

Girls Start Tourney

Goddard Spoils

Debut For Coach

There's nothing like starting at the top and working your way down.

New Mulvane High School girls basketball coach Jayson Miller probably is wondering where the "break-in period" is. He was welcomed to the Chisholm Trail League as Mulvane opened its season Friday night, Dec. 4, at home against Goddard.

The trouble is Goddard is one of the top-ranked Class 5A teams in the state and although the Wildcats returned four starters, they were no match for the Lions, who chopped down the Cats, 59-39, in Miller's Mulvane debut.

"Going into the game, we knew we had a big challenge ahead of us," said Miller. "We realized Goddard was a good ball club, one of the more talented ones in the State right now and our hats are off to them. What we wanted to focus on was the first three minutes of the ball game and then we'd see what happened. I thought we accomplished what we set out to do. We came out with good intensity, but we just didn't continue to do the things we needed to do to win the ball game."

With seniors Shelley Richards and Kristin Buchanan each scoring three points, the Wildcats stayed close for the first few minutes but Goddard's pressure defense paid dividends that started to tell a story. It was a story Mulvane didn't want to read. By the end of the first quarter, the Lions were up by six and by halftime, the visitors held a 32-19 lead.

"We knew we would be seeing some great athletes and that they would pressure us most of the game," said Miller. "I felt like we did a good job for the most part against their pressure defense. Our main flaw was in the transition. We didn't get back down the floor like we wanted to and they hurt us in transition. When you're going against good athletes, you can't give them the easy looks that we gave them. I felt like 80% of their scoring came from just running the floor, and if you expect to win, you can't do that."

Miller wasn't unhappy with the offense shown by his Wildcats. It was about what he expected. "I wasn't disappointed in 39 points, but I didn't feel like we got the looks like we should have," pointed out Miller. "If we get better looks, I think that 39 points will come a lot easier. I thought the girls did a nice job getting to the offensive boards and they battled for the boards pretty good. They showed they were not afraid to get in there and mix it up."

"They clearly beat us on the boards but it was kind of a weird game in that respect. We did a nice job on the offensive boards

Varsity Girls

Goddard	14	18	14	13-59
Mulvane	8	11	10	10-39

Goddard—Nikki Hall 14, Sharlee Heiter 19, Trisha Cavanaugh 4, Emily Edwards 6, Amy Craig 16. FG 24 (1), FT 8-16, F 22.

Mulvane—Shelley Richards 11, Kristin Buchanan 13, Lindsay Kendrick 9, Jackie McColpin 2, Shiriah Craft 4. FG 12 (0), FT 15-27, F 16.

Junior Varsity Girls

Goddard	7	14	12	12-47
Mulvane	0	9	0	5-14

Goddard—Natalie Thomas 11, Amanda Voßen 8, Bailey Funke 6, Margi Crauthers 2, Alison Dopps 8, Becky Resing 8, Laura Grant 4. FG 21 (0), FT 5-19, F 19.

Mulvane—Carisa Ward 7, Natalie Turner 0, LaShelle Parker 2, Aubrey Benjamin 2, Jackie Burkhart 3. FG 5 (1), FT 3-9, F 19.

but we didn't do a very good job blocking them out on the defensive boards, which gave them a lot of easy offensive opportunities. That was another big difference in the game. That No. 35 really hurt us there."

Miller said he felt the Cats could improve in that area. "As we learn more, I think the girls will get better at blocking out," said Miller. "We're not a big enough team to just dominate the boards. We need to block out better." Having returning starter Kassie Hargrove would have helped on the boards, too. She missed the game because of injury.

If there was anything Miller was disappointed in it was his club's defense. "We just broke down in our defensive principles and lost track of the ball too many times," emphasized Miller. "I'm working with the girls to make this kind of a pride issue. We don't want to give up that many easy points."

While he would have just as soon started his prep head coaching career with a "W," Miller is looking ahead, not behind. "I was pleased with a lot of the effort the girls showed," said Miller. "And playing smarter will come. Kristin Buchanan really came through for us. She put in some good points. Shiriah Craft played well coming off the bench."

Buchanan finished with a team-high 13 points and veteran Shelley Richards added 11. Senior guard Lindsay Kendrick scored nine and Shiriah Craft had four.

The Wildcat junior varsity girls also ran into trouble Friday night. The Lions jumped out early and stopped the Cats, 47-14, in the season opener for Coach Dale Landes' girls.

Carisa Ward topped the scoring for the Cats with seven points. Jackie Burkhart had three points and both Aubrey Benjamin and LaShelle Parker scored two points.

The next action for the MHS girls will be when they play three consecutive nights in the Mulvane Round-Robin Tournament beginning tonight (Dec. 10) at the MHS gym. The Cat girls play their first game at 6 p.m. against Oxford in the main gym.