

Nightmare Start For Cats; MHHS Boys Struggle On Offense

Five seniors who started games a year ago. Being at home. Opening night.

What more could a coach ask for. But the first game 2003-04 basketball season for Coach Ryan Herra was anything but magical Friday night, Dec. 5. It was more like another sequel on "Elm Street."

Kingman was in Mulvane Friday and picked up all the parts for "extras" as the Eagles stopped Mulvane's Wildcats, 48-37, in the season opener for both Chisholm Trail League schools.

The MHHS boys were to have played Douglass Tuesday night, Dec. 9, in the opening round of the Mulvane Early Season Tournament but that round of games was postponed by the bad weather in the area earlier Tuesday.

Instead, the opening round of the four-team, round robin tournament was to have been played on Wednesday night, Dec. 10. The other teams in the tournament are Rose Hill and Andale.

"We didn't defend like we (coaches) told them, we didn't defend on the post, we didn't run the offense like we taught them," said Coach Herra. "We scored 37 points, which is very, very disappointing. We

worked all last week on post defense and Kingman got all their points in the paint. And, of course, we couldn't score at all. It didn't help that we had Zach (Kimble) and Greg (Flores) hurt, but you should be able to score 37 points with your off-hand."

In a word, Herra was hurt. He expected more, much, much more with seniors Gavin Snider, Grant Snider, Nick Hansen, Kimble and Flores all coming back after starting games last season for the Cats.

It didn't work out, though. You still have to perform. "It's not that Kingman was more talented than we are," added Herra. "They're not. They just executed better and that's a reflection on us as coaches."

The Eagles, who were 14-7 last year, had even lost their No. 1 player, who transferred to Andover Central, but they were a handful Friday night. Kingman motored out to a 13-6 lead in the first quarter and stretched its

Varsity Boys

Kingman	13	12	14	9	48
Mulvane	9	7	12	9	37
Kingman	Tyler Swartzendruber 4, Brandon Zaegler 9, Andy Strong 8, Chet Hartley 8, Josh Blackwell 10, Larry Miller 6, Jeremy Knapp 3. FG 15 (4), FT 14 (19), F 19.				
Mulvane	Zach Kimble 5, Grant Snider 2, Gavin Snider 10, Greg Flores 2, Nick Hansen 9, Brad Enochs 9. FG 13 (3), FT 8 (10), F 20.				

lead to 10 in the 2nd quarter. But the Cats could never put on a rush because they had trouble scoring because of their poor shooting. The Cats hit only 32% from the field (13-40). "With five veterans back, that's not what I expected, I didn't expect that at all," said Herra.

The Wildcats did stop Kingman five consecutive trips down the floor once in the 4th quarter but couldn't make up any ground because of those shooting woes. "We got point blank shots that we just weren't making," said Herra. "Those are the

kind of shots you have to hit. As poorly as we played, if we could have hit just 40% of our shots, we would have walked away with a victory. You have to give Kingman all the credit. They knew what they wanted to do and they got it done."

The Cat running game also got grounded. Going into the season, Herra said he wanted to play an up-tempo game but it didn't happen Friday night. "The kids just need to loosen up," said Herra. "It doesn't take a rocket scientist to get the ball up the floor. Just pass it forward to the open people."

The Wildcat offense had its hands full but senior newcomer Brad Enochs and veterans Gavin Snider and Nick Hansen led the scoring. Gavin Snider scored 10 points and both Hansen and Enochs scored nine points.

"This is just one game, though, and it doesn't make or break our season," said Herra. "It definitely has to change, though."