Starcher 7, Wess 2, Cox, Lee 2) FT: 6-7. PF: 14.

Boyd County (102)—Spurlock 29, Woods 18, Rardon 15, Payne 22, Rimmer 12, Huff 6, Carter, Edmonson, Witherow. 3-pt FGS: 16 (Spurlock 5, Woods 4, Rardon 3, Payne, Rimmer, Huff 2) FT: 8-11. PF: 7

PUBLIC NOTICE

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS ENGINEERING SERVICES

Sanitation District No. 4 (SD4) is soliciting sealed proposals from qualified engineering firms to provide professional engineering services to conduct a comprehensive capacity study of the District's sanitary sewer system. The study will place particular emphasis on evaluating system capacity within the Industrial Park service area.

Interested firms are invited to submit proposals outlining qualifications, relevant experience, and a proposed approach to performing the capacity analysis.

Proposals must be submitted no later than 4:00 PM on March 6, to the SD4 office located at: 239 W. Little Garner Road, Ashland, KY 41102

Questions regarding this request may be directed to: Della Spradlin Email: dspradlin@bcsd4.com Phone: 606-928-3936

Sanitation District No. 4 reserves the right to reject any and all proposals and to accept the proposal deemed to be in the best interest of the District.

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