

# Cats 'Close' To Being Good Basketball Team

"Almost" is a big word

Mulvane High School boys basketball coach Ryan Herra and his Wildcat warriors are finding out its three times the size of "it."

"We're close, we're so close," said Herra.

The MHS coach was talking about the last two games. The Cats chested up against Augusta Friday night, Feb. 7, at home and almost pulled off the biggest upset in years before the Orioles pulled it out in the final moments for a 45-42 victory. Three nights earlier at Valley Center, Mulvane again played a strong game but came up with another three-point loss, 50-47.

"We at least look like we know what we're doing out there and that's great," said Herra. "These kids are playing. Against

Augusta, they played like warriors. They went up there with as much confidence as they could, and they went in there and played hard. We just had a couple of turnovers that hurt us. Otherwise, the kids did a tremendous job."

In the whole first half, it looked like the Cats were the defending 4A State champs instead of Augusta as they moved the ball well, passed to the Orioles weakness and got the easy inside shots that dropped. The Cats out-scored Augusta, 14-9, in the first quarter and went into intermission with a 26-17 lead when Nick Hansen canned a three pointer from the corner as the horn went off.

"That play was a good example of what I'm talking about," pointed out Herra. "We

went into the game wanting to control the tempo and we did that the whole game. We didn't want to play 'Augusta ball,' we wanted to play 'Mulvane ball.' Right before the half, we got the ball and went for one shot. The kids on the floor ran the offense and Hansen gets the shot and drains it."

Mulvane also played some outstanding zone defense, collapsing on the Augusta inside game. "They didn't have a very good shooting half and that's what we needed," said Herra. "We gambled that they would have trouble hitting from outside and that is one reason we had them off-balance."

The Orioles heated up in the second half, though, and made the Wildcats guard farther outside, which opened up their big inside gun. After hitting under 50% from the field in the first half, the Orioles hit over 50% in the 2nd to catch up and pass the Wildcats.

Senior Tyler Hennes and junior Zach Kimble powered the offense for Mulvane, each scoring 10 points. Dusty Sorensen finished with six points, Greg Flores had five and Gavin Snider scored four.

The Cats also had their trouble in the jayvee game Friday night, losing by a 55-34 count to the Orioles. Cris Stephens had a career-high of 16 points. Kiel Mangus had eight points, Josh Trevitt had four and Grant Snider scored three.

At Valley Center, the Wildcats had some missed opportunities that led to the defeat. "We had several opportunities to take control of the game but we didn't," said Herra. "We had the lead until late and one of their kids hit a three that put them ahead and that seemed to break our back."

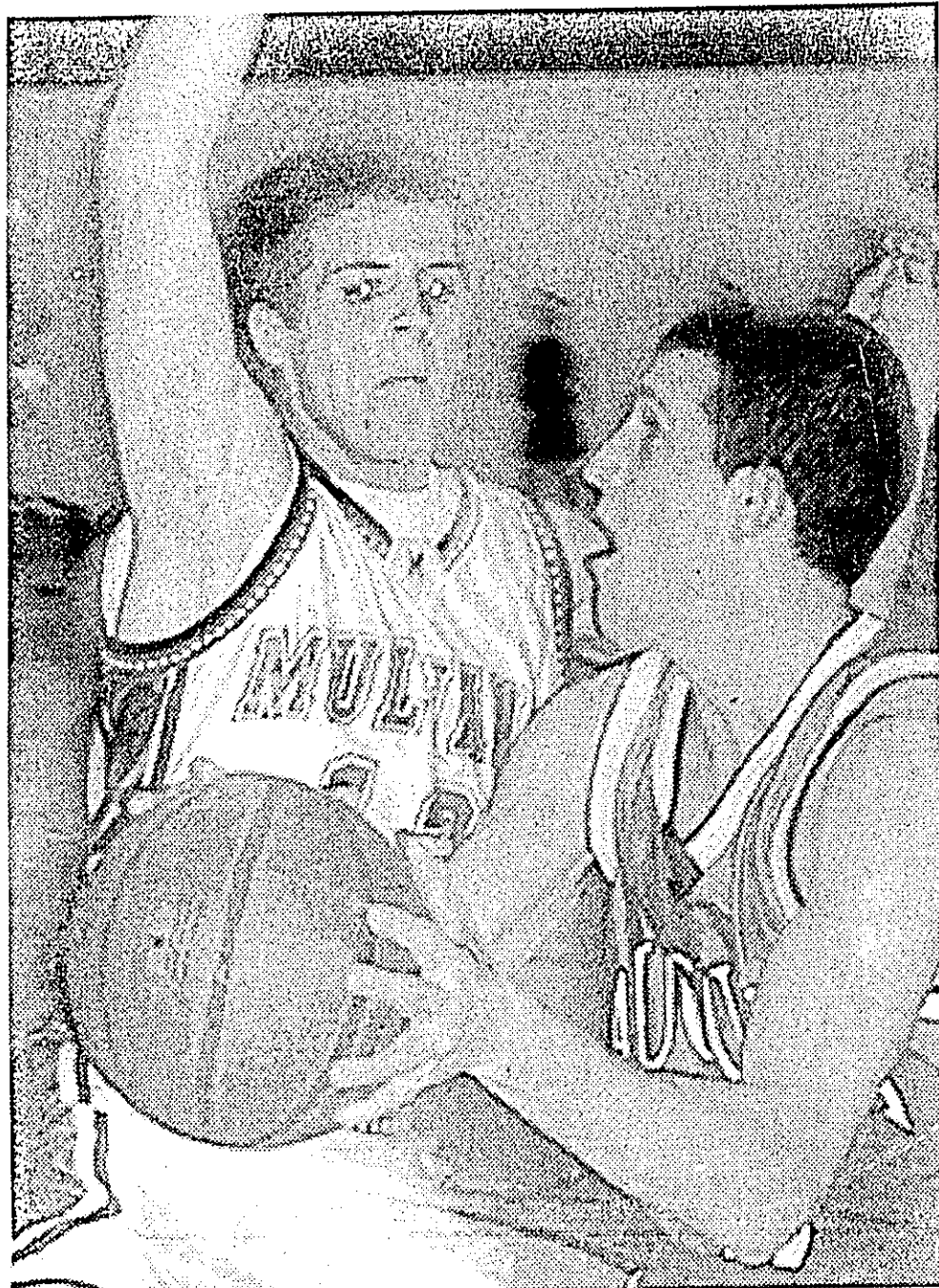
Still, Herra said he felt good about the direction Mulvane was going. There was plenty to praise from the VC game.

"Zach Kimble made some great plays, Greg Flores hit his open shots and Dusty Sorensen was 3-for-5 from the field and had a couple of assists off the bench for another great job," said Herra. "Luke Gunter had no turnovers for us playing point guard the entire game. That's the kind of leadership these kids are starting to give to us."

"These kids want to be good. They are getting those opportunities to win ball games. If we get a couple (wins), look out."

Kimble led the scoring for the Cats with 13 points. Flores scored 11 points, Sorensen had a season-high 10 and Hennes scored six.

It doesn't get any easier, though. Mulvane is off Friday night, Feb. 14, but will travel to league-leading Maize Tuesday night, Feb. 18.



A determined Luke Gunter (12) puts a roadblock up against Augusta

#### Boys Varsity

Augusta	9	8	18	10	45
Mulvane	14	12	9	7	42
Augusta—	John Mauer 13, Matt Boyer 6, Jake Sims 7, Scott Slade 6, Hans Nickel 13	FG 18 (5), FT 4 11, F 12			
Mulvane—	Gavin Snider 4, Nick Hansen 3, Dusty Sorensen 6, Zach Kimble 10, Greg Flores 5, Tyler Hennes 10, Grant Snider 2	FG 18 (4), FT 2-5, F 15			
Mulvane	18	9	10	10	47
Valley Center	13	18	8	11	50
Mulvane—	Dusty Sorensen 10, Greg Flores 11, Nick Hansen 3, Gavin Snider 3, Tyler Hennes 6, Zach Kimble 13	FG 18 (6), FT 5-13, F 18			
Valley Center—	Betsworth 6, Corey Carter 2, Ian Lindstrom 13, Garrett Konen 20, DeLong 2, Travis Riffel 2, Jared Simon 5	FG 18 (3), FT 11-19, F 15			

#### Junior Varsity Boys

Augusta	14	17	15	9	55
Mulvane	11	3	7	13	34
Augusta—	Brice Simon 14, Eric English 7, Brody Lantham 2, Tyler Lytton 14, Kirby Nickel 8, Cole Hancock 2, Caleb Pazzie 4, Kevin Schauf 4	FG 19 (4), FT 13-17, F 23			
Mulvane—	Kiel Mangus 8, Cris Stephens 16, Grant Snider 3, Chris Simon 1, Josh Trevitt 4, Jason Turner 2	FG 11 (1), FT 11-27, F 15			