

BASKETBALL WILDCATS TAKE 2ND PLACE IN R-2 TOURNAMENT NELSON IS TOURNAMENT MVP & PARRISH MAKES ALL-TOURNAMENT TEAM

The Montgomery County R-2 Wildcats Basketball Varsity played 3 games in the Montgomery County R-2 Invitational Tournament, the week of November 28-December 3. The Wildcats won their first 2 games in the tournament, but lost to arch rival Hermann in the Championship Game. Still they came away with the 2nd Place Trophy.

In their First Round Game on November 29, the Wildcats defeated Silex 78-43. In the Championship Semifinal game on December 1, Montgomery County defeated Clopton 75-71 in a very exciting game. The Championship Game on December 3 was just as exciting, but the Wildcats could never take the lead away from Hermann and lost 74-68. With these games, the Wildcats have a record of 3 wins and 1 loss.

After the Championship Trophy and 2nd Place Trophy were awarded to Hermann and Montgomery County, the Tournament Most Valuable Player and the 5 players on the All-Tournament Team were announced. These awards were based on a vote of the coaches of the 8 schools in the tournament. Wildcat Junior Aubrey Nelson was selected as the Tournament MVP, while Wildcat Senior Chase Parrish was named to the All-Tournament Team for the second consecutive year.

CHAMPIONSHIP GAME

There is more than one way to look at this game, and to point to a certain thing as to why Montgomery County did not come away with the win. A slow start in the first quarter led to Montgomery County trailing Hermann 24-14 at the end of the quarter. During the rest of the game the Wildcats would continuously cut Hermann's lead to 1-4 points with good defense and solid shooting, only to get lax on defense and cold in their shooting and Hermann would increase its lead back to 5-10 points.

Finally, it could be said that Hermann beat Montgomery County at the free throw line, making 16 of 25 free throws for the game (including 8 of 13 in the last quarter), while the Wildcats only made 9 of 13 free throws for the game (and only 2 of 3 in the last quarter). Any way you want to look at it, Hermann came away with the win.

Hermann jumped out to a 5-0 lead in the first 2 minutes of the game and never trailed the rest of the game. Montgomery County outscored Hermann 7-5 over the next 2½ minutes to make the score 10-7 with 3:30 left in the quarter. However, Hermann then went on an 8-0 scoring run over the next 1 minute and 10 seconds to increase its lead to 18-7 with 2:15 left in the quarter.

Montgomery County came back with a 7-0 scoring run over the next 1:15 to cut Hermann's lead to 18-14 with 1 minute left in the quarter. Once again, Hermann ended the quarter with a 6-0 scoring run to lead 24-14 at the end of the quarter.

The second quarter did not have the big scoring runs by either team. Instead, the teams exchanged baskets and/or free throws over a 1-2 minute period, or exchange 4-0 scoring runs that lasted about 30 seconds to 1 minute each. Montgomery County did have the better of things, and when it was all said and done, a 3-point basket by Nelson with 7 seconds left in the half got the Wildcats to within 2 points of Hermann at 37-35 at halftime.

The teams basically exchanged points through the first 3:20 of the third quarter, with Hermann leading Montgomery County 46-43 with 4:40 left in the quarter. Then Hermann outscored the Wildcats 11-6 during the rest of the quarter to lead 57-49 heading into the final quarter.

Montgomery County cut back into Hermann's lead in the first 4 minutes of the fourth quarter, outscoring Hermann 11-4 to cut Hermann's lead to 61-60 with 4 minutes left in the game. However, that would be as close as the Wildcats would get.

Hermann proceeded to outscore Montgomery County 7-2 over the next 1 minute and 20 seconds to increase its lead back to 68-62 with 2:40 left in the game. The Wildcats twice cut Hermann's lead to 2 points at 68-66 with 1:51 left in the game and at 70-68 with 1:26 left in the game, but could not get any closer. Hermann made 4 of 6 free throws in the last 37 seconds of the game to win the Championship Game and Trophy at 74-68.

Nelson led the Wildcats in scoring with 19 points (5 field goals/FGs, 2 3-pointers, 3 of 4 free throws/FTs). He was followed in the scoring by Chase Parrish with 16 points (3 FGs, 2 3-pointers, 4 of 6 FTs); John Shaw with 13 points (6 FGs, 1 of 2 FTs); Tim Hall with 10 points (3 FGs, 1 3-pointer, 1 of 1 FTs); Corey Kroll with 6 points (3 FGs); and Chris Harrison and Skyler Hutcheson with 2 points each (1 FG each). Logan Henke also played in the game, but did not score. No other statistics were available for this game when this report was written.

CLOPTON GAME

The Semifinal Game on December 1 was just as action packed as the Championship Game. Montgomery County jumped out to a quick 5-2 lead early in this game, only to have Clopton go on an 11-0 scoring run to take a 13-5 lead with 1:40 left in the quarter. The Wildcats finished the quarter with consecutive 3 pointers to cut Clopton's lead to 13-11 at the end of the quarter.

Montgomery County made 4 more 3-pointers and 3 field goals while holding Clopton to 7 points in the first 3 minutes of the second quarter, to take a 29-20 lead with 5 minutes left in the half. However, Clopton regained the momentum and outscored the Wildcats 14-3 over the remaining 5 minutes to take a 34-32 lead at halftime.

Clopton scored the first 4 points of the third quarter to take a 38-32 lead with 6:38 left in the quarter. Montgomery County gradually made a comeback, outscoring Clopton 14-8 over the next 2:50 to tie the score at 46-46 with 3:48 left in the quarter. The score was tied two more times at 48-48 and 50-50, but Clopton then outscored the Wildcats 6-3 over the last 3 minutes of the quarter to take a 56-53 lead in to the last quarter.

Montgomery County started the fourth quarter with a 3-pointer to tie the game at 56-56 with 7:38 left in the game. Clopton responded with a 4-0 scoring run over the next minute to take a 60-56 lead with 6:40 left in the game.

It would be another minute before either team would score again. This time it was Montgomery County who made a free throw, and then went on a 11-0 scoring run to take a 67-60 lead with 4:06 left in the game.

Neither team scored over the next 1:30, but then Clopton had another 4-0 scoring run to cut Montgomery County's lead to 67-64 with 2:05 left in the game. Clopton followed that by outscoring Montgomery County 5-3 in the next 1:20 to cut the Wildcats lead to 70-69. However, the Wildcats would make 5 free throws in the last 35 seconds of the game to come away with a 75-71 win and advance to the Championship Game.

Nelson led the Wildcats in scoring with 33 points (5 FGs, 5 3-pointers, 8 of 9 FTs). He was followed in the scoring by Hall with 14 points (1 FG, 3 3-pointers, 3 of 4 FTs); Shaw with 10 points (2 FGs, 6 of 9 FTs); Hutcheson with 9 points (3 3-pointers); Parrish with 6 points (2 3-pointers); and Kroll with 3 points (1 FG, 1 of 1 FTs). Henke and Harrison also played in the game, but did not score.

Other statistics for this game were as follows:

Rebounds: Parrish 6; Hall and Hutcheson 5 each; Nelson 4; Shaw 3; Kroll and Henke 2 each; and Harrison 1

Assists: Kroll 4; Hall and Nelson 3 each; Hutcheson 2; and Parrish, Henke and Harrison 1 each

Steals: Harrison 2; and Hall, Nelson, Parrish and Shaw 1 each

Blocked Shots: Hall 2; and Harrison and Hutcheson 1 each

SILEX GAME

Montgomery County also got off to a slow start in this First Round Game, falling behind early. However, the Wildcats got going on offense in the last part of the first quarter and led 20-9 by the end of the quarter.

The second quarter scoring was similar to the first quarter, as Montgomery County outscored Silex 23-8 to take a 43-17 at halftime. The third quarter was more of the same, as the Wildcats outscored Silex 27-16 to increase their lead to 70-33 by the end of the quarter.

There wasn't as much scoring in the fourth quarter, as the clock ran continuously due to the "mercy rule" (goes into effect when a team has at least a 30-point lead in the fourth quarter). Silex outscored Montgomery County 10-8 in the quarter, but the Wildcats came away with the 78-43 win.

Nelson led the Wildcats in scoring with 17 points (4 FGs, 2 3-pointers, 3 of 3 FTs). He was followed in the scoring by Parrish with 16 points (2 FGs, 2 3-pointers, 6 of 8 FTs); Harrison with 13 points (4 FGs, 5 of 10 FTs); Hall with 12 points (3 FGs, 1 3-pointer, 3 of 6 FTs); Cole Curry and Carson Parker with 6 points each (3 FGs each); Kroll with 4 points (2 FGs); and Henke and Shaw with 2 points each (Henke 2 of 3 FTs and Shaw 2 of 4 FTs). Hutcheson and Colin Parrish also played in the game, but did not score.

Other statistics for this game were as follows:

Rebounds: Hall 7; Chase Parrish and Nelson 6 each; Harrison 5; Kroll and Hutcheson 4 each; Parker 3; Shaw 2; and Curry and Colin Parrish 1 each

Assists: Nelson 5; Colin Parrish 2; and Chase Parrish, Curry, Hall, Harrison, Kroll and Shaw 1 each

Steals: Nelson 5; and Chase Parrish, Henke, Shaw and Curry 2 each; and Hutcheson 1

Blocked Shots: Curry 2; and Parker 1

THIS WEEK'S GAMES

Montgomery County has 2 games this week. On Tuesday, December 6, the Wildcats will play at South Callaway in a non-conference game. Then on Friday, December 9, they will host Silex in an Eastern Missouri (EMO) Conference game. On both nights, the Jr. Varsity game will be played first, starting at 6:00. The Varsity game should start around 7:30.

UPCOMING GAMES

The Varsity and JV teams have 2 more games in the remaining 1½ weeks left before the Christmas Break. On Thursday, December 15, the JV Boys and JV Girls are scheduled to host Wellsville-Middletown. The Girls' game will start at 6:00, followed by the Boys' game around 7:30.

On Friday, December 16, the Varsity Boys and Varsity Girls will play at Wellsville-Middletown. This is the annual "Pink Out Game", in which both schools have a fund raising effort to help the families of area people who have cancer. The Girls' game will start at 6:00, followed by the Boys' Game around 7:30. Both of the games on Thursday and Friday Nights are EMO Conference games.

Then on Monday, December 19 the Wildcats Varsity and JV teams will host New Haven in a non-conference game. The JV game will start at 6:00, followed by the Varsity game around 7:30.

"Best Wishes" to the Wildcats in the two games you play this week, and in the following 3 games before the Christmas Break. Go Wildcats!