Top-ranked Lady Vikings look to finish strong

BY Ryan Nagelhout Niagara Gazette

NIAGARA FALLS — While Niagara Falls has dominated the boys basketball talk in Western New York, the Grand Island girls team has quietly dominated on its own.

The Vikings have ran through the 2010-11 season undefeated and are ranked as the top Class A team in New York State by the New York State Sports Writer's Association.

Grand Island can guarantee at least a share of the Niagara Frontier League crown with a win against Kenmore East at home tonight at 6:30 p.m., but coach Jenepher Banker said the raised stakes don't make her team approach the contest differently.

"It's our focus is to win every night so that's more of the focus right now than anything else," Banker said. "I'm glad we're playing good teams so that's what we're looking to do."

Banker picked up her 200th coaching victory earlier in the season as her Vikings have had little trouble with their NFL opponents. Grand Island handed Lockport it's only loss of the season in a 48-34 win at home on Jan. 18, and finishing the regular season against Ken East and Lockport will give the Vikings a boost in competition before postseason play begins.

Ken East features forward Jordyn Broas and guard Selina Zaccaria as its main scoring threats, and Banker credited the Lady Bulldogs for playing tough under coach Jack Blanch.

"They're always intense and they're always physical," Banker said. "They're well coached and they have good players."

Grand Island boasts a variety of scoring threats including Kallie Banker, Jenepher's daughter, as well as Danielle Wegrzyn and Cassie Oursler. Brooke Demarco has also had big numbers in the box score, and with all four players averaging double figures the Lady Vikings prove to be difficult to stop offensively.

"(Those are) the nights that make you a good team, "Banker said. "Different defenses might indicate different people are going to get different looks, and I think we've got a lot of options.

"Whatever somebody throws at us, we've been able to counteract that with our balance."