

Boys On Short End

The key words to hang onto are "getting" and "better" as in making progress.

Mulvane High School boys basketball coach Todd Barker never would have dreamed his Wildcats would start the season 0-3 but believe it.

Mulvane finished last in the eight-team Circle Thunderbird Boys Classic Saturday afternoon, Dec. 14, as they let a lead slip away in the last quarter as Goddard rallied for a 75-71 victory. In a semifinal match-up against Arkansas City Thursday, Dec. 12, Ark City held off the charging Cats, 89-79. Mulvane had opened the tournament and their season Monday night, Dec. 9, by getting blasted by Chanute, 95-50.

"We're getting better," emphasized Barker, trying to lead the Wildcats to improvement from last year's 10-11 record. "We still have some thing to work on but from each game, I can see improvement. The Ark City ball game, you take away the first quarter and we played them even. In the Goddard game, we out-performed them in every way but free throws killed us. They shot 29 of them (making 21) and we shot only 10. It was a pretty physical game but we didn't get the calls I thought we should have gotten."

Barker isn't pushing the panic button because he sees the improvement each game. "Offensively, we're on track," pointed out the second-year coach Barker. "And on defense, we have started to pick up where we need to be. We still have too many blown defensive assignments, but it's getting better. And we also have knocked down our turnovers."

All that didn't matter against both teams. Both Goddard and Ark City shot the lights out against the Wildcats. Goddard hit 52% from the field and 29% from three-point land and Ark City blistered the cords for 63% from the field and 33% from beyond the three-point line.

"I don't think that means we didn't play defense, I think those two teams were just hot," said Barker. "We improved each part of our game and I felt good about that. If you keep improving, things will fall into place."

Against Goddard, Mulvane was right there most of the way despite the difference in the free throw line. "It was a game of spurts and they got their last one last," said Barker. "We were up on them by seven in the third quarter but they had two real good shooters who started hitting the three real well. That enabled them to get the lead in the 4th quarter and we had to foul as they were trying to slow the game down. They shot 11 free throws in the last quarter and made eight of them."

That enabled the Lions to rally, out-scoring MHS, 27-18, in the last eight minutes. Mulvane got within a point several times in

Circle Thunderbird Classic Boys Results

SEVENTH PLACE

Goddard	19	17	12	27-75
Mulvane	18	18	17	18-71
Goddard—Donnie Wallace 30, Josh Bell 27, Zac Brazill 2, Jared Friesen 4, Josh Fairbank 3, Matt Tylski 1, Jeff Buchanan 8. FG 23 (6) FT 21-29, F 15.				
Mulvane—Darrin Erbert 9, Chad Gerwick 12, Sean Holman 11, Dan McElroy 2, Raymond Lazier 8, Neil Gosch 15, Brad Canfield 11. FG 26 (10), FT 8-10, F 26.				

FIRST PLACE

Andover 58, Circle 43

THIRD PLACE

Chanute 74, Independence 62

FIFTH PLACE

Arkansas City 64, El Dorado 54

SEMIFINALS

Mulvane	17	19	16	27-79
Arkansas City	26	20	13	30-89
Mulvane—Raymond Lazier 16, Brad Canfield 22, Neil Gosch 2, Darrin Erbert 11, Bryce Schumacher 5, Chad Gerwick 9, Ryan Rogers 1, Greg Nunn 9, Dan McElroy 2, Sean Holman 2. FG 28 (8), FT 15-20, F 20.				
Arkansas City—Tyson Barnes 26, Jackie Barnett 17, Michael Morgan 9, Ricky Johnson 19, T.J. Howerton 4, Troy Gilmore 2, Dustin Littrell 7, Grant Gilmore 3, Chris Martin 2. FG 37 (7), FT 14-22, F 18.				

El Dorado 60, Goddard 53

Andover 77, Chanute 71 (OT)

Circle 72, Independence 47

the final three minutes but had two turnovers at critical times and Goddard converted their free tosses.

Senior Neil Gosch had one of his finest games, scoring a game-high 15 points. Juniors Chad Gerwick and Sean Holman scored 12 and 11 points, respectively, and big senior center Brad Canfield scored 11. Raymond Lazier had eight points, one behind junior guard Darrin Erbert, who scored nine.

In the Ark City battle, it was a one-point game after the first quarter when the Bulldogs burned things up by scoring 26 points to Mulvane's 17. "We seemed to come out a little intimidated against Ark City and it showed in that first quarter," said Barker. "We had quite a few turnovers (22) in the game and never could make up for that poor start. After the first quarter, we came out of it and matched them bucket-for-bucket."

Canfield had a career game for the Cats. The 6-7 center finished with a career-best 22 points and nine rebounds. "If we can get that kind of performance every game, we'll be tough," noted Barker. "People will have to play us honest."

Canfield had plenty of help, too, as Lazier scored 16 points, his all-time best, and Erbert joined the double-figure rolls with 11. Reserve Greg Nunn, a senior, and Gerwick had nine points each while Bryce Schumacher finished with five.

"We did find out we have some fighters," added Barker. "There were several times we could have rolled over and died, but we didn't. They kept fighting back and that's good. The Circle tournament has a lot of tough teams and we found out we can score with them. Once people start hitting everything in sight against us, we'll be okay."

The Cats play their final game of 1996 Friday night, Dec. 20, when they travel to Kingman.

Chisholm Trail League

Boys Standings

DIVISION II

Team	League		Overall	
	W	L	W	L
Circle	1	0	3	1
Andale	0	0	4	0
Rose Hill	0	0	3	1
Clearwater	0	0	2	1
Kingman	0	0	0	3
Chaparral	0	0	0	4
Mulvane	0	1	0	4

DIVISION I

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

Games Friday, Dec. 20

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