

Thunderbird Girls

Eliminate MHS Wildcats

In Sub-State Semifinals

High hopes turned to a disappointing end to the season for the Mulvane High School girls basketball team Thursday, March 6, in the semifinal round of the Augusta 4A Sub-State Tournament.

The beginning of the end came in the fading moments of the first half when Circle smoked past Coach Bill Stinson's Wildcat gals to turn a sliver of a lead into a 15-point advance. End of game. The two teams traded points in the second half as Circle took another step toward the state tournament by racking the Cats, 60-45.

The Thunderbirds went on to crack Rose Hill, 60-57, in the championship game Saturday night, March 8, to advance to the 4A State Tournament.

"It didn't work out," said Stinson of his club's game plan. "We didn't get started on the right foot. We didn't run our offense. We just didn't play very good basketball in the first half. We felt we had some things going. Wellington had just beaten Circle and we turned around and beat Wellington, so we felt we needed to get out early and put some pressure on them...but we didn't. If we could have hit four or five shots right at the first, we may have been able to get them to get out of their game plan."

Instead, Mulvane's season screeched to a halt. The Wildcats, who were 7-3 with a promising future, limped home with an 11-11 record, losing five of their last seven games. Circle improved its record to 16-5.

The Thunderbirds, the No. 1 seeded team, started quickly, taking a 15-9 lead after one quarter and enlarging it to 32-17 by halftime. Several times, the Wildcats battled back to get within 12 and had the ball but never could make a solid run and the T-Birds roared off to a 48-30 advantage with approximately four minutes left in the third quarter.

"We played even with them in the second half but we had such a poor start, we never could get back in the game," said Stinson. Defensively, we played okay. The Shadoin girl hurt us. From scouting, we didn't feel like she would hurt us on offense because she couldn't make a free throw on film and

AUGUSTA 4A GIRLS SUB-STATE CHAMPIONSHIP

Circle 60, Rose Hill 57

SEMIFINALS

Mulvane 9 8 10 18-45
Circle 15 17 10 18-60

Mulvane—Lori Cox 6, Tiane Dossey 9, Shella Mahlandt 3, Terri Plotts 5, Rhonda Davis 8, Kathy Saxton 14. FG 18, FT 9-20, F 13.

Circle—Tara Hopkins 2, Tawnya Hopkins 10, Carol Shadoin 17, Tracy Tanquary 10, Julie Wellner 6, Becky Carter 7, Toni Tanquary 8. FG 25, FT 10-14, F 19.

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Rose Hill 73, Caney Valley 62

in fact had three air balls. She was 6-for-6, though."

Early foul trouble for cat playmaker Tiane Dossey also hurt Mulvane's chance to throw its all-out pressure defense on. The senior Dossey picked up her third foul in the second quarter and took a seat next to Stinson. With her out, the MHS ballhanding suffered and so did Mulvane's attempt to press a team that appeared to be susceptible to pressure.

The Cat coach also pointed to his free throwing as another cause of the shellacking. Mulvane made only nine of 20 from the stripe. Circle was icing things with a 10-for-14 effort. "The problem is many of our misses came at the front end of a one-and-one, so you're talking about more points," said Stinson.

The typically good balance in scoring for Stinson's girls was mostly absent Thursday night. Sophomore Kathy Saxton capped a brilliant first varsity year with 14 points. The club's No. 1 scorer on the season, senior Lori Cox, was held to six points by the taller T-Bird players. Second-high for the Cats was Dossey with nine points. Juniors Rhonda Davis and Terri Plotts were next with eight and five points, respectively.

"We weren't getting the good shots like we were the game before against Wellington," admitted Stinson. "We needed to have a big scoring game from Rhonda but our ball movement wasn't very sharp and we didn't move the ball back around the zone quick enough to get her the good shots."