

Balance & Defense Come To Forefront

Everything he thought his team had finally came to the forefront. It just took Mulvane High School boys basketball coach Todd Barker seven games to get it to surface.

Good defense, good shooting, a running, gunning group. Yep! That's what Barker thought would show up on the floor back in December.

It finally did Friday night, Jan. 17, when Chaparral came to town and the Wildcat boys sent the Roadrunners running out the door and down the road with a 79-60 whipping in a Chisholm Trail League game.

The victory was the second straight for the Cat boys after opening the season with seven consecutive losses. Mulvane is 2-7 and 2-4 in the Chisholm Trail as the team neared the midway point of the season.

The Wildcats were to have met No. 1 seeded Medicine Lodge (8-1) in the opening round of the 26th annual Chaparral Roadrunner Classic Wednesday night, Jan. 22. The game last Friday night could be a big stepping stone for the rest of the year.

"I hope so," said Barker. "I think they are starting to come together as a team. People are starting to step up individually and we're starting to play better defense. We've given up 59 or 60 points in the last two games and that's important. Plus, we have gotten our board game together. We out-rebounded Chaparral and it was our second straight game of controlling the boards."

Defense. It's a word for hustle and sweat. In their first seven losses, the Wildcats gave up 565 points, an average of nearly 81 points an outing. In their last two games, both wins, the Cats held the opponents to 59.5 points a game. Hummm!

"I think the kids are finally understanding they need to be in the defensive scheme of things instead of playing as five individuals with different defensive philosophies. We played good defense against Chaparral, forcing 33 turnovers. That's a lot of turnovers.

"They've finally figured out instead of standing in one area playing zone or playing their man in a man-to-man that they have to help. That help philosophy has been a little time in coming together for us. It's just a little thing and we've been asking them to do it all season but I think they're finally understanding that they need to move over and help someone out when the need arises."

Although Mulvane won by 19, the game started like it was going to be a barn-burner. Chappy actually came out swinging, jumping to a 15-14 lead after one quarter. "We wanted to jump them early but I think our kids read the newspapers, too, and I think Chaparral's kids did, too," offered Barker. "Our kids saw that they didn't have any

wins and kind of took them lightly and at the same time, their kids saw that we had only one win so they thought they really had a shot at us. We were a little shell-shocked early, I think, but I gave them a good talking-to at the quarter break and they came out with much more intensity and really got it going.

"The kids kind of over-looked Chaparral. I think they were thinking about Medicine Lodge, but I reminded them that they had to take care of things at hand and they responded. Chaparral also shot the ball really well in the first quarter but their adrenaline pump ran out after the first quarter."

Indeed. The Cats squeezed down the Roadrunner offense to only 10 points in the second period while Mulvane went on a 23-point binge to take the lead for good.

Another factor which helped was Chaparral's attempt at going with a zone defense after intermission. "They tried to play a little zone at the start of the third quarter and Greg Nunn came in and busted it up with three three-pointers. Chad Gerwick also had a three-pointer during that stretch and those were crucial buckets.

Another key statistic was at the free throw line, kind of a nemesis area for Mulvane before Friday night. However, against the Runners, Mulvane popped in 23 of 34 and would have been almost perfect had not the Cat big guys, Luke Cox and Brad Canfield, gone a combined 1-10 at the stripe.

"We were getting the ball inside and getting fouled," acknowledged Barker. "Our guards really did a nice job but our big people let us down a little. Usually Brad is pretty solid at the line but they weren't falling for him Friday night."

Mulvane also won the battle of the boards. Junior guards Darrin Erbert and Bryce Schumacher had eight rebounds apiece and 6-3 Neil Gosch and 6-2 Raymond Lazier had six each as the Cats commanded a 42-34 edge in rebounding.

Even more important, though, was balance on offense. Ten players scored for the Cats. Gerwick finished on top of the heap with 19 points, including nine consecutive free throws. Erbert and Schumacher scored 10 points each and Nunn and Lazier finished with nine and eight, respectively.

"When everybody's a scoring threat, it keeps people from being able to key on any one individual," noted Barker. "It's the team concept. The opponents can't worry about one guy scoring. Chad was struggling a little early but really got it going. He got in a groove and really did an okay job. Raymond also had a great game coming off the bench. He also had six steals for us."

Boys Varsity

Chaparral	15	10	16	19—60
Mulvane	14	23	20	22—79

Chaparral—Smithhiser 5, Jeff Cox 4, Kyle Carothers 5, Kunz 18, Lance Ricke 11, Rob Catherwood 9, Ryan Hoopes 2, Alex Moore 2, Chris Stevens 4. FG 20 (6), FT 14-17, F 28.

Mulvane—Chad Gerwick 19, Darrin Erbert 10, Dan McElroy 6, Brad Canfield 6, Raymond Lazier 8, Sean Holman 6, Bryce Schumacher 10, Greg Nunn 9, Keene Hargrove 2, Luke Cox 3. FG 25 (6), FT 23-34, F 21.

Junior Varsity Boys

Chaparral	12	12	7	11—42
Mulvane	20	15	13	19—67

Chaparral—Kyle Wedman 2, Richie Barrett 7, Rob Catherwood 4, Lyle Redgate 7, Chris Stevens 9, Spencer Hosteller 2, Ryan Hoopes 9, Shaun Winkelman 3. FG 16 (1), FT 9-25, F 19.

Mulvane—Sean Holman 7, Bryce Schumacher 2, Ryan Lowe 7, Doug Grow 3, Ryan Rogers 11, Keene Hargrove 11, Ryan McCarty 12, Rob Parker 6, Clint Cox 2, Lucas Powell 2, Jake Wilkinson 2, Tom Anderson 3. FG 27 (2), FT 7-18, F 20.

Sophomore Boys

Chaparral	9	12	14	17—52
Mulvane	23	20	20	19—82

Chaparral—Spears 11, Shue 8, Troyer 8, Connell 8, Bauer 16, Jelinek 3. FG 21 (5), FT 5-10, F 14.

Mulvane—Jake Wilkinson 12, Lucas Powell 17, Tom Anderson 11, Brian McColpin 17, Philip Ward 4, Josh Sears 8, Garrett Hennes 13. FG 35 (6), FT 6-10, F 16.

Chaparral Roadrunner Boys Classic Pairings

Wednesday, Jan. 22

Game 1 — Medicine Lodge (8-1) vs. Mulvane (2-7), 6:30 p.m.

Game 2 — Arkansas City (3-4) vs. Pratt (2-6), 8

Tonight (Jan. 23)

Game 3 — Conway Springs (5-3) vs. Chaparral (0-8), 6:30 p.m.

Game 4 — Clearwater (4-4) vs. Campus (2-8), 8

Friday, Jan. 24

Game 5 — losers of games 1 and 2, 3 p.m.

Game 6 — losers of games 3 and 4, 4:30

Game 7 — winners of games 1 and 2, 6:30

Game 8 — winners of games 3 and 4, 8

Saturday, Jan. 25

Game 9 (Seventh Place)—losers of games 5 and 6, 2:30 p.m.

Game 10 (Fifth Place)—winners of games 5 and 6, 4

Game 11 (Third Place)—losers of games 7 and 8, 6

Game 12 (Championship)—winners of games 7 and 8, 7:30

The Cats made a clean sweep of things against the Roadrunners. The Mulvane jayvee boys clipped Chappy, 67-42, and the sophomore Cats had no trouble in an 82-52 shelling.

The JV boys were never in trouble as they raced out to a big lead early. Ryan McCarty scored 12 points and both Keene Hargrove and Ryan Rogers had 11 points in the blowout. Sean Holman and Ryan Lowe finished with seven apiece for Mulvane.

In the sophomore game, the Wildcats raced out to a 23-9 lead after one period and it was never close after that. Guard Brian McColpin and Lucas Powell shared scoring honors with 17 points apiece. Garrett Hennes, Jake Wilkinson and Tom Anderson gave the MHS sophs five double-figure scorers with 13, 12 and 11 points, respectively.