

STATE CHAMPS

Noisy Welcome Home For Champion Team

A rowdy crowd of more than 300 Mulvane Wildcat boosters saluted the best and best-dressed Class 4A boys basketball team in the State of Kansas in the early morning hours Sunday, March 11.

A caravan of approximately 150 honking cars ushered Mulvane's boys down K-15 through Derby and into Mulvane for an impromptu celebration at 1 a.m. in the morning following the Wildcats' victory in the Class 4A State Tournament at the Salina Bicentennial Center earlier in the evening.

The MHS Wildcats whipped up on two-time defending 4A champ Topeka Hayden, claiming a 64-50 triumph and the 4A state title. It's the first state championship for Mulvane in basketball. In fact, it's the first state-level trophy for the school, which has always lost in the first two rounds.

Occupants of more than 150 cars waited for the team along K-15 and in the parking lot of the Gas Lane Service Station a mile north of Derby. As the vans zoomed past, the area became a vast chain of cars, honking and tooting their champions home.

"There were 20 shocked individuals on those vans when they hit Derby. I can tell you that," said Mulvane boys basketball coach Charlie Mason, who guided the team to the school's best-ever record 24-2. "They were surprised and totally happy. It really helped to have the whole town behind them, it really did. And it was really good for the team and coach to be greeted like that."

"I think the town was good for the players and the team was good for the community, too, all the positive exposure these boys brought to Mulvane."

The celebrating caravan snaked its way through Derby, then into Mulvane down Main Street, past the historic Mulvane Depot Museum, then on out to the high school grounds, where the crowd departed their cars and milled around the two vans carrying the new 4A champions and the staff.

The coaches and players joined the celebrating before Mason gave his "victory speech," thanking the fans for their welcome home and support at the state meet.

"Hayden came in as a two-time defending champion and had lots of tradition," the Cat coach said later. "We talked about their crowd before the game because we were worried about their crowd having an impact on the game, but it never became a factor. Our crowd just blew them away."

"It certainly was a big help to our kids to turn around and see wall-to-wall green. They (the Mulvane crowd) got behind these kids and the kids knew it."

Mulvane started its run to glory by

State Champs To Be Honored

The Mulvane Wildcat Booster Club is planning a reception to honor the Class 4A State Championship won Saturday, March 10, in the 74th annual Kansas State High School Activities Association boys state basketball tournament.

Mulvane won the state title by thumping defending champion Topeka Hayden, 64-50.

According to booster club officials, the reception will be from 6 to 8 p.m. Friday, March 16, in the Mulvane High School gym.

The reception will be honoring the state champion team members, the trainers and coaches, the Wildcat pep band, the Classy Cats pom pom squad and the Wildcat cheerleaders.

The public is invited to attend. Refreshments will be served.

rallying to a 65-60 victory over Nickerson in the first round, then blasted Tonganoxie, 57-34, in the semifinals. Hayden dumped state-power and undefeated No. 1 ranked Concordia by a point in its first-round game, then nipped Colby by a point in the semifinals.

"All year long, we knew we could make it there (to the state tournament)," confided Mason. "And we knew after the first game that we could win it all. Whether we did or not was left up to the kids. A lot of times in tournaments, that first game is the hardest. After that, we saw all the other teams and felt we could do some things to Tonganoxie and get to the finals, and we felt good about our chances there, too."

Mulvane Mayor Jim Ford will introduce a proclamation at the next Mulvane City Council meeting Monday night, March 19, proclaiming a "Wildcat Week" in honor of the team's state championship.

The proclamation reads: "Whereby, on the 10th day of March, 1984, the Mulvane High School varsity basketball team attained the Kansas State Class 4A Championship and, whereas, by their ability and sportsmanship, they have brought respect and recognition to themselves, their school and their community, on behalf of, and for, the citizens of Mulvane, I do hereby proclaim the week of 19 through 25 March, 1984, as 'Wildcat Week.'" The proclamation goes on to list every member of the tournament team, the coaches and staff.



Coach Charlie Mason holds the 4A championship trophy on high as the Wildcats celebrate their victory in the background

We're No. 1

Wildcats Ride Green Wave To 4A State Crown

SALINA--Pom poms of the green and white variety flew in the air, a great sea of green waved back and forth, Wildcats hopped around in the thunderous limelight and senior Mike Rayl fumbled nervously with the nets trying to figure out which end went over his head.

Heck, you would have thought Mulvane's Wildcats had just won the state basketball champion or something. A tidal wave of emotion swept over Mulvane High School boys basketball players as the seconds ticked down Saturday night, March 10, in the championship game of the Class 4A State Tournament at the Bicentennial Center.

And when the gun finally sounded, no one questioned who really was No. 1. Coach Charlie Mason's Wildcats, the Mean Green Machine from Mulvane, had just manhandled Topeka Hayden by a 64-50 count to capture the Class 4A state championship.

The Cats ended their illustrious season with a 24-2 record and the words "State Champ" beside their names. Seeded second behind undefeated Concordia going into the shootout at Salina, the Wildcats opened their run to glory by rallying for a 65-60 decision over Nickerson in the first round, then toyed with Tonganoxie, 57-34, to reach the championship final against Hayden.



The Topeka team came in with back-to-back Class 4A state championships but in no way were the Hayden Wildcats playing the same game as Mulvane.

"It's a dream come true," rejoiced MHS coach Mason two days after the triumph. "I've talked to a lot of coaches in the last few days who have been in the business a lot longer than me and some have never made it to the top. Some haven't even gone to the state tournament. We got a chance to go and made the most of it."

"It's just a fantastic feeling. I really don't think it has set in yet," added Mason, who has made his 5th season at the Wildcat helm the school's best ever. This was the first Mulvane team to win the state basketball title and the first to rack up 24 victories in one season, 17 of them coming in a row at the end of the season.

The proud coach has reason to bust his buttons after the Wildcats, never rated No. 1 in most state-wide polls all season, made short work of the state tournament, winning by an average of 14 points a game.

"Defensively, we kept everybody so off-balance," said Mason. "We zoned, then the next time we were in a man, then into a full court press, then into a half-court press. They never could get set up. Only one time in the whole tournament were the kids ever in the wrong defense."

If the state meet swing, Mulvane gave up an average of only 48 points.

The senior guard Kevin Bell led the tournament in scoring but what's more important is his overall play was outstanding. He had six steals against Hayden, four against the Chieftains from Tonganoxie and three against Nickerson.

Junior frontliner Lonny Travis also had himself a tournament. After a slow start

against the Panthers, Travis displayed the talents which should make him an outstanding college prospect, scoring 24 points in the championship victory.

Reserve Aaron Huslig came off the bench with some superlative inside play both on offense and defense, averaging more than seven points a game.

Smooth-as-silk guard David Belew, also a junior, keyed the Cat transition game like never before and sparked all three games. Senior starters Todd Travis and J.C. Shook also stood above the crowd, especially inside on the boards and on the Cat pressure defenses.

In the 14-point blitz of Hayden, a team that had posted back-to-back one-point victories in its first two games, Mulvane packed its 2-3 zone defense inside the paint and dared the Hayden Cats to score from outside. Hayden didn't.

"We collapsed to the inside because we watched them in earlier games and felt they had only one scorer," said Mason. "We wanted to make them beat us from the outside."

Mulvane quickly jettied out to a 6-0 lead before Hayden, which had topped No. 1 seeded and unbeaten Concordia in a first-round game, finally scored with 4:32 left in the first quarter.

Early in the second quarter, two free throws by Lonny Travis and one by Huslig, plus a bucket by L. Travis on Huslig's miss gave Mulvane a 16-6 lead and Cat fans started to sense something big was in the making.

Hayden closed the gap to 24-22 with 1:46 left in the half before two T. Travis free throws, two more by Huslig and a bucket at the gun by L. Travis gave the Wildcats another spur and a 30-22 halftime cushion.

The Topeka team narrowed the edge to 48-40 with 4:40 left in the game but Belew made a steal at midcourt and turned it into a three-point play and seconds later, L. Travis grabbed an

offensive board and shot it in for a 53-40 lead which never melted. Lonny topped the scorers with 24 points with Bell tossing in 14 points and Belew having 13.

Mulvane 57, Tonganoxie 34

A huge second-quarter swing lifted Mulvane to a 30-17 halftime lead and it was all downhill after that. Mulvane took a 16-13 lead after one period but a quick bucket made the score 16-15 early in the period. After that, Mulvane reeled off 14 points while Tonganoxie scored two. Belew hit off a drive, Bell followed with a jumper and L. Travis stole the ball and put it in. Another fast break bucket by Belew capped the mini-run of unanswered points.

Another dry spell early in the fourth quarter ended all hopes the Chieftains had of winning.

A free throw by Tonganoxie made it a 12-point game, 42-30, with 7:40 left in the game. Belew got an offensive board and scored. Bell threw in two free throws, Huslig followed with a pair of freebies, L. Travis returned a rebound for two and T. Travis converted two free throws for a 52-32 lead, all in the next three and one-half minutes.

The senior Bell scored a game-high 18 points, and L. Travis and Belew were in double figures, too, with 12 and 10 points, respectively. Huslig again scored eight off the bench and T. Travis also scored eight.

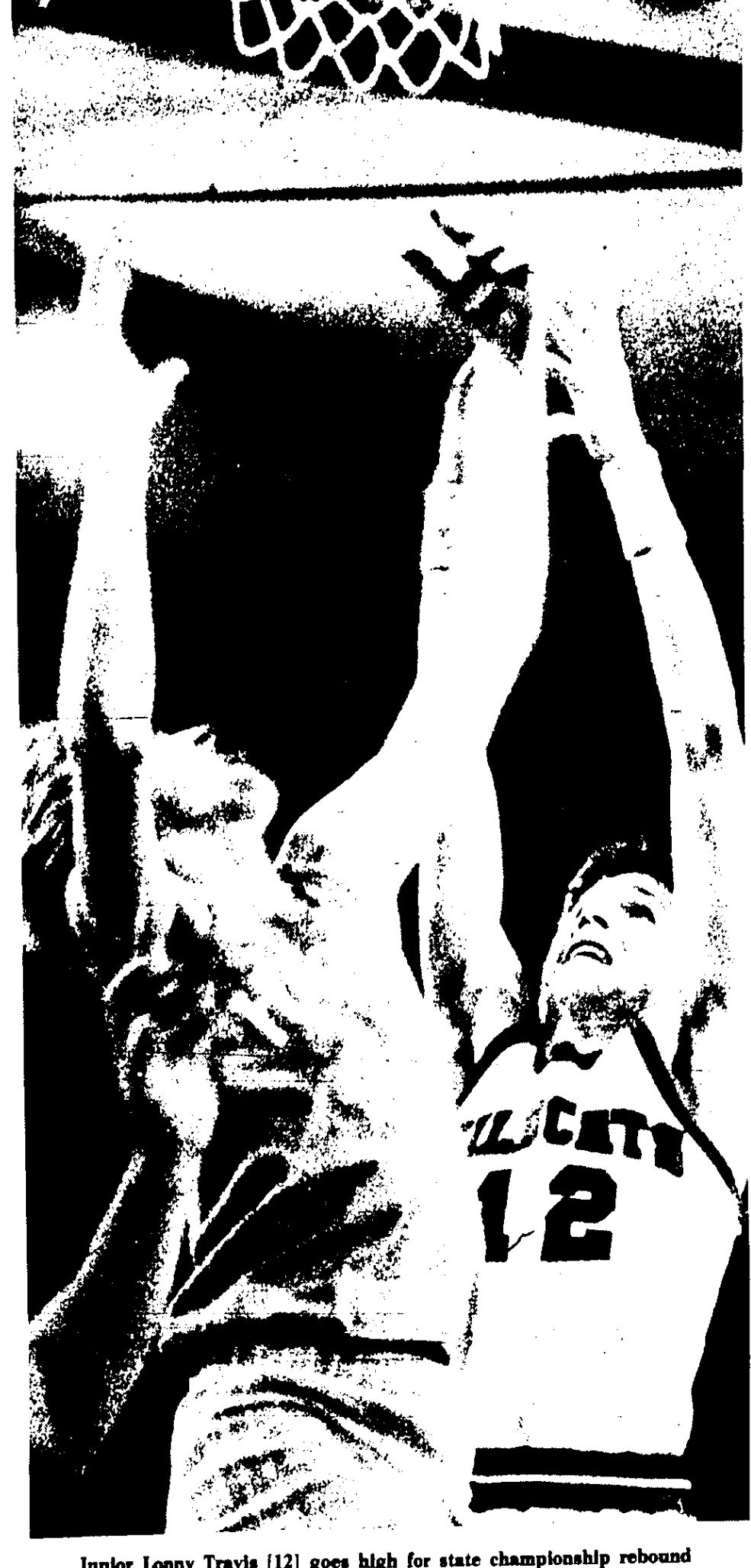
Mulvane 65, Nickerson 60

Nickerson shot a torrid in the opening half, taking a surprising 39-32 lead at intermission but the Cats responded in the first 2:40 of the 3rd quarter with three buckets by Kevin Bell and one each by L. Travis and T. Travis before the Panthers finally broke into the scoring column in the second half with 4:19 left in the third period.

It was still a one-point game with the lead swinging back and forth until the final 1:21 when the Cats made their charge with the help of two missed free throws by Nickerson's Ray Norman, who hit only one of four in the final three minutes of the game. L. Travis made one and missed the second free throw but Mulvane retained possession and Belew popped a fielder at the head of the key, giving the Cats a 61-60 lead. L. Travis then made both ends of a one-and-one for a 63-60 lead with :58 seconds left and T. Travis iced the game following a Nickerson turnover when he retrieved a rebound and banked in a shot with :32 left, giving the Cats a

65-60 advantage as Nickerson failed to score in the final 2:30 of the game. Belew finished with 21 points and Bell

scored 16. L. Travis and T. Travis had 10 each and reserve Aaron Huslig dumped in eight.



Junior Lonny Travis (12) goes high for state championship rebound

CLASS 4A BOYS STATE BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT AT SALINA BICENTENNIAL CENTER

Championship

Mulvane	6	18	10	18-50
Nickerson	11	19	9	25-64

Semifinals

Mulvane	13	4	12	57-34
Nickerson	18	14	12	15-57

First Round

Nickerson	18	21	10	11-40
Mulvane	18	14	16	17-65

Consolation

Nickerson	18	21	10	11-40
Mulvane	18	14	16	17-65

Tournament Notebook

Cats 1-2-4 In Tourney Scoring; Salina A Homecoming For Coaches

SALINA--Mulvane's boys basketball team did in fact end up being both the best--and best dressed--team in the Class 4A State Championship here at the Bicentennial Center.

Coach Charlie Mason's Wildcats waltzed through the impressive Class 4A field and then could have easily blended into the ballroom in their sharp tuxedos worn for the occasion.

And what an occasion it was for the Mulvane faithful, who haven't had much to crow about in state-wide competition since the mid-1970's and the Cats' state championship volleyball team.

Some thought Mason was using the tuxedos as a conversation piece to get his club's mind off the pressures of a state tournament. Others thought the impeccably-decked out Cats would have the winner's edge in the psychology of basketball.

Heck, it was none of those, revealed Mason. "I've never been to state as a player or as a coach and I vowed that I would come in style when I did make it," said Mason, who polished off his 5th season as Cat head basketball coach Saturday night, March 10, by whipping Topeka Hayden for the Class 4A state championship. "And thanks to 'Wedding Specialists,' we came in style."

Each player had a tux of his own, as did the assistant coaches, Dennis Tegethoff and David Katzenmeyer, the ball boy, the student managers and the statistics crew.

And each had the color of his choice.

The 6-4 Huslig returned for the title game against Hayden and scored seven points.

Folks at Love's Mulvane IGA won't have to worry about where their next pack of chewing gum's going to come from. Jerry and Virginia Love, owners, were challenged by owners of the Berridge IGA in Nickerson prior to the first round game pitting the Wildcats against Nickerson.

On the line: chewing gum for the work force.

Well, the Wildcats, rocky in the opening game, rallied at the end for a 65-60 victory and in Monday morning's mail was chewing gum for the entire work force at Love's--all 20 people. Next time, Jerry might be a little smarter and go for a ham for each employee.

Mulvane's pep band also wrapped up a state championship over the weekend--unofficially any way. The Wildcat pep band played at all three games, making the trip between Mulvane and Salina each day.

Director Ted Powers had approximately 45 members playing in the band, so many that it took another Mulvane couple, John and Pat Williams, to help the band lug its instruments to Salina in the back of their truck.

The band sounded great and was voted the No. 1 pep band at the 4A State Meet...the poll was conducted by the Mulvane News, which took a survey vote from anyone dressed in green.

Speaking of green, you would have thought part of the Salina Bicentennial Center was growing with all the green in the stands Saturday night.

It was inspiring to see the backing that the state champs got. There were approximately 1,500 Mulvane residents in the stands for the championship game.



Wildcats ARE No. 1

Late in a tight game against the eventual state champs from Andale, Kinningsham was whistled for a technical. Kinningsham leaped off the bench after what he felt like was a terrible call against his Braves and walked toward the official on the court. When the official turned to face him, Kinningsham did a perfect about-face and marched off the court, yanking his suit jacket off as he was going. He then fired a fastball at the Brave bench with his jacket.

Mulvane actually dominated its class. The Cats finished the three-game run with three of the tourney's top four scorers. Kevin Bell was the state meet's No. 1 scorer with 48 points. The Wildcat senior had an outstanding tournament and if a "Most Valuable Player" were named, he would have been a shoo-in because of the consistency he displayed on offense and his defensive wizardry.

Junior Lonny Travis, after a slow start, came on to finish second with 46 points. Topeka Hayden's Gary Fangmann was third with 45 points and Mulvane guard David Belew, who was his usual flashy self, was fourth with 44 points.

Mulvane's domination is no more clear than in its game against Tonganoxie in a semifinal outing. The Cats won easily, 57-34.

The Chieftains were 19-7 this year and their losses were to Bonner Springs (by 6 points), Immaculata (1 point), DeSoto (1), Washburn Rural in the first game of the year and Bashor (3). Tonganoxie also got hammered in the third place game by Colby.

The 4A state tournament was like a homecoming for the Cat coaching staff. Head Coach Mason went to Kansas Wesleyan, which is located in Salina, and played some ball for Wesleyan. Charlie's wife, Kathy, comes from Salina, her parents, John and Dorothy Williams still live there. And Dennis Tegethoff, the MHS assistant coach, is a grad of Marymount in Salina, class of 1982.

Mason refused to tell when he graduated but it reportedly was back in the days of the two-handed set shot.

Back in 1965, the Wildcats went to Hutchinson for the Class 4A state tournament. Until this year, that was the last Mulvane appearance in the big time. One of those Mulvane players was Steve Carmichael, who was a junior that year. Steve remembers that trip very well. The Cats were bussed from the state field in the first round by Larned, and one of the Larned players was John Zook, who went onto the University of

Kansas and played professional football for a number of years.

"I got 19 (points) and he got 14," recalled Carmichael. "I got double-figure boards and he got seven or eight--I shut him off pretty good. But he got to play pro football and I didn't."

Carmichael said the thing he remembers most about that visit to Hutch was the disappointment. "I remember vividly the disappointment of losing," noted Carmichael. "I don't like to lose. And as I look back on it, I think another thing I remember is the pride of being there, too."

Other members of that squad were Steve, Roney, Bruce Kimble, Dallas Johns, Frank Cobb, Steve Iverson, Richard Dame, Mickey Davey, Greg Farber, Gordon Long and Jerry Richardson. The coach was Teddy Webster. Several members were in the crowd Saturday night.

While most of the "Green Wave" was making its two-hour way to the state tournament in Salina in cars, busses or vans, there were a few Wildcat backers who were smarter than the rest. They flew...those lucky ducks!

A local pilot, Paul Thomas, and his co-pilot, Jim Kincald, flew a group of Wildcat fans to the game in his Lear. The group consisted of local businessmen Wes Wenzel, Frank Carson III, Gary Branine and Doug Starkweather, local businessmen Shirley Pickering and Marry Morris and two sons of the group, James Starkweather and Brent Wenzel.

They flew up to the semifinal game Friday night. I don't care, that flying isn't all it's cracked up to be. It's not a bowl of cherries. It took the group only 15 minutes to fly from Ryan Aviation to Salina and the poor suckers didn't even have time to finish their Cokes.

This year's state championship team had connections with previous state tournament teams from Mulvane. Todd and Lonny Travis have an uncle who played on the state meet team, Matthew Helder, in 1947. The uncle, David Miller, was a senior on that

Wildcat squad and later married Patsy Travis, a Cat cheerleader. The Millens now live in Claremore, Okla. The 1947 Mulvane team lost in the second round to Goff.

An interesting footnote to that game was that Darrell had called Mulvane restaurateur owner Pat Hurd after the first-round victory and told Hurd that i sure would bring him luck if his mother Grace Millen, would be at the game. Grace was confined to a wheelchair and couldn't get to Hutchinson. Hurd showed up for the Goff game with Mrs. Millen but it didn't bring Darrell and his team much luck as Goff nipped the Cat by one point.

Darrell and Patsy still have a daughter (Traci Lowrance) and grandchildren (Toni and Cory Lowrance) living in Mulvane.

Mulvane area farmer Forrest Butts has a record which might never be topped while attending Mulvane High School. Butts played on two state tournament teams and was a freshman in 1947 when the Wildcats went to the state meet.

As a senior, Butts keyed the Wildcat into the state tourney at Hutchinson: only to lose out in the first round. The year before, the Wildcats were beaten by two points by Clearwater in the regional championship game, and Clearwater then went on to win the state championship.

During Butts' sophomore year, the Wildcats advanced to the state tourney but lost in the first round.

Mulvane also had the distinction of having an official from the community calling games in state tournament play. Rod Spatz of Mulvane was one of 21 men in stripes for the Class 4A State Tournament at Salina. Officials are chosen for post-game play by voting by the coaches on the better officials in their area.

Andale made it an all-Chieftain Tri League sweep by rolling to a championship in the Class 4A GHS State Tournament at Salina. The Andale girls nipped Concordia for the state title, 67-64.