

Past 'Haunts'

Young Cats

It was the classic experience vs. inexperience match-up and as usual, experience rose to the top late in the game.

Mulvane High School's boys basketballers opened their season Friday night, Dec. 6, with five new starters--and no lettermen--and paid the price for two years of top-notch success as Andale toppled the Cats, 56-50, in a non-league game in Mulvane.

The loss snapped a 20-game home winning streak for the Wildcats dating back to the 1982-83 season when Wellington clipped the Cats by two.

In the junior varsity game, the Wildcats hung on after a big first half to down the Indians, 70-61.

"You have to look at what we put on the floor, virtually no varsity experience, and the difference, I felt, was their experience," said MHS coach Charlie Mason. "They returned four starters. We made some inexperienced mistakes and it cost us. Overall, though, I thought we did a real good job getting back in the ball game."

The Indians, coming off a 1-20 season, rolled out to a 14-point lead early in the third quarter. They out-scored Mulvane, 14-6, in the second quarter to attain much of that edge before Mulvane closed the gap to 45-44 early in the fourth quarter. Andale's own inability at the free throw line strangely kept Mulvane in the ball game as the Indians managed only 20 of 41 at the stripe.

"It seemed every time we came back, they went to the free throw line," stressed Mason. "I don't care who it is, you can't give a team 41 free throws. It's just good for us that they didn't shoot 50%."

One of the early-season tasks for Mason is trying to find the right combination of five players who jell. The Cat chief played 11 players Friday but still isn't ready to settle down with only five. "We intend to play a lot of people looking for the right combination," said Mason. "Reese Brown came in and did a real good job for his first ball game. And Curtis Hicks and Bryson Butts came in and played well for us right at the end of the game. The kids played hard and didn't quit. If we could have gotten a couple of breaks at the end of the game, we would have been in good shape."

Starter Todd Fox had a good night, especially in the first quarter when his shooting kept the Cats in the lead. The slender junior finished with a game-high 15 point and was the only Cat in double figures. Junior Morgan LeClair scored nine points and the reserve Butts had six, as did Brown off the bench. Andrew Swayne, another starter,

Varsity Boys

Andale	15 14 12 15-56
Mulvane	16 8 14 14-50

Andale—Bill Nilles 13, Steve Winter 3, Greg Smarsh 13, David Blasl 3, Gregg Doll 8, Chad Marx 12, Phil Thunberg 2, Alan Williams 2. FG 18-55, FT 20-41, F 17.

Mulvane—Morgan LeClair 9, Andrew Swayne 5, Todd Fox 15, Jeff Williams 2, Nick Fortin 3, Bryson Butts 6, Curtis Hicks 4, Reese Brown 6. FG 20-52, FT 10-17, F 25.

Junior Varsity Boys

Andale	15 15 14 17-61
Mulvane	21 19 18 14-70

Andale—Jamie Lee 2, Gavin Seller 16, Phil Thunberg 10, Scott Mannebach 14, Dave Winter 1, Jason Grimm 14, Steve Kinder 1, Eric Swenson 1. FG 24-55, FT 11-26, F 25.

Mulvane—Ken Baer 4, Bryson Butts 9, Lyle Graybeal 4, Curtis Hicks 6, Kyle Steadman 12, Toby Butcher 9, Shay Cornejo 16, Dan LeClair 9, Justin Moses 1. FG 27-65, FT 16-28, F 22.

finished with five.

LeClair did have 14 rebounds to pace the Cats to 35 rebounds. It was shooting, however, that concerned Mason. "We only hit 38% (20 of 52)," said Mason. "I felt like we had better shooters than that. We had been shooting better in practice, but in a game and in a practice are two different things."

The jayvee Wildcats built up a 21-15 lead in the first quarter, then made it 40-30 by intermission to make it easy for Andale's junior varsity. Kyle Steadman scored 12 points and sophomore Shay Cornejo had 16 for the MHS jayvees.