

Cowboys grab seventh from Liberal after losing to Wichita South Titans

By Doug Stephens

The Goodland Cowboys finished seventh in the Orange and Black Classic this weekend in Colby, losing to Wichita South 53-49 and beating Liberal 53-48.

Cowboy Don Raymer was named to the all-tournament team, and Andrew Melia got the Bench Award. "Which means he probably won't be on the bench much anymore," said Goodland coach Jon McLean. "We're going to begin starting him."

Goodland shot almost 47 percent from the field over the tournament, and exactly 50 percent from the free throw line each game.

Raymer led Goodland scoring with 47, followed by Melia at 31, Aaron Gittinger 25, and Bryan Mai and Jordan Riebel at 16.

Goodland played Wichita South on Friday at the Colby High School Gym. Even though the Cowboys outshot, out rebounded, and had less fouls than the Titans, they couldn't pull out a win.

The Cowboys came out strong in the first quarter and led by 4 points with two minutes left in the first quarter, but two buckets from the Titans evened things up, and the quarter ended tied at 16.

Wichita South jumped out fast in the second with a 25-21 lead, but Goodland came back to tie it at 27 with

Rubio scoring easily on a pick and roll. The quarter ended with the Titans up by three.

About halfway through the third quarter, Kevin Schulte accidentally knocked Tate into the bench, and the two were all over each other the rest of the quarter.

Schulte caused a five-second violation to be called on Tate, and Tate stole from Schulte on the inbound play, taking it down to lay it in. The quarter ended with the Titans up 36-42.

Goodland brought it back to three points with a running jumper from Rubio with six minutes left, but never got any closer.

A basket by Stacey Bias and a turnover turned into a breakaway put Wichita South up by seven.

Rebel, Gittinger and Melia scored treys for Goodland's last three baskets. The last to beat the buzzer, but it was too little to overcome the Titans.

The loss dropped them in the tournament, and they next faced Liberal, which had lost to Scott City.

This was the third year in a row Goodland had played Liberal for seventh place, losing in 2000 and winning in 2001 and this year.

Although Redskin Kent Williams scored the first basket, the Cowboys out-scored the larger Liberal team 17-7 in the first quarter. Goodland went into double digits when Melia got an

offensive rebound and was fouled by Phillip Wedel going for the putback, making both free throws.

On the next play, Melia got a rebound on Liberal's Quinton Woods missed shot, getting it down court where Gittinger got it over to Mai, who was fouled on the shot. Mai made both his shots, putting Goodland up 12-4.

Riebel scored on a fade-away jumper at the end of the quarter, giving the Cowboys a 10 point lead.

Goodland outscored the Redskins 11-10 in the second quarter, giving the boys a 28-17 lead.

Liberal came back in the second half, at one point down by just two, after a trey by Cory James. Melia came back with a bucket from directly under the hoop, having to lean back to get it over, ending the quarter with Goodland up by 4.

Liberal scored two quick baskets at the start of the fourth, tying it up at 36 with a lay-up by Iban Ramirez. Rubio answered with a three-pointer.

Goodland built up a 12-point lead with a minute left, but the Redskins weren't out yet. Liberal's James scored, and Ramirez stole Goodland's inbound pass, throwing it out to James, who missed a three-pointer.

Liberal fouled Goodland after every play from this point. After Melia made one of two, Ramirez sank a trey, cutting the lead to seven.

Jordan was fouled on the inbound, and he made one of two.

Williams of Liberal got an offensive rebound and put it back, making it 51-45. Riebel was fouled and made one of his free throws, and James scored with an NBA range three-pointer, bringing Liberal within four points with seven seconds left.

Goodland was able to keep the Redskins from scoring again, and won by five points after another shot at the free-throw line.

"We didn't play as well in the second half," said McLean. "We just kind of hung on for the win."

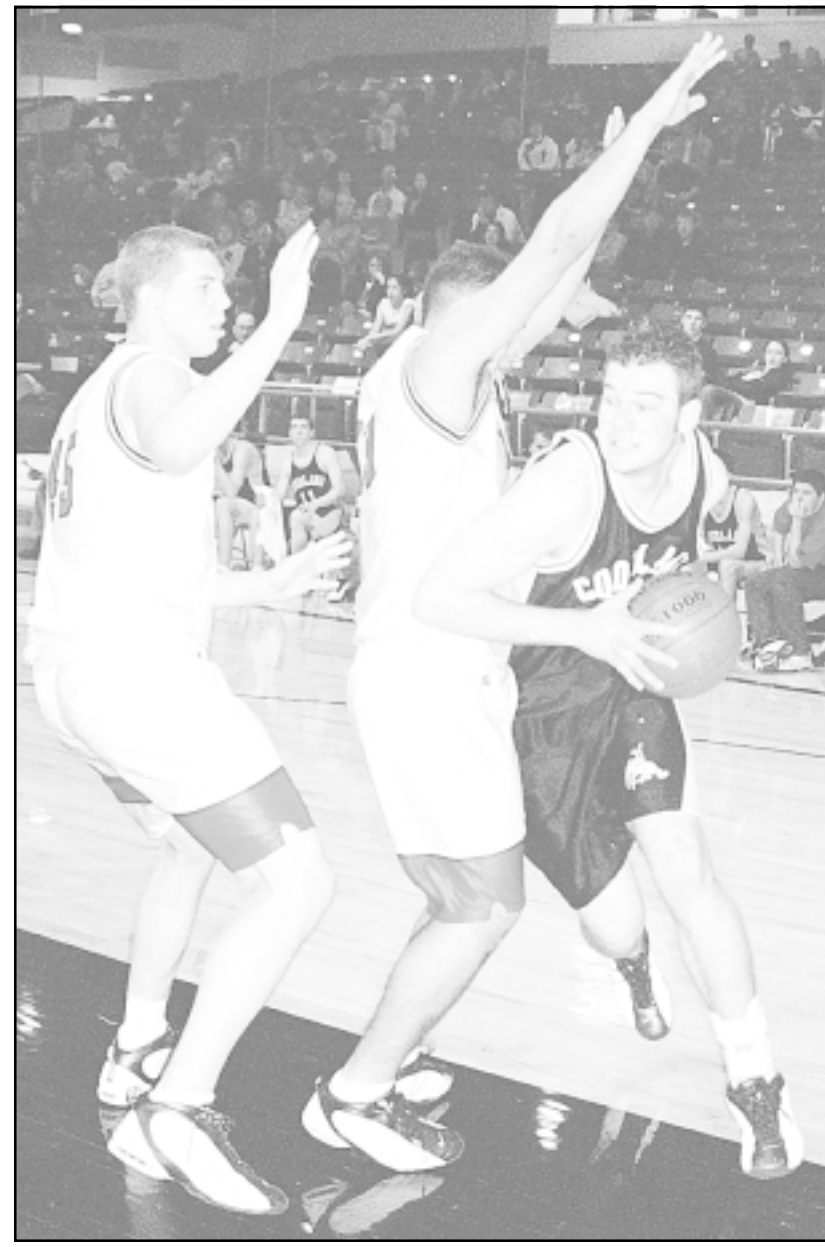
"It's always better to get one win than three losses in a tournament like this. I hoped that we would get two wins, which is why the loss to Wichita South was so disappointing."

McLean said the team will work on ball handling, passing, man-to-man defense and avoiding mental breakdowns.

"I'm excited," he said. "We play some tough teams the rest of the season, and if we continue to improve, we have a good chance of beating them."

McLean said Gittinger hurt his ankle Saturday against Liberal, but he should be ready to go Friday against Oberlin.

The Cowboys come off of the tournament with a season record of 4-7. They next play about 7 p.m. Mountain Time on Friday at Oberlin.



Andrew Melia tried to penetrate the Liberal defense Saturday in the Orange and Black Classic at the Colby Community Building. Photo by Rachel Miscal/The Goodland Daily News

Cornerback finally has chance

ST. LOUIS (AP) — Though Aeneas Williams is heading to his seventh Pro Bowl, his career has been short on team glory.

Until now. The St. Louis Rams' cornerback is in the playoffs for only the second time and the first with a team that won its division. He's never before entered the postseason with such possibilities.

"We would ask him, 'Now, how far did you go with the Cardinals?' to remind him that this is all new to him," fellow cornerback Dexter McCleon said. "He is excited. This is what he came here for."

Williams was named to the NFL team of the 1990s along with Deion Sanders, Darrell Green and Rod Woodson. He led, or shared the lead, in interceptions in the NFC among cornerbacks three times in his 10 seasons there.

But his only previous playoff experience came on a 9-7 team in 1998. The Cardinals won a wild-card game over the Cowboys and then lost by 20 at Minnesota.

Now, he's on a team shooting for its second Super Bowl win in three years. The Rams, who led the NFL with a 14-2 record, are a double-digit favorite to beat the Green Bay Packers on Sunday, which would put them in the NFC championship game.

"With this group of guys, I've just kind of been in question and answer mode, just kind of asking the guys about the experience," Williams said. "I'm very excited."

Teammates are excited for him. "It's something that he has been waiting for since he walked through that door for the first mini-camp," McCleon said. "He can't wait, we all can't wait. We want to all get there for him."

The Rams got Williams cheap, paying only second- and fourth-round draft picks. In return, they got an instant leader with a nose for big plays.

This year he made a career-best 100 tackles with four interceptions, three fumble recoveries and one forced fumble. He returned two of the picks for touchdowns.

He's fourth on the active list with 50 interceptions, eight of them for scores.

"I've enjoyed the season," Williams said. "I think there's so many things I've gotten better at."

Defensive coordinator Lovie Smith loves Williams' intensity, and not just on game day.

"In practice he's intercepting balls and scoring. He's running on and off the field and he's always taking notes," Smith said.

"I can go on and on about the things he's done. He really acts like a rookie trying to make the team."

Teammates have noticed, voting him the team's annual Spirit of the Game winner.

"The way he practices and prepares for each game has been the same from Day 1 up to now," McCleon said. "And it is not going to change. That is just the way he approaches this game."

Missouri may be ready for upcoming stretch

ST. LOUIS (AP) — Missouri is about to begin another tough stretch, with three of the next four games against Top 10 opponents. This time, coach Quin Snyder believes his team may be ready.

First, the No. 21 Tigers play at No. 5 Oklahoma on Monday night. They play at No. 4 Kansas Jan. 28 and play No. 10 Virginia at home Feb. 3.

Not long ago, Snyder would have been dreading the prospect.

Last month, Missouri (14-4, 4-1 Big 12) lost consecutive games to then 15th-ranked Iowa and ninth-ranked Illinois.

Of the Oklahoma matchup, Snyder said: "Three weeks ago, we should not have even played the game. Now, we'll see."

First things first, and Oklahoma (14-2, 3-1) swept Missouri in a pair of two-

point decisions last season. Snyder said the Sooners, who have beaten Missouri seven straight times overall, have the best talent in the Big 12.

"All these great recruiting classes we've had, they don't compare to what they've had," Snyder said.

"They keep playing this underdog role, but they're the big dog to me — a big dog that bites."

"And we've been bit by them a couple of times."

Snyder is 0-4 against Oklahoma, coming off a seven-point loss at Kansas on Saturday, but denies he wants to beat them any more than any other team.

"I don't get into personal things," Snyder said. "We've come in hard every time and we haven't won."

"If everybody stays around long enough, I'm sure we'll beat them at

some point."

Players certainly are aware of the recent history.

Except for border rival Kansas, Kareem Rush said there's no one he wants to beat more.

"It's a burning desire in our hearts right now," Rush said.

"The games could have gone either way, and hopefully we can get over that hump."

Missouri shot 62.5 percent in the first half of a 92-77 victory over Colorado on Saturday, and has won five of six. Snyder said his young team, which led by 27 points in the first half, played so well because it was unselfish.

He hopes his players remember.

"We've got to hang on to it tight because it's not a habit yet," Snyder said. "We have to hang on unbelievably tight to play the right way."

Snyder switched Clarence Gilbert to point guard three games ago, and indicated he'd leave him there.

Gilbert, the Tigers' second-leading scorer, was about the only shooter who struggled against Colorado, going 2-for-14.

Gilbert, who had six assists, said he's still getting used to the point.

"It's simple to me: I just need to learn how to score from the point," Gilbert said.

"I used to do it in high school, but I'm used to scoring from the shooting position."

Snyder said Stokes has taken the demotion well.

"I think we make less of the starting thing," Snyder said.

"We're thinking about we, not about me. The more we do that, the better chance we have to grow."

Kansas State cruises over Iowa State for first Big 12 win

MANHATTAN, Kan. (AP) — Kansas State's biggest play in gaining its first Big 12 win of the season took just a minute to design.

And Iowa State never got over it as the Wildcats cruised to a 63-52 triumph Saturday night.

Pervis Pasco's dunk on an alley-oop from point guard Larry Reid spurred a Wildcats run that turned a seven-point halftime lead into a 15-point edge.

"Coach drew it up in the huddle and we executed it," Reid said. "It gave us a lift we needed."

The Wildcats hope that lift lasts as they begin a two-week stretch of games against conference heavyweights Kan-

sas, Missouri, Oklahoma State and Texas.

But first, Kansas State travels to Colorado Tuesday to tackle the Buffaloes, 10-5 despite losing Saturday to the Tigers.

"This was a good win for us," Reid said. "We got confidence now."

In dismissing the Cyclones, Larry Reid led the Wildcats with 18 points and Pasco added 10 points and nine rebounds.

But it was Kansas State's defense that decided the outcome. The Wildcats (7-8, 1-3 Big 12) held Iowa State (9-10, 1-4 Big 12) to just one field goal in the first ten minutes of each half and

scored 21 points off eight Cyclone turnovers.

The Wildcats snapped a three-game losing streak and won their first game since Dec. 29.

They beat the Cyclones for the first time since 1999.

"I thought it was the scrappiest effort of the season against a team that is noted for that as well," said head coach Jim Woodriddle.

"It certainly wasn't a fluid game, but they came out tonight and showed some real effort. I'm real proud of them."

The Wildcats held the Cyclones to 35-percent from the field.

Iowa State was 16-of-28 from the free-throw line.

"You know when you don't make baskets and free throws, and you turn it over, you just look pathetic," said Iowa State coach Larry Eustachy. "It doesn't surprise me. It's very frustrating for everybody. We'll see better days."

Nick Williams added 11 points and Matt Siebrandt added 10 for Kansas State.

Tyray Pearson, the Big 12's second leading scorer with 19.2 points a game, led Iowa State with 15. Jake Sullivan scored 10 for the Cyclones, who host Kansas Wednesday night.



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