

Cowboys snare Topside title in final seconds

Goodland senior breaks tie with free throws, beats Norton Blue Jays 44-42

By Greg Stover
The Goodland Star-News

Two free throws by senior Lane Winter with nine seconds left gave the Goodland Cowboys a 44-42 win over the Norton Blue Jays on Saturday night for their first Topside Tip-Off championship since 1997. The Cowboys led 12-8 at the end of the first period at Max Jones Fieldhouse, but found themselves trailing 19-17 at halftime. Winter turned that around.

With the Blue Jays leading 24-20 about three minutes into the third period, Winter scored seven straight points to give Goodland a 27-20 lead. Senior Derrick Raymer then made it 30-24 with a three-point basket.

Although the Cowboys took a 34-28 lead into the fourth period, Norton came back to tie the game at 36 with about 3 1/2 minutes left. After that, the score was tied at 38, 40 and 42.

Cowboy coach Jon McLean took a full timeout with 31 seconds left, then the Cowboys drove down the court where Winter was fouled trying to make a shot with nine seconds. Winter hit his first free throw to give Goodland a 43-42 lead.

Norton immediately took a full timeout, after which Winter hit his second free throw to make it 44-42. McLean then took a 30-second timeout to plan a defense.

Inbounding the ball, the Blue Jays drove straight down the court and missed an inside shot. They got the rebound but missed again, giving the Cowboys their fifth tournament title in 16 years.

"I'm extremely proud of the guys," said McLean. "They played some awfully good basketball over the three days of the tournament."

Winter led Goodland with 16 points, followed by Raymer with 12. Junior Heath Chatfield scored six points, senior Brock Lohr four, and junior Jase Herl and freshman Jance McKee both had three.

Raymer grabbed six rebounds and blocked two shots to lead the team in both categories. Winter and Chatfield each had five rebounds.



Senior Lane Winter (No. 21) scored two of his 14 points against the Weskan Coyotes on Thursday night at Max Jones Fieldhouse during the first day of the Topside Tip-Off.

Photo by Tom Betz/The Goodland Star-News

Norton's Ryan Maddy led all scorers with 20 points, and Heath Vincent led the Blue Jays with nine rebounds.

In other games Saturday, the Ottawa Cyclones defeated the McCook Bison 70-57 for third place. Ottawa was led by Addison Miller with 11 points.

The Burlington Cougars beat the Weskan Coyotes 70-52 for fifth, and the Wray Eagles defeated the

Dragons of Holyoke in a close game 56-54 for seventh.

The Cowboys won their first game of the tournament Thursday, defeating Weskan 52-48. Goodland scored the game's first seven points, but the Coyotes came back to tie it up at 8. Trailing 10-8 to start the second period, Weskan again fought back to tie the score at 13.

The Cowboys responded in a big way, hitting three straight three-

point baskets by Herl, McKee and Raymer to take a 22-13 lead. Goodland led 27-19 at halftime, but the Coyotes proved tenacious and only trailed by one, 35-34, at the end of the third period.

The teams played even ball through most of the fourth period, but the Cowboys held a 49-46 lead with 57 seconds left. A free throw by Raymer made it 50-46 then a few seconds later Weskan's Noel Cox got the Coyotes within two, 50-48.

Goodland then drove down the court and with five seconds left, Weskan's Jason Young fouled out. That sent Herl to the free throw line for two shots. He made both to make it 52-48, after which the Coyotes missed on a long three-point attempt at the buzzer.

Winter led the Cowboys with 14 points, followed by Herl with 12 and Raymer with 10. McKee scored eight, hitting three of four from three-point range, and Lohr had seven points. Chatfield scored on a free throw.

Two tournament records were set Thursday when the Ottawa boys defeated Burlington 108-98: highest point total in a game by both teams and highest winning score. Other first-day games saw Norton beat Holyoke 48-28 and McCook defeated Wray 70-53.

On Friday, the Cowboys faced the McCook Bison. The teams played even throughout the first half and went into the locker room at halftime tied at 25. Herl hit a shot from near half-court at the buzzer, but it was ruled too late to count.

With the score tied at 27 early in the third period, Goodland scored nine straight to make it 36-27 and took a 44-37 lead into the fourth.

Trailing 55-44 with just over two minutes left, the Bison went into their two-minute drill, which produced 10 fouls. However the Cowboys connected on 13 of 20 free throws and hung on to win 68-61.

Herl led Goodland with 25 points, hitting on seven of 11 from three-point range. Raymer scored 14, McKee 10 and Winter six. Lohr, Chatfield and senior David Liven-

good each had four points, and freshman Nick Angelos scored on a free throw. Raymer led the team with 12 rebounds.

Raymer and Herl were named to the all-tournament team, Raymer for the second straight year.

Burlington won the team free throw contest, hitting 46 of 67 during the tournament. Junior Evan Murray of the Holyoke Dragons

won the Long Distance Shoot-Out.

In other games Friday, Burlington defeated Holyoke 75-60. Norton beat Ottawa 51-49 and Weskan beat Wray 94-86.

The Cowboys, now 5-0 for the season, travel to Hays today for a game against the Indians. Tip-off will be around 7 p.m. (Central Time).

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School calendar for Dec. 15 - Dec. 21

Wednesday - "Black Day"; Senior Citizen Dinner; city county recreation at the fieldhouse and junior high gym 7:30 p.m.; High School Band in auditorium 8-9:15 a.m.; Baseball Club meeting in the cafeteria 6:30 p.m.; PDC screening 3:45 p.m.

Thursday - "Gold Day"; Seminar - STUCO; junior varsity Basketball Tournament at the fieldhouse 3 p.m.; seventh grade League Basketball Tournament in Oakley 2 p.m.; eighth grade League Basketball tournament in Quinter 2 p.m.

Friday - "Black Day"; C-boys junior varsity and varsity basketball in Goodland against Quinter 3:45 p.m.

Saturday - Holiday Classic Wrestling Tournament in Goodland 8 a.m.; STUCO Dance 9 p.m. to midnight in High School gym.

Sunday - Elks Hoop Shoot at the fieldhouse 1 p.m.

Monday - High School Vocal and Band Concert in the auditorium 7 p.m.

Tuesday - "Black Day"; Seminar - American Field Service; C-boys basketball in Benkelman 5 p.m.

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