

Patient Wildcats Reap Rewards

Patience has its own virtue in basketball. The Mulvane High School girls found that out Friday night, Jan. 10, when Clearwater came to town for a Chisholm Trail League Division II contest.

The Wildcat girls were patient on offense, getting the good passes inside and the good shots outside. And the Wildcat girls were patient on defense, making the Indians work hard against a seldom-used 1-3-1 defense. And that patience was rewarded with their biggest win of the year as Coach Kelly Dennis' Wildcats hammered out a 21-point victory, 54-33.

"It was probably our best all-around games of the year, we played at both ends and for the whole game," emphasized Dennis. "It was definitely our best defensive game, but when you play against a poorer team, your defense should look pretty good."

The victory snapped a two-game skid and left the Cats at 4-4 overall and 3-2 in the loop as they head into a home battle Friday night, Jan. 17, against Chaparral.

"We were a lot more patient on offense," said Dennis. "The perimeter shot has always been there for us all season but we haven't been patient enough to use it to our advantage and then stick it inside. The girls did Friday night. I thought they played with much more patience and discipline."

The Cats nursed a small lead out of the first quarter, then out-scored Clearwater, 12-4, in the second period as Mulvane's offense and defense came together. "I think we relaxed a little more in the second quarter and got into a rhythm," said Dennis. "We kind of did to them what has been done to us. It was nice to get a good second quarter because that has been a problem this year. Our shots fell and the we got some turnovers. Defensively, I thought we really limited them in that quarter by keeping them from getting good shots."

"The girls really started playing with confidence. They came out, and seemed to be pretty sure of what they wanted to do. The whole game, the girls seemed to have a confidence about them that we haven't had in some of our previous games. That confidence built the whole game and stayed pretty strong."

When things are going right, everything seems to go your way and the Wildcats made sure by keeping up the defensive pressure and hitting shots in the final half, out-scoring the Indians, 32-21.

Scoring balance also played a big role.

Lindsay Kendrick was the only player in double figures. The sophomore guard scored 10 points, but she had a host of help with seniors Melissa Buchanan scoring eight and center Dannelle Hughes tossing in seven. Freshman Kassie Hargrove and sophomore Shelly Richards also had some good moments, each scoring seven points off the bench, and senior Crissy Carpenter finished with six points.

"I'd take that kind of balance every night out," admitted Dennis. "Melissa, Lindsay and Shelley all gave us some quality scoring and Kassie came in for her points too. Kristen Buchanan came in for some good playing time and Michelle Fowler is getting better and better. Michelle and Shelley had some big buckets in that second quarter when we were establishing our game."

Still, that "turnover thing" continues to pester Dennis and the Wildcats. "We still had a lot of turnovers, too many turnovers," emphasized Dennis. "That's something that we may not be able to get completely away from. I don't know. It's been a problem since I've been here and it's frustrating because you make errors that give the other team 10-to-20 more shots. That's tough to overcome. The scary thing is that many of them aren't forced, they occur because of our lack of 'ball sense.'"

In the junior varsity contest, the Wildcats rocked the Indians pretty easily, 34-17. A 14-1 spree in the opening frame was all that it took.

Kristen Buchanan was the jayvee scoring leader. She had eight points. Victoria Padilla, Krystal LaPlant and Ashley McCoskey had six points each for Coach Dale Landes' Cat JVs.

Varsity Girls

Clearwater	8	4	7	14	33
Mulvane	10	12	12	20	54
Clearwater	Emily Dunn 11, Tara Pauly 1, Megan Loger 5, Faith Struthers 10, Trisha Doll 2, Emily Chambers 4. FG 11 (0), FT 11-21, F 17.				

Mulvane—Melissa Buchanan 8, Crissy Carpenter 6, Lindsay Kendrick 10, Dannelle Hughes 7, Kristen Buchanan 3, Michelle Fowler 3, Ashley McCoskey 3, Kassie Hargrove 7, Shelly Richards 7. FG 17 (4), FT 8-13, F 15.

Junior Varsity Girls

Clearwater	1	6	4	6	17
Mulvane	14	6	8	6	34
Clearwater	Bonnie Charles 5, Brenda Seiter 4, Crystal Struthers 3, Rachel Walker 1, Deborah Biby 2, Julie Youngers 2. FG 5 (0), FT 7-15, F 8.				

Mulvane—Kristen Buchanan 8, Victoria Padilla 6, Krystal LaPlant 6, Ashley McCoskey 6, Heather Williams 4, Rachel Rose 2, Kassie Hargrove 2. FG 16 (0), FT 2-6, F 17.