

Cats Win Thriller In 4 OTs



Count 'em. Four of those babies. And it took every one of the four overtime periods to provide the Mulvane High School boys basketballers with their first victory of the season Saturday afternoon, Dec. 19, in the Maize Boys Invitational.

The MHS boys hung tough through four overtime periods to clip Valley Center, 76-74, in the game for seventh place in the eight-team tournament. It was Mulvane's first win of the season after four losses, including a 69-61 loss to Pratt in the opening game of the tournament Thursday, Dec. 17, and a 69-64 loss to Wellington in a semifinal game. The tournament had been postponed from earlier in the week by snow.

"It was a hard-fought game, but what game have we played in that isn't," said Mulvane coach Charlie Mason. "We made it a lot harder than it should have been. If we could have made some free throws in the overtimes, it wouldn't have gone that far, but again, the four free throws (two each by Neal Hamilton and Shay Cornejo) in the last one put us up by five and won the game." Until those successful free throws, the Cats had gone six of 14 at the stripe.

It was a classic case of biting the hand that's been pinching you. Poor free throwing has been a problem this season for Mulvane but when Hamilton made two and Cornejo dropped in a pair in the final moments, it put Mulvane ahead, 76-71, and a three-point shot at the buzzer made no difference.

Earlier, Mulvane stayed alive against Valley Center, a team that had decked the Cats 72-63, in Mulvane when Sean Gillespie popped in a three-pointer to tie the game at 68s in the third overtime period.

"I think we made some progress each ball game," said Mason. "The thing is, if we could have made some free throws against Pratt, we would have been there (challenging) at the end. Against Wellington, we played our worst basketball of the year. We didn't have any legs, no enthusiasm. We found ourselves 16 points down, then had to spend the rest of the game getting back into the game.

"Still, it's the little things that are beating us but we did show a lot of character and determination to win against Valley Center. We had to win it. The loss won't hurt Valley but we were desperate. We needed it. If we wouldn't have won that game, I think we would have been devastated, and it took everybody doing their job to win it."

The Cats trailed most of the early part of the game before finally taking a lead mid-way in the fourth quarter. The Hornets took a 33-27 halftime lead before Mulvane turned things around in

the last half. "We made an adjustment offensively at halftime and it made a difference," said Mason. "We went away from our standard zone offense and looked to take the shot anytime it was there. Instead of running our screening offense against a zone, we just passed the ball around, rotating our post people inside and let our kids take the open shot. We're going to have to take advantage of the three-pointer because we have four people who can shoot it."

The Cats had four three-pointers against Valley Center.

"Hopefully, now that we've broken the barrier, we can go ahead and play some good basketball," added Mason. "It was a good win. Everybody had a part in it and that made it much better."

Cornejo finished with 27 points, his second straight 20-point-plus outing. Three other Wildcats, however, were in

twin figures. Junior Larry Lambrecht got rolling with 15 points and seniors Toby Butcher and Neal Hamilton scored 12 and 11 points, respectively. Russell Norden had six.

In the semifinal loss to the Crusaders, Cornejo dumped in 23 points to guide the way. Guard Hamilton added 18 points and Butcher and Norden were next with 10 and seven, respectively.

Mulvane opened slowly against Pratt, the No. 1 seeded team, and lost it in the last quarter when the Greenbacks out-scored MHS, 25-19. Butcher had his finest game of the season, blasting away for 27 points inside. Cornejo

scored 13 points and Gillespie, John Melick and Hamilton all chipped in with seven points each.

"We were just so hungry for the win, that can be a strong motivating factor," stressed the Mulvane chief. "The kids had been so close all season. We've played decent ball but the little things keep costing us. It's just the little things that separate you from being 4-1 instead of 1-4."

CHISHOLM TRAIL LEAGUE BOYS STANDINGS DIVISION I

Team	League			Overall
	W	L	W	
Buhlor	1	0	2	2
Andover	1	0	2	3
Valley Center	1	0	1	4
Wellington	0	0	2	3
Augusta	0	1	2	3
Mulvane	0	1	1	4
Goddard	0	1	0	5

DIVISION II

Maize	1	0	5	0
Rose Hill	1	0	2	3
Kingman	1	0	3	1
Clearwater	0	0	2	0
Circle	0	1	2	2
Chaparral	0	1	4	1
Andale	0	1	2	3

Includes games played through 12/19/87.

Games Scheduled Tuesday, Dec. 15

Mulvane at Augusta
Rose Hill at Kingman
Maize at Circle
Clearwater at Andale
Andover at Buhlor
Wellington at Goddard

MAIZE BOYS INVITATIONAL

Seventh Place

Valley Center 12 21 18 10 (3) (0) (4) (6)--74
Mulvane 11 16 20 14 (3) (0) (4) (8)--76
Valley Center--Chad Nitcher 22, Brett Warne 16,
Bobby Webber 13, Todd Adrian 10, Frank
Lesperance 9, Carl Franklin 4. FG 26 (3), FT 13-18,
F 21.

Mulvane--Larry Lambrecht 15, Shay Cornejo 27,
Toby Butcher 12, Neal Hamilton 11, Russell Norden
6, Sean Gillespie 5. FG 27 (4), FT 10-18, F 18.

Championship

Maize 64, Pratt 36

Third Place

Nickerson 49, Winfield 48

Consolation First

Wellington 61, Andale 54

Consolation First

Semifinals

Wellington 19 12 16 22--69
Mulvane 10 13 15 26--64

Wellington--Matt McIntire 19, Mickey Rusk 18,
Clint Whitney 12, Eric Adams 10, Billy Mott 10 FG
28 (0), FT 13-20, F 12

Mulvane--Shay Cornejo 23, Neal Hamilton 18,
Toby Butcher 10, Russell Norden 7, Sean Gillespie
2, John Melick 2, Brian Smith 2. FG 30 (0), FT 4-6,
F 18

Maize 66, Nickerson 63

Pratt 43, Winfield 42

Andale 59, Valley Center 43

FIRST ROUND

Mulvane 7 16 19 19--61
Pratt 14 12 18 25--69

Mulvane--Sean Gillespie 7, Shay Cornejo 13, Toby
Butcher 27, John Melick 7, Neal Hamilton 7 FG 24
(1), FT 10-21, F 22.

Pratt--Mike Edwards 2, Perry Henry 4, Brennan
Wood 23, Brian Mills 12, Matt Havlas 17, Brandon
Forsburg 11. FG 24 (0), FT 21-29, F 18.

Winfield 53, Wellington 52

Nickerson 70, Andale 46

Maize 72, Valley Center 61