

Confident Cats Get Hot

One practice of shooting only was just the remedy the Mulvane High School Wildcat boys needed. It lit the fuse on the struggling MHS shooting and when the smoke cleared, Clearwater was left by the wayside Friday night, Jan. 9.

Coach Todd Barker's Wildcats posted their first Chisholm Trail League Division II victory Friday at Clearwater by blasting the Indians out of the tub behind their best shooting of the season in a 71-56 game.

The Cats hit 54% from the field (23 of 37), finally looking like a confident bunch of Wildcats as they squared their record at 4-4 and

1-4 in the CTL heading into another league game Friday night, Jan. 16, at Chaparral.

"After the Rose Hill game, where we shot terribly, we just took one complete day out of practice just to shoot the ball," said Barker. "We didn't do anything else but shoot it. We talked about confidence. We 'partnered up' and just took two hours of shooting the ball. I don't know if that was what got them going but they got going. They came out with a great deal of confidence and after the first couple of shots dropped, everybody wanted to get in there

and make a bucket. It was contagious."

And it couldn't have come at a better time. Barker and his Cats needed a win after dropping three in a row.

"We got off to a great start (against Clearwater) and not only shot the ball well, but we did a couple other things pretty well," confessed Barker. "We pounded them on the boards (43 rebounds to 28) and we committed a season-long 12 turnovers."

And the Wildcats defense was stiff in the second half, allowing the Indians only 21 points the entire two quarters.

The good start enabled the Cats to jump ahead by 10 early in the initial quarter but by halftime, the Indians, who slumped to 2-5 overall and 0-3 in the loop, had clawed their way back into contention, trailing only 42-35. "We had a little breakdown just before half when we tried some people in different situations to protect against fouls and they threw a press on us and got a couple quick buckets off turnovers," said Barker. "We just didn't have enough guards out there and they took advantage of it."

Mulvane pulled away in the last quarter by pounding the boards and cracking the whip on defense. "We really blitzed them in the second half on the boards," said Barker. "They only got one shot at the basket and we got the rebound most of the time. I think they had three or four offensive rebounds in the second half and that makes it tough to stage a comeback. We took away their second shots and executed defensively. That was a big, big factor."

Mulvane had its best balance of the season. Senior Darrin Erbert poured in 21 points and senior Bryce Schumacher had 15. Sophomore Jesse Marksberry scored 18 while senior Rob Parker dropped in eight off the bench.

The junior varsity Wildcats had little trouble putting down the Indians, winning by a 70-51 count. Coach Scott Swaney's JVs rolled out to a 24-8 lead and maintained the margin.

Garrett Hennes scored 18 points to pace the Cats. Teammates Randy Johnson and Marksberry scored nine apiece and Jake Wilkinson and Jared Rice scored seven each.

The Wildcats will be playing next week in the 27th annual Chaparral Roadrunner Classic at Chaparral High School. The Wildcats were the No. 4 seed and will tangle with Arkansas City at 8 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 22. No. 2 seeded Medicine Lodge and Nickerson will start the tournament at 6 p.m. Wednesday night, followed by the Chaparral-Clearwater game at 8.

27th Annual Roadrunner Classic Pairings

WEDNESDAY, JAN. 21

Game 1 -- Medicine Lodge (4-4) vs. Nickerson (2-6), 6 p.m.

Game 2 -- Chaparral (3-4) vs. Clearwater (2-6), 8

THURSDAY, JAN. 22

Game 3 -- Conway Springs (7-1) vs. Campus (0-8), 6 p.m.

Game 4 -- Mulvane (4-4) vs. Arkansas City (2-6), 8

FRIDAY, JAN. 23

Game 5 -- losers of games 3 and 4, 3 p.m.

Game 6 -- losers of games 1 and 2, 4:30

Game 7 -- winners of games 3 and 4, 6:30

Game 8 -- winners of games 1 and 2, 8

SATURDAY, JAN. 24

Game 9 (Seventh Place)—losers of games 5 and 6, 2 p.m.

Game 10 (Fifth Place)—winners of games 5 and 6, 3:30

Game 11 (Third Place)—losers of games 7 and 8, 5:30

Game 12 (First Place)—winners of games 7 and 8, 7

Varsity Boys

Mulvane	26	16	10	19--71
Clearwater	19	16	11	10-56

Mulvane—Darrin Erbert 21, Chad Gerwick 2, Bryce Schumacher 15, Jesse Marksberry 18, Dan McElroy 4, Keene Hargrove 3, Rob Parker 8, FG 26 (3), FT 16-22, F 19.

Clearwater—Tim Hastings 15, Josh Davis 6, Landon Langston 27, David Lehl 4, Jerry Rausch 4, FG 21 (3), FT 11-19, F 21.

Junior Varsity Boys

Mulvane	24	14	10	21--70
Clearwater	8	13	13	16--51

Mulvane—Jake Wilkinson 7, Randy Johnson 9, Brian McColpin 4, Jesse Marksberry 9, Garrett Hennes 18, Nick Pope 3, Tom Anderson 5, Josh Hanson 5, Derek Paul 2, Jared Rice 7, FG 28 (4), FT 10-24, F 26.

Clearwater—Eric Estep 3, Zack Dalbom 4, Chad Avila 10, Chad Esslinger 3, Curt Dugan 4, Drew Pelz 3, Luke Doll 2, Bill Hamilton 8, Andy Hastings 8, Collin Peck 6, FG 18 (2), FT 13-34, F 24.