

MHS Boys Fade In 4th; Buhler Makes The Plays

It was almost a perfect night.

The Mulvane High School Wildcat boys were slapping mighty Buhler around, leading by as many as seven points in the late stages of the 3rd quarter. Then it got down to simply making plays and it was the visiting Crusaders making them as Buhler pulled ahead and survived its latest visit to Mulvane Friday night, Feb. 20. The score was 52-46.

"We really played well, we played great basketball and for three quarters, we had that game won but down the stretch, their players stepped up and made plays and ours didn't," said MHS Coach Ryan Herrs.

The Crusaders trailed the entire game until finally pulling ahead in the last four minutes. Buhler out-scored the Cats, 18-9, in the critical 4th quarter.

The narrow loss was just another in a series of close ones in February. In their last four games—all losses—the Wildcat boys have been ahead in the 4th quarter in every game. They lost by two at Augusta, in overtime at home against Rose Hill, by three at Maize and now this.

"We're just in a holding pattern," said Herrs. "We have a team that can win ball games. We just don't have the maturity and understanding to win. We didn't make plays down the stretch and that's what it comes down to. Making plays. Buhler did and we didn't. What that means is we need to hit shots when we have to have them. Making stops defensively when we have to have it."

That created another tough loss for the Mulvane boys, who slipped to 6-12 for the season with just games at Goddard and Valley Center left before the opening round of the Mulvane Class 4A Sub-State next week.

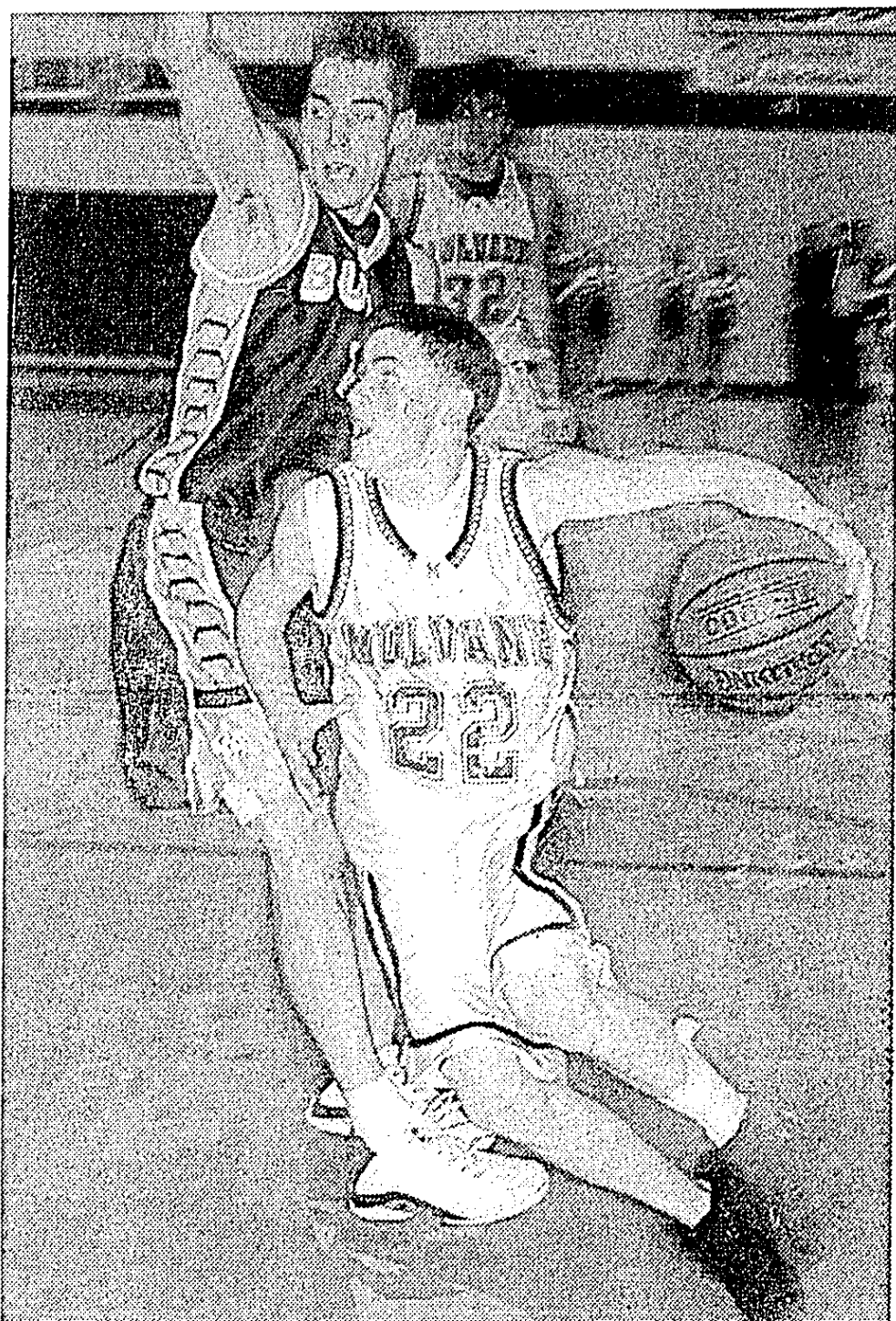
Herrs isn't saying that his Wildcats didn't play the game. They did. Mulvane committed only six turnovers and for much of the game, the Cats had Buhler scrambling.

"The six turnovers is the lowest number of turnovers we've had in a game since I've been here," said Herrs. "We really played well. We played great basketball. Nick Hansen was fantastic. He didn't lead us in scoring but he played his rear end off. What happened is that we just disappeared on defense, especially in the fourth quarter. We had a couple of guys on the floor who just didn't play defense in the last quarter and that just killed us. I didn't know how badly they had played (on defense) until we watched the tape. The tapes don't lie."

It's been a tough luck season for the Wildcats. In nine of their 12 losses, the MHS boys have been either tied or ahead at intermission and in many of those games, Mulvane was leading going into the final eight minutes.

The Cats came out smoking, rolling out to a six-point lead after one quarter. "Early, I was extremely happy with the way we played," said Herrs. "Our first possession, is a perfect example. It was 35 seconds and I was so proud of our guys because they got two free throws out of it, but we did what we wanted to do."

The Wildcats would have had an even larger lead had they been able to stop the coach's son. Brandon Cameron, son of Crusader Coach Don Cameron, scored 18 points in the



Guard Nick Hansen (22) drives a Buhler defender for a shot

first half. Buhler had 23 total points. "Last time we played them, we had Brad Enochs on him and Brad did a pretty good job, but he was just too hot the other night."

Senior Zach Kimble paced the Wildcat scoring but he had lots of help in that department. Kimble scored 11 points and senior Greg Flores scored 10. Hansen finished with nine points, Gavin Snider had seven and Enochs scored five.

"Right now, the kids are doing everything right," pointed out Herrs. "But sometimes, it just comes down to making plays

to win ball games. That's where we're at. I don't question our heart and desire. It's there. It comes down to just stepping up when it counts. Winning is experience. That's it. And now having been in situations where they can win games, it's a whole new world for them."

Buhler's JV team stopped a late rally by the Wildcat jayvees to win by four, 49-45, Friday night. Three MHS players scored eight points each--Kyle Womacks, J.D. Sorensen and Bobby Swayne. Brock Kendall had six points and Logan Sorensen finished with five.

Boys Varsity

Buhler 8 15 11 18-52
Mulvane 14 12 11 9-46

Buhler—Britt Streck 4, Linda Wray 12, Jake Sawatzky 0, Andy Preston 12, Brandon Cameron 24. FG 18 (3), FT 13-15, F 14.

Mulvane—Brad Enochs 5, Greg Flores 10, Gavin Snider 7, Nick Hansen 9, Zach Kimble 11, Kiel Mangus 2, Grant Snider 2. FG 17 (6), FT 6-13, F 17.

Junior Varsity Boys

Buhler 10 17 15 7-49
Mulvane 10 14 7 14-45

Buhler—Jared Rizzo 6, Brody Gustafson 9, Nate Goering 4, Aaron Schmuicker 13, Kyle Ward 2, Rawlins 9, Nathan Lind 2, Ryan Peck 2, Vern Craig 2. FG 18 (2), FT 11-22, F 16.

Mulvane—J.D. Sorensen 8, Kyle Womacks 8, Bobby Swayne 8, Logan Sorensen 5, Chris Wilson 3, Greg Simon 3, Brock Kendall 6, Sage Swaney 4. FG 17 (5), FT 6-16, F 20.