

Home Finale Tonight

Late Surge Powers Cat Boys

Struggling at Chaparral is no way to get mentally prepared for a tough sub-state, but there's a difference between struggling and winning and struggling and losing.

The Mulvane High School boys, dogged by foul trouble throughout the game, had enough down the stretch to coast past Chaparral, 60-52, Friday night, Feb. 21, in their last Chisholm Trail League road outing.

The triumph gave the Wildcats a 4-7 league mark with one game to go and a 5-14 log overall in the final game before the seeding for sub-state. The Wildcats will be at home for the home finale tonight (Feb. 27) with league-leading Circle coming for a visit.

The Cats will be starting play in the Augusta Class 4A Sub-State Tuesday night,

March 4. The Wildcats were seeded No. 7 and will meet No. 2 seeded Circle again in Thunderbird land in the opening game. First round winners will advance to Augusta for the semifinals Thursday night, March 6.

Earlier this season, the Wildcats slammed Chaparral by 19 points (79-60) but had a hard time shaking the 1-18 Roadrunners this time. "We got into early foul trouble and had to battle the whole game," said MHS Coach Todd Barker. "We had (Darrin) Erbert, (Neil) Gosch and (Clint) Cox all sitting on the bench because of foul trouble and that doesn't help things, especially since we also lost two other starters to injuries since that earlier game. We have other kids who can play but with

the experience on the sidelines, it makes it tough. We missed Raymond's size in there, and he's pretty active, too."

Since that blowout, the Cats have had to put two starters on the sidelines with injuries—junior Chad Gerwick and senior Raymond Lazier. "When you get into foul trouble and already have a couple kids out, it makes it even more difficult," pointed out Barker. Gerwick is out with a knee injury and Lazier with a broken finger.

The game was tight all the way before the Wildcats slowly pulled ahead in the final few minutes. Finally, the Cats started showing their stuff. Juniors Erbert and Bryce Schumacher and Dan McElroy warmed up in the final eight minutes to spoil Chappy's upset hopes. Erbert and Schumacher scored six points each and McElroy had five in the final quarter.

"We started getting a little more aggressive on defense and forced some turnovers in the last quarter," said Barker. "We got our transition game going with three or four quick turnovers to get a nice lead.

"They came down the court and were a little sloppy handling the ball and we took advantage of things. We weren't out trying to force things but we did get into our half-court trap and got some turnovers with it. Really, though, it was their sloppy passing that kind of caught up with them."

Barker said he didn't want to turn the game into an up-tempo "run-arama." "We didn't want to do a whole lot of pressing because of personnel situation. Earlier, we ran a lot of kids in and out of the game but we weren't getting many points off it so we thought that strategy wasn't working. We decided we needed to pick our spots, so that's why we went with the half-court trap. We don't have to go for so long or so hard to get results."

Turnovers—theirs and ours—really played a huge role in the Wildcat win. Mulvane had only nine turnovers in the game. "That's probably a season-low for us," pointed out Barker. "We seemed to take care of the ball better and didn't rush things. I just think we're handling pressure a lot better now than we did earlier."

Mulvane also had another fine game in the rebounding department, taking a 34-29 edge in that department. Clint Cox finished with 10 boards, 6-7 Brad Canfield picked off nine, Erbert had six and Gosch finished with five. "It's hard to imagine how many Neil would get if he could play more," said Barker. "He's on the sidelines so much with foul problems."

It didn't bother Barker much to have to sweat it out at Chaparral, a team that has been getting drilled on a regular basis this season. "A win is a win," said Barker. "On down the line, nobody's going to remember what the point spread was, we had some kids step in there and pick up the slack. That's what I'm going to remember about it. Anytime it is positive, it's going to give you momentum."

The guard Erbert finished with a game-high 18 points to ignite the Wildcat offense.

Canfield finished with 15 points and both Gosch and McElroy had seven points.

The varsity game gave the Wildcats a sweep at Chaparral for the night. The junior varsity Wildcats bombed the Roadrunner jayvees, 75-46, raising their record to 7-6 for the season under Coach Scott Swaney.

Mulvane had a host of scoring in the avalanche. Ryan Lowe hit a season-best 15 points. Ryan McCarty had 14 points, Doug Grow scored 12 points, Sean Holman hit nine points and Rob Parker had eight points.

Last week at Clearwater, the MHS jayvees continued their torrid pace by swamping Clearwater's JVs, 78-48. Balance on offense keyed the Mulvane victory. Parker scored 14 points, Garrett Hennes had 12 and Jesse Marksberry finished with 11. Grow scored nine points, and both Ryan Rogers and Randy Johnson hit for six points.

The Mulvane sophomores also had a breeze at Chappy. The score was 71-51 as Johnson had a career-best 28 points and Brian McColpin pumped in 18. Marksberry scored eight points and both Hennes and Jacob Wilkinson had five-point games.

Varsity Boys

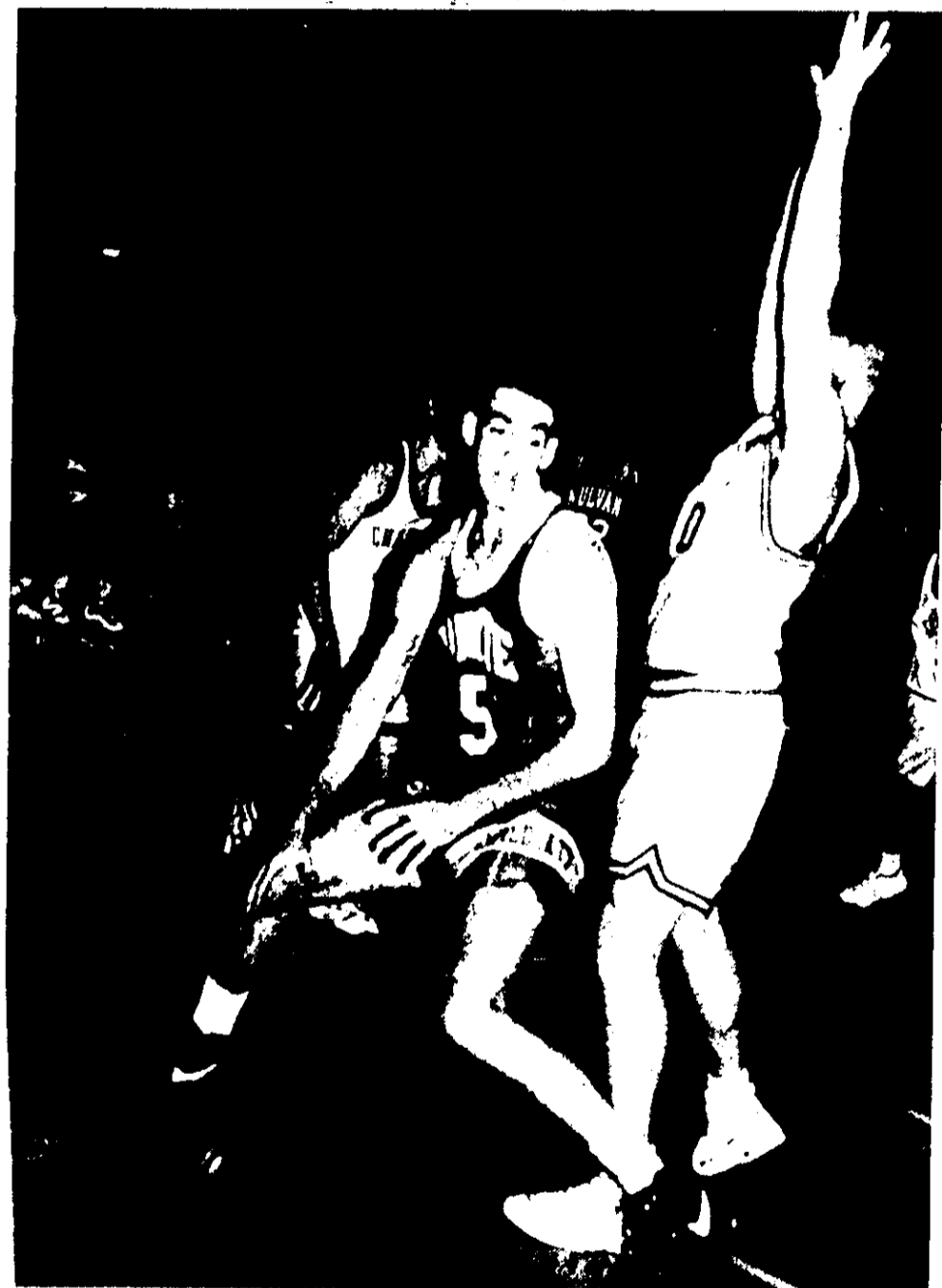
Mulvane	15	12	14	19--60
Chaparral	17	12	13	10--52
Mulvane—Darrin Erbert 18, Bryce Schumacher 6, Neil Gosch 7, Dan McElroy 7, Brad Canfield 15, Greg Nunn 2, Clint Cox 5. FG 21 (0), FT 18-27, F 14.				
Chaparral—Kevin Kunz 16, Dustin Smithhisler 5, Kyle Carothers 7, A.J. Caterwood 14, Lance Ricke 6, Jeff Cox 6. FG 20 (5), FT 7-10, F 21.				

Junior Varsity Boys

Mulvane	19	16	12	28--75
Chaparral	22	12	8	4--46
Mulvane—Doug Grow 12, Ryan Lowe 15, Ryan McCarty 14, Rob Parker 8, Sean Holman 9, Keene Hargrove 2, Randy Johnson 4, Jesse Marksberry 4, Garrett Hennes 3, Tom Anderson 4. FG 26 (5), FT 18-25, F 22.				
Chaparral—Richie Barnett 5, Spencer Hostetler 7, Ryan Hoopes 6, Lyle Redgate 11, Chris Stevens 14. FG 19 (1), FT 7-19, F 21.				
Mulvane	6	22	22	28--48
Clearwater	10	7	12	19--48
Mulvane—Rob Parker 14, Doug Grow 9, Keene Hargrove 4, Garrett Hennes 12, Doug Grow 9, Ryan McCarty 4, Ryan Lowe 5, Ryan Rogers 6, Jake Wilkinson 1, Randy Johnson 6, Tom Anderson 4, Jesse Marksberry 11. FG 35 (1), FT 7-23, F 25.				
Clearwater—Ast 13, Dalbom 3, Ladd 2, Lehl 13, Mathews 1, Bevan 7, Davis 4, Avila 5. FG 19 (1), FT 11-20, F 19.				

Sophomore Boys

Mulvane	17	24	15	15--71
Chaparral	13	12	11	15--51
Mulvane—Randy Johnson 28, Garrett Hennes 5, Jacob Wilkinson 5, Brian McColpin 18, Josh Sears 4, Jesse Marksberry 8, Tom Anderson 1, Philip Ward 2. FG 23 (8), FT 17-28, F 19.				
Chaparral—Eddy Spears 7, Jeremy Shue 8, Jason Bauer 17, Russell Jelinek 13, Joel Gerber 4, Joel Walker 2. FG 19 (0), FT 13-19, F 23.				



Wildcat Brad Canfield (45) steps inside as he goes for a basket against Chaparral