

Mulvane Boys Make It Two In Row

Two-out-of-three is a pretty good batting average and the same is true in basketball.

Mulvane High School basketball coach Todd Barker was glad to see his Wildcat cagers bounce back after a disastrous opener, shooting for "gold" for the second straight year in the three-day Mulvane Tip-Off Classic at the Mulvane High School gym.

The Cats rebounded from a 38-point thrashing at the hands of Goddard in the season opener by rallying from behind in the second half Thursday night, Dec. 10, to top

Oxford. The Cat boys then slipped past Rose Hill, 47-43, Friday night, Dec. 11, despite making only nine field goals. In the final game against Douglass Saturday night, Dec. 12, the Bulldogs used a first-half blitz to dump the host Wildcats, 79-59, but the Cats won the tournament championship anyway. Last year, Mulvane swept through with a 3-0 record.

"I felt we played pretty good basketball in the first two games but we put ourselves in such a deep hole that we couldn't climb out."

Both Mulvane and Douglass entered the finale ready to fight. The Cats were 2-0 and Douglass was 0-2 after losing a two-point game on opening night to Rose Hill, but it was no contest after the Bulldogs raced ahead, 22-8, after one quarter and by half-time, Douglass held a 49-29 lead.

"Going into the tournament, we felt like we could win it again," said Barker. "And we were doing what it took to do that until the Douglass game. They just took it to us on the boards in the first half, especially. They had more offensive boards than we had defensive rebounds in the first half and that led to a lot of excellent shots. We never could recover from being down by 20."

Mulvane made a slight run at the Bulldogs in the third quarter, pulling back to within 11, but the Bulldogs got things going again and pulled away. "At halftime we talked about some of the things we weren't doing right and we challenged the kids," said Barker. "We got back in the game, but I think we just ran out of gas and ran into some major foul trouble."

Just like the Cats had done a night earlier against Rose Hill, Douglass had a field day in the free throwing department. The Bulldogs hit 20 of 31 from the stripe while Mulvane made only four of nine. "That was one of the big differences in the game," admitted Barker. "We can beat Douglass, but not playing the way we did. In the second half, we urged the kids to play harder and block out and be a little more patient with our offense. We also played a little tougher defensively, but they had a little size in the 6-5 Reed kid and he'd get posted up. When they missed a shot, he got the rebound and put it back in."

Barker said he liked the offensive spark he saw in the tournament, unlike what he saw in the season opener. "I thought we just settled down a little more and got relaxed," said the Cat coach. "That seemed to help our offense. Our game against Goddard was just a big adjustment for four of our five kids and I think it was just too much for them right now."

Wildcat junior Jesse Marksberry, the lone returning Cat veteran, dumped in 14 points against Douglass and guard Nick Pope scored a career-high 13 points to spark the Wildcat offense, which included good, balanced scoring from nine different players. Seniors Randy Johnson and Jake Wilkinson had eight points each and Garrett Hennes, Brian Dinkel and sophomore Ryan McKnight hit for four points apiece.

The Wildcats had a thrilling contest against Rose Hill, another Chisholm Trail League team. And the Cats used a page out of Douglass' book by winning it at the free throw line. Mulvane hit 27 of 42 free shots, which wiped out a RH advantage from the field. The Rockets hit 17 field goals to Mulvane's nine. However, the Rockets made only eight of 13 at the stripe.

Marksberry again was the big gun for the Cats, scoring a game-high 17 points. Pope finished with nine points and both Johnson and Brian McCoplin dished out six points.

"Our shooting was atrocious against Rose Hill," complained Barker. "If we hadn't made so many free throws, they would have smoked us. I would have never believed we could shoot 23% (from the field) and win, which is what we did. They came out aggressively at the guard spots and were all over us. That could have been why our shooting was off. We went to the line so much, we never got into any rhythm."

The Cats fell behind by five early, then came back with eight unanswered points to lead after one, 10-7. By halftime, they were up by five and the Wildcats made it a 37-27 game heading into the fourth quarter.

"They never got closer than four points and Rose Hill finally got into foul trouble with their big kid, Rhett Hansen, and that kind of slowed them down," said Barker.

The Cats could have played some of their best ball in the opener against Oxford. The Wildcats put everything together in the last two frames after slipping behind, 27-20, by intermission. Mulvane out scored the Oxford Wildcats, 42-28, in the second half.

"In the second half, they started playing a 1-2-2 zone and it was open in the middle," said Barker, whose Cats squared their record at 2-2 for the season. "We just started rolling Marksberry in the paint and they let him shoot. He got on a roll and hit them."

Going into the Oxford game, Barker was kind of concerned. After all, Oxford went 13-8 a year ago and lost only two players. "They just didn't adjust to Marksberry moving into the middle, so we kept doing it," added Barker.

The MHS Cats also out-horsed Oxford on the boards with Johnson and Wilkinson getting some boards along with McKnight when he was in there and Marksberry.

The Wildcats will play their final game of 1998 at home Friday night, Dec. 18, when Chaparral comes to town for the first Chisholm Trail League game. The Roadrunners are 1-3 so far this season. The game will mark the fifth consecutive home game starting the campaign for the 1998-99 Wildcats.

Chisholm Trail League Boys Basketball Standings

DIVISION II

Team	LEAGUE		OVERALL	
	W	L	W	L
Circle	0	0	3	1
Kingman	0	0	2	2
Mulvane	0	0	2	2
Chaparral	0	0	2	2
Rose Hill	0	0	2	3
Andale	0	0	2	3
Clearwater	0	0	0	3

DIVISION I

Goddard	0	0	2	0
Buhler	0	0	3	1
Andover	0	0	2	1
Maize	0	0	1	1
Augusta	0	0	2	1
Valley Center	0	0	1	3
Wellington	0	0	0	4

Games Friday, Dec. 18

Chaparral at Mulvane
Circle at Rose Hill
Clearwater at Andale
Augusta at Wellington
Andover at Buhler
Valley Center at Maize
Winfield at Goddard

Games Saturday, Dec. 19

Maize at Wichita East

Games Tuesday, Dec. 22

Goddard at Campus

Mulvane Boys Varsity Tip-Off Classic

THIRD ROUND

Douglass	22	27	13	17	79
Mulvane	8	21	16	14	59
Douglass—Brandon Ford 7, Logan Banister 7, Joe Rush 27, Aaron Overbey 9, Josh Reed 21, Justin Dillner 2, Brant Barnes 2, Jeff Jackson 2, Lance O'Donnell 2. FG 27 (5), FT 20-31, F 15.					
Mulvane—Garrett Hennes 4, Nick Pope 13, Brian McCoplin 2, Randy Johnson 8, Jesse Marksberry 14, Brian Dinkel 4, Jake Wilkinson 8, Ryan McKnight 4, Dan MacKay 2. FG 26 (3), FT 4-9, F 25.					

Rose Hill 65, Oxford 58

SECOND ROUND

Rose Hill	7	12	8	16	43
Mulvane	10	14	13	10	47
Rose Hill—John Rodgers 2, Spencer Holland 6, Phil Harden 6, Nick Kerr 2, Rhett Hansen 8, Chns Schneider 5, Brenden Taylor 6, Ryan Daugherty 2, Joe Chandler 4. FG 17 (1), FT 8-13, F 15.					
Mulvane—Brian McCoplin 6, Randy Johnson 6, Jake Wilkinson 4, Brian Dinkel 2, Nick Pope 9, Jesse Marksberry 17, Ryan McKnight 3. FG 9 (2), FT 27-42, F 15.					

Oxford 54, Douglass 50

FIRST ROUND

Mulvane	14	6	19	23	62
Oxford	12	15	13	15	55
Mulvane—Jesse Marksberry 23, Jake Wilkinson 2, Ryan McKnight 6, Garrett Hennes 4, Randy Johnson 15, Brian Dinkel 3, Nick Pope 5, Brian McCoplin 3. FG 24 (2), FT 12-20, F 15.					
Oxford—Danny Morris 4, Brian Hamilton 22, Benji Weber 2, Josh Wheeler 21, Ross Bartelton 2, Jeremy White 2, Kevin Sawyer 2. FG 23 (2), FT 7-11, F 15.					

Rose Hill 60, Douglass 58