

Cowboys dominate first half, fall to Scott City

By Tom Betz
nt.betz@nwkansan.com

The Goodland Cowboys were the underdogs going into Friday's Class 3A sub state semifinal game in their third game against Scott City, but for nearly a full three quarters the Cowboys played at the top of their game and gave the Beavers a case of nerves.

In the end the Beavers overcame their poor play and turnovers to take control late in the third quarter and dominate the fourth quarter for a 58-39 win and a chance to move onto the sub state championship on Saturday.

The Cowboys had lost the two previous meetings with the Beavers 72-29 and 85-43, but the boys took the court on Friday knowing they didn't have anything more to lose.

Cowboys Coach Don Raymer said he felt the boys were feeling confident about their chances against the Beavers, who were the No. 1 seed and a top-ranked 3A team in the state.

The cowboys had played well in the first half on the final home game against Scott City, and Coach Raymer said he felt the boys would have a chance if they played a full four quarters like they had played in the final game.

The Cowboys started their top five players Ryan Hillmer, Brock Wilkens, Dillon Trachsel, Garth Helton and Robert Cowan.

The Cowboys hit often and the Beavers didn't in the first half. The Beavers turned the ball over and the Cowboys didn't. The Cowboys rebounded and the Beavers didn't.

The Cowboys led 14-8 after the first quarter and had only one turnover to six for the Beavers. The Cowboys went on an 11-point run in the second to lead 22-11 with six minutes left. The Beavers got to within four points with 1:10 left in the half at 25-21, but the Cowboys scored the final two baskets to lead 29-21 at the break.

The Cowboys hit 44 percent in the half with Hillmer hitting two 3-point shots and a free throw for 7 points. Wilkens had 8 points including a couple of free throws. Reed Bellamy came off the bench to hit two 3-point baskets and another field goal for 8 points. Cowan 4 and Trachsel 2.

The Beavers had 10 turnovers in the half and the Cowboys had six in the second quarter to have a total of seven.

The game wasn't going according to anybody's plan, especially for Beaver's Coach Glenn O'Neil.

"I think at one time I just told them to play hard and get their rears in gear," O'Neil said. "It came down to making some plays we didn't

make early."

O'Neil wasn't pleased with the play of his team in the first half when, for the first time all season, they trailed by 11 points and were down 29-21 at halftime.

The Cowboys were pumped coming out of the locker room, and feeling they were on the verge of a great upset. They forgot that is why there are four quarters in the game.

One of the Beavers' players said the team had a case of nerves in the first half, and were over confident. "I think we just thought we could come out on the floor and that was all we had to do," he said.

A good number of Cowboys fans had made the three hour trip to Larned to support the Cowboys and they had lots to cheer about in the first half.

Goodland had the ball in the third quarter but Scott City's Ron Baker got a steal and a quick basket to cut the lead to 29-23. Another Beaver basket cut it to four points, 29-25.

Coach Raymer took a time out with 5:35 left to talk to his team. The Cowboys played good defense, but suddenly the shots started rolling off, and Wilkens was called for a foul that put Baker at the free throw line where he made the two shots to narrow the lead to 29-27 with 4:40 left.

Cowan broke the scoring run with a basket to make it 31-27 with under four minutes to go. The Cowboys fans were being loud as they could feel the momentum fading for the Cowboys. After a Scott City time out the Beavers got a steal and basket to tie the score 31-31 with 2:25 left. In the final 90 seconds Wilkens hit two free throws to give Goodland a 33-31 lead, but Baker hit a 3-point shot to give the Beavers their first lead of the game 34-33, with about 45 seconds left. Hillmer hit one of two free throws to tie the score with 30 seconds left, and that is how the quarter ended with 34-34 tie.

The fourth quarter was for all the marbles, and suddenly the Beavers had decided they were ready to play as they dominated the final eight minutes outscoring the Cowboys 24-5 and sealed the win 58-39. The Cowboys five points all came in the final 63 seconds on a 3-point basket by Wilkens and two free throws by Hillmer with 54 seconds left.

With more than five minutes left Coach Raymer decided it was time to try to get the ball and started having his players foul the Beavers. For the season the Beavers had been a 50 percent free throw shooting team, but in the final minutes the Beavers hit 13 of 15 free throws to extend the lead. At the same time the Cowboys



Cowboy senior Brock Wilkens (above) led the scoring on Friday with 13. Senior Hazen Deeds (above right) played in the fourth quarter pushing the ball up the court trying to find a way to score. Junior Reed Bellamy (right) skied for a shot in the first half against Scott City on Friday. Bellamy came off the bench and had two key 3-point shots to help put the Cowboys ahead by 11 points.

Photos by Traci Price-Waugh/The Goodland Star-News



couldn't get a basket to fall and missed 3 of 5 free throws.

Wilkens led the Cowboys scoring with 13, Hillmer 10, Bellamy 8, Cowan 6 and Trachsel 2.

Brett O'Neill, the coach's son led Scott City with 16, Baker 14, Braeden Robinson 9, Joey Meyer 7, Mason Turner, Tyler Hess and Drew Kite each had 4.

Saturday the Beavers faced Holcomb in the sub state championship and won 77-44.

The Beavers (22-1) are the No. 2 seed in the Class 3A State Championships and will play the No. 7 seed Riverton (13-8) in Hutchinson on Thursday. The winner will play on Friday against the winner of the Wichita-Collegiate (21-2) vs Hutchinson-Trinity (18-5).

On the girls Class 3A side the Hays Thomas More Prep-Marion Lady Monarchs defeated Southwestern Heights-Kismet 46-43

for the sub state championship on Saturday.

The Lady Monarchs are going back to the state tournament with a chance to defend their title from last year. The Lady Monarchs will play on Wednesday against Richmond-Central Heights. Both teams have 19-4 records. The winner will play on Friday against the winner of the Wednesday game between the No. 1 seed Winchester-Jefferson County (23-0) and No. 8 seed Fredonia (15-8).

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School calendar for March 9-15

Wednesday: Gold day State Basketball 7:30 a.m.: PLC 4 p.m.: Central Site Council
Thursday: Black day State Basketball West School Spring pictures End of Third Nine Weeks
Friday: NO SCHOOL-Teacher Professional Day State Basketball
Saturday: State Basketball
Sunday: Daylight Savings Time Begins
Monday: Gold day Board of Education meeting
Tuesday: Black day 6:30 a.m.: GHS Site Council

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