

Boys Struggle On Offense

It's not the way John Darrow wanted to start the John Darrow years in Mulvane. He would have rather walked on a bed of hot coals to prove himself than what he's having to do now.

The first three games at the Mulvane High School boys basketball helm, though, have been, well, a lot like torture. That torture continued Tuesday night, Dec. 7, with a third straight beating as Rose Hill romped past the Wildcat boys, 54-7, in the second round of the Douglass Early Season Tournament.

The Cats started the season at Goddard Friday night, Dec. 3, and scored 25 points as the Lions roared to a 71-25 victory. Mulvane went into the Douglass tourney Monday night and it was slightly better, the host Bulldogs steaming past the punch-less Cats, 57-24.

Needless to say, offense is hard to come by. "We're having problems executing on offense, there's no question about that," admitted Darrow. "The guys are not on the same page. We have four guys on one page and one on another. Consequently, we're not able to score any points."

Tuesday night's loss left the MHS offense gasping for air. "We didn't execute at all," said Darrow. "They trapped us and we turned the ball over. We couldn't get anything going at all on offense. We had 19 turnovers by halftime and many more in the second half. The half-court trap is something we should have been familiar with but the kids didn't make the adjustments."

In the where-do-we-go-from-here department, Darrow said the Wildcats are headed for the drawing board. "We need to go back to the basics and find a way to come together as a team and learn from the last three ball games," said Darrow. "The trouble is we only have one practice to get ready to play another game. All I can say is that our guards have a long way to go."

Troy Johnson led the Mulvane scoring with four points and Jason Wilson scored two. Senior Jared Rice had the only other point.

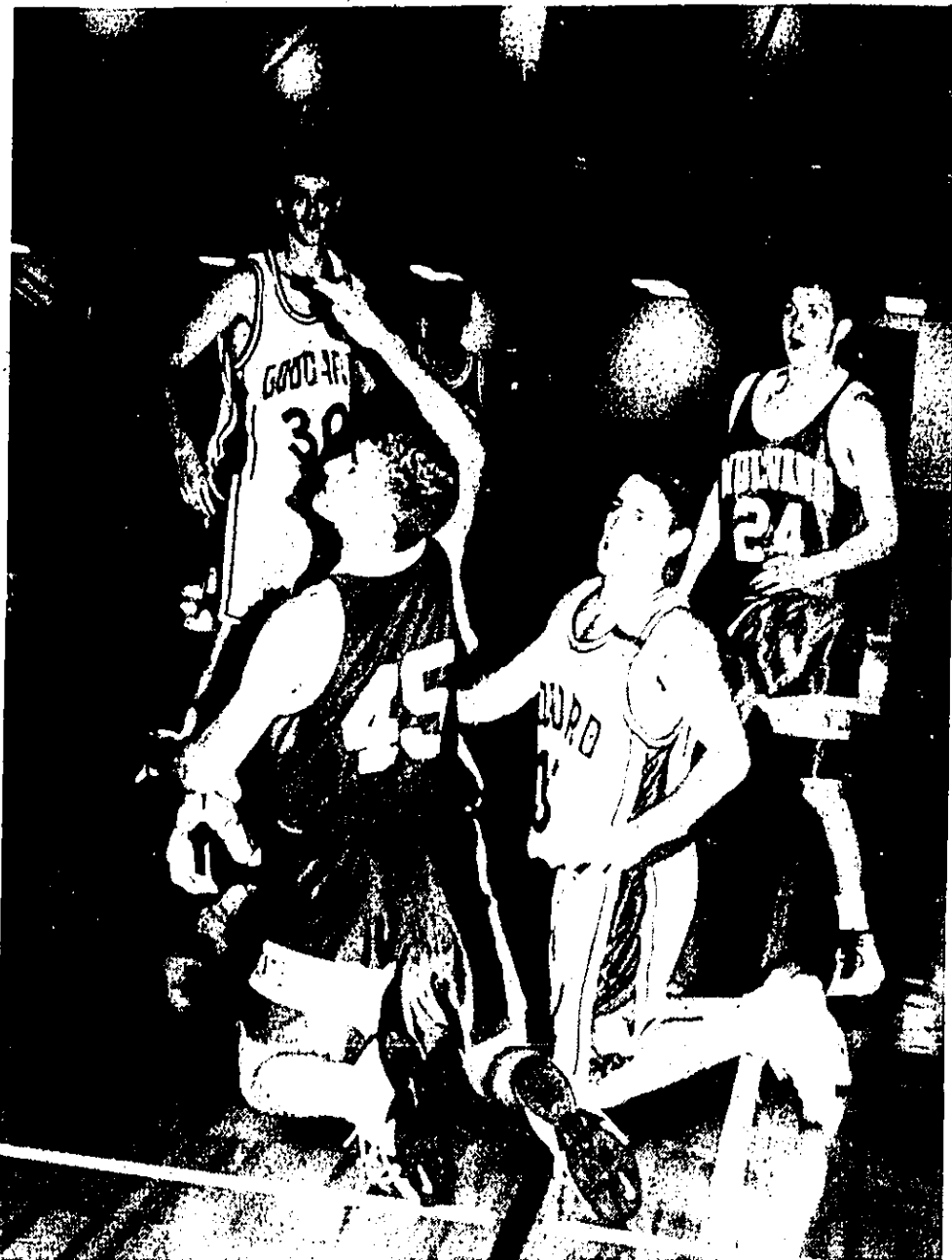
Darrow had hoped to draw things together at Douglass Monday night, Dec. 6, but the hosts had different ideas, using the same tactics Goddard did three nights earlier. Douglass pressured the Cats all over the place and scooped up the dividends. "Douglass ran a run-and-jump type defense and pressured us all over the court, which caused a lot of turnovers," said Darrow. "We just need to become a better team and play more team ball, hitting the guy who is open, and that would relieve a lot of the pressure. We're still looking for a couple of guys to step up. We just haven't had anybody do it yet."

The Bulldogs stretched out to an 18-9 lead after one quarter, then blew the game open

behind a 23-point spurt to take a 41-17 lead by intermission. "They hit some three-pointers in the second quarter and that dug us into a 24-point hole by halftime," said Darrow. "We never could dig ourselves out of it."

Darrow had high hopes coming into the season but those hopes took a hit two weeks ago when his only returning starter, Jesse Marksberry, ran into legal difficulties and hasn't been back to school.

"Experience sure is a big problem," admitted Darrow. "Varsity basketball is a step or two faster than JV ball and when you bring kids in with little experience, it takes a while to mesh. Obviously, we haven't yet. I've been happy with the kids responding to me and wanting to learn what they are doing wrong. They want to get better. I can turn around and look at the kids on the bench and they all are wanting to go in. That's exciting to me because I know they want to get better. And we're going to get better."



Mulvane's Jared Rice (45) hustles to the ground during a scramble for the ball at Goddard

Against the Bulldogs, Mulvane showed some signs of rebounding better with senior Jared Rice and juniors Andy Hixson and Ryan McKnight. "And our post play looks like it could be fairly productive if we could get the ball into them," said Darrow.

In the tournament's first round, the Cats didn't have anybody in double figures but Hixson and junior guard Jason Wilson led the way with six points each. McKnight scored four points.

The season opener at Goddard was a nightmare. The Lions were quicker and pressured Mulvane's guards into mistakes. By halftime, the Cats were out of the game with Goddard holding a 54-15 lead. It was more of the same in the third quarter when the Lions quickness and pressing defense taking the Cats completely out of their offense.

McKnight scored six points, Nick Pope had five and Rice finished with four. Both Chris Brannon and Wilson had three points for Mulvane.

Douglass Early Season Boys Basketball Tournament

SECOND ROUND

Rose Hill	12	17	12	13	54
Mulvane	3	0	2	2	7
Rose Hill—Chris Schneider 19, Todd Brittingham 11, David Dickerson 2, Phil Harden 2, Joe Chandler 6, Ryan Daugherty 10, Nick Kerr 2, D.W. Sutz 2, FG 22 (2), FT 8-12, F 11.					
Mulvane—Troy Johnson 4, Jared Rice 1, Ryan McKnight 0, Andy Hixson 0, Jason Wilson 2, FG 3 (0), FT 1-5, F 15.					

Douglass boys 74, Oxford boys 58

FIRST ROUND

Douglass	18	23	10	6	57
Mulvane	9	8	5	2	24
Douglass—Brandon Ford 15, Joe Rush 7, Josh Reed 23, Chad Bamster 2, Chad Beisel 4, Ryan O'Donnell 6, FG 24 (5), FT 12-16, F 11.					
Mulvane—Jared Rice 2, Andy Hixson 6, Ryan McKnight 4, Chris Gerhardt 2, Brian Love 2, Jason Wilson 6, Nick Pope 2, FG 10 (1), FT 3-4, F 16.					

Rose Hill boys 50, Oxford boys 48 (OT)

Varsity Boys

Mulvane	11	4	3	7	25
Goddard	26	28	10	7	71
Mulvane—Ryan McKnight 6, Nick Pope 5, Jared Rice 4, Troy Johnson 2, Andy Hixson 2, Chris Brannon 3, Jason Wilson 3, FG 11 (2), FT 1-5, F.					
Goddard—Jesus Bruno 12, Tyler Better 11, Trevor Askew 9, Jeff Buchanan 12, Dayhuff 4, Sullivan 9, Sandall 9, Richards 5, FG 30 (7), FT 4-5, F.					

Junior Varsity Boys

Mulvane	2	10	2	2	16
Goddard	27	17	1	11	56
Goddard—Markham 9, Frey 8, Brown 3, Dietz 5, Page 7, Quattlebaum 10, Hosey 3, Riggan 2, Richards 8, FG 25 (5), FT 5-8, F 7.					