

Mustangs rally for win over Forgan, 55-53

Wednesday, 03 February 2010 12:57

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By RICK YEARICK AND EARL WATT

- Daily Leader

Those who left the Corral at Southwestern Heights at half missed one of the best comebacks in Mustang history.

After trailing by 14 at half to the undefeated No. 2 Forgan Bulldogs, the Mustangs rallied with a 24-8 run in the second half to earn a 55-53 win.

Forgan built an early lead. Freshman Jake Regier hit two three pointers in the first quarter and three more in the second while the Bulldogs outpaced the Mustangs in a physical contest in the first half.

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Forgan built a 16-11 lead after the first quarter, and the Forgan show continued in the second when Rhett and Ryan Radcliff combined to provide stifling defense and key baskets.

Heights struggled to make shots while the Radcliffs scraped the boards. By half, Forgan jumped out to a 33-19 halftime lead.

As much as the Bulldogs dominated the first half, the Mustangs took control in the second.

Senior Wes Winfrey hit three three-pointers in the third quarter to lead the rally. Cory Ryan added eight of his 14 points in the third quarter.

With the Heights offense clicking, the momentum poured over to the Mustang defense. Forgan's Regier was shut out in the third quarter, and the Radcliffs combined for Forgan's only eight points in the period.

By the end of the third quarter, the Mustangs erased the 14 point deficit and had a two-point lead.

But the rally forced the Mustangs to use a lot of energy, and the Bulldogs were able to surge back to a four-point lead early in the fourth quarter.

With 2:56 to play, the Mustangs were able to tie the game, 49-49.

With 24 seconds to play, the Mustangs had a 54-53 lead, and Forgan had the ball out of bounds. But Regier could not find an open Bulldog and was called for a five second violation.

Forgan was forced to foul, but the Mustangs struggled to put the game out of reach at the free throw line.

Forgan had a chance to tie or take the lead, but Sigala knocked the ball out of Radcliff's hands, and the ball appeared to be headed out of bounds, but it hit the referee's leg and remained in play. Sigala scooped it up and was fouled.

With eight seconds to play, Oscar Sigala hit a free throw to give the Mustangs a 55-53 lead.

With 1.1 seconds to play, Forgan attempted a Hail Mary pass, but the Bulldogs were unable to get off a shot as time expired

"I was proud of my kids," Mustang coach Chad Novack said. "Being down by 14, you can throw in the towel,. The Forgan team has great talent. This was a much-needed victory to get our swagger back after losing to Syracuse and Leoti in overtime. We have not played well for four games. We have to work on our free throws and two footers."

The loss was the first of the season for the Bulldogs.

"We were outplayed by a quality team," Forgan coach Todd Kerr said. "They exposed our weaknesses, and our game management needs to improve on the floor and on the bench, but they are correctable things."

Winfrey scored 15 for the Mustangs, Ryan had 14, Jacob Flores scored 12, and Cody Eakes had 10.

Regier led the Bulldogs with 17, Ryan Radcliff scored 13, and Rhett Radcliff scored 11.

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