

Ugly Is In For Mulvane Boys; Wildcats Sit On Top Of CTL

Ugly is in. Forget about beautiful basketball.

The Mulvane High School Wildcat boys like it that way and when it comes to ugly, the Cats know what they're doing. Mulvane overcame a 5-for-11 free throw effort in the final quarter and prevailed over Clearwater, 67-61, in a Chisholm Trail League game on the road Tuesday night, Jan. 5.

"We kind of played sporadically, kind of ugly again, but we seem to be able to get it done at the end," noted Cat coach Todd Barker about his club's first game following the nearly two-week Christmas break. "It was back-and-forth in the first half but we got it going in the third quarter with a little more pressure defensively. We torqued it up in the second half, switching to a zone and extend-

ing our pressure up the court a little more. It seemed to cause them some problems."

The victory kept the surprising Wildcats on top in the Chisholm Trail Division II race with a 2-0 loop record. Overall, Mulvane is 4-2. Clearwater stumbled to 0-5 for the year and 0-2 in the league.

Mulvane's pressing tactics enabled Coach Barker's troops to take the lead for good in the 3rd quarter, out-scoring the Indians, 18-10. "We started putting more pressure on their guards and they started turning the ball over. They ended up with more than 20 turnovers. I think the score would have been a little more lopsided if the free throwing would have been a little different."

The free throw stripe both kept the Cats fighting for life and kept the Indians in the

ball game. Mulvane made only 14 of 25 free tosses while Clearwater was nailing 15 of 16 to hang tough.

"Our scouting report on Clearwater told us that they shot the ball pretty good at the free throw line," said Barker. "We did make a conscious effort not to foul them but late in the game when we were up by 10, we started sending them to the line. I had to have a time out just to make sure the kids understood we didn't need to do that. We wanted the clock to run."

Barker said another factor was shooting and the game was the best shooting game for Mulvane so far this season. "Compared to what we had been shooting, it was a fine game for us," said the MHS coach. "I think Jesse did a nice job in the shooting department and Brian Dinkel was getting some shots to fall. Every one of our practices over the Christmas break, we had a lot of time shooting the ball. I just put the ball in the kids' hands and they just shot the ball. Hopefully, all that work paid off. I thought the guys felt pretty comfortable shooting it against Clearwater, and they were making their shots."

Mulvane hit 52% from the field (25 of 48) from inside the three-point line and finished with a 48% field goal mark overall (26-54). Clearwater made only 41% from the field overall.

Marksberry finished with 25 points. Garrett Hennes finally found his stroke, gunning in 16 points. Dinkel scored eight points and both Jake Wilkinson and guard Nick Pope scored seven points.

Mulvane also held its own in the rebounding department, although in the final quarter, the Wildcats tried to be less aggressive on the boards in an effort to keep the clock running. "They finally caught us in the last quarter in rebounding, but Coach (Greg) Wolgast said we had the statistical edge until the last quarter. We were more interested in keeping the time ticking off," pointed out Barker.

In the junior varsity contest, the Wildcats couldn't match the Indians and lost by a 38-25 count. Clearwater made the most of an 8-2 edge in the third quarter to pile up a nice lead.

Top scorers for the Cats included Jonathan Reed with six points, Brian Love and Jason Wilson with five points each and

Chris Gerhardt with three.

Mulvane will be idle Friday night, Jan. 8, but will have its biggest test of the season Tuesday, Jan. 12, when Barker's Cats test their muscle against pre-season favorite Circle. The Thunderbirds, are 4-2 overall and 1-1 in the league after being upset by Rose Hill just before the holiday break.

Varsity Boys

Mulvane	18	15	18	16	67
Clearwater	20	12	10	19	61
Mulvane-Jesse Marksberry 25, Randy Johnson 2, Jake Wilkinson 7, Garrett Hennes 16, Nick Pope 7, Brian Dinkel 8 FG 26-54 (1), FT 14-25, F 16					
Clearwater-Collin Peck 15, Peltz 6, Avila 6, Josh Davis 13, Wallace 4, Allenbach 11, Tim Hastings 6 FG 22 (2), FT 15 16, F 21					

Junior Varsity Boys

Mulvane	5	6	2	12	25
Clearwater	8	6	8	13	38
Mulvane-Jason Wilson 5, Jonathan Reed 6, Jared Rice 2, Derek Paul 2, Chris Gerhardt 3, Brian Love 5, Chris Brannon 2 FG 8 (2), FT 6-13, F 20					
Clearwater-Untrein 3, Estep 2, Mills 2, Doll 4, Charles 15, Daley 4, Hastings 4, Avila 2, Lang 1 FG 14 (1), FT 9 21, F 17					