DGB turns attention back onto final games

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Hillcrest High School senior Dorial Green-Beckham admits the past week has taken a lot of pressure off of him.

After signing to play football at the University of Missouri last week, Green-Beckham can now make the last few weeks of the basketball season his main priority.

“He is kind of aware that this is the end,” Hillcrest coach John Schaefer said. “I know how much he loves basketball and how much fun it is for him.”

Green-Beckham proved that on Friday night, where he scored a game-high 31 points and pulled down 13 rebounds to lead the Hornets to a 54-43 win over Lebanon in an Ozark Conference matchup at Hillcrest.

“Now that I know what school I’ll be attending, it makes it a lot easier to just focus on basketball now,” said Green-Beckham, who had a double-double in the first half. “It’s time to stay focused on basketball and lead our school through districts and try to make it all the way back to state.”

With two conference games remaining, Hillcrest (18-6, 5-2) still has a shot of sharing the OC title with Glendale, who beat Parkview Friday evening.

After battling Lebanon close in the early going, Hillcrest took control early in the second quarter and never trailed the rest of the way.

“We weren’t productive offensively in the first half, and in that second half we started to tighten up the reigns so to speak,” Schaefer said. “We got some easy baskets, and got people in the right spots in that second half.”

Hillcrest outrebounded Lebanon 23-16, which gave the Hornets several second-chance baskets on the offensive end in a game where neither team was shooting lights out.

Lebanon trailed 37-29 after the third quarter, but a 9-4 Hillcrest run midway through the fourth helped seal the victory.

“Dorial just kind of got loose on us and got some buckets there,” Lebanon coach Cole Dishman said. “Hillcrest knocked down some shots, and ours weren’t falling.

“(Dorial) was the difference-maker tonight. We just didn’t have an answer for him.”

After struggling offensively in the first half, Hillcrest junior Austin Petry scored nine of his 11 points in the second half to help give the Hornets momentum down the stretch.

Lebanon senior Jordan McGinnis led the Yellowjackets (9-14, 3-4) with 19 points.