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By JASON EPP
Leader & Times

TURPIN, Okla.-One bad stretch is all it took. The Turpin Lady Cardinals hung tough with the Laverne Lady Tigers for almost the entire game, but a bad stretch to end the first half led to a 54-36 loss.

"We were better tonight," Lady Cardinals coach Jeff Funk said. "We hung with them for three quarters, but they wore us down a little at the end. I was very proud of our effort tonight."

Turpin started poorly with turnovers on four of their first five possessions before they could even get a shot attempt. But Turpin righted the ship midway through the quarter. Alyssa Kinser scored the first Lady Cardinals' basket, then followed it up with a three, and less than thirty seconds later got a steal she converted into a layup to put Turpin up 7-5.

Laverne quickly hit their first of eight threes to regain the lead, but Turpin scored the final six

points of the quarter to go up 13-8.

The two teams traded baskets until Laverne was able to knot the game at 19 with 3:51 left in the first half. That basket started a 12-0 run that included a pair of threes that put the Lady Tigers up by 10.

Turpin was able to cut the lead back to a single digit at half (29-21), but never recovered from the run.

"Number 10 is their best shooter, and we were afraid she'd get hot, and she did," Funk said. "We tried to stay close to her, but they found ways to get her space. They're pretty good inside too so we had to take that away first."

In the third, Laverne got to the line for their points. The Lady Tigers made their fifth three of the game with 5:47 left in the quarter to go up 34-23. Laverne went 6-10 at the line the rest of the quarter, and did not make another shot from the field until another three rained down at the buzzer to make the score 43-31.

Turpin opened the quarter with a pair of trips to the line and cut the lead back to nine with 6:09 left, but could get no closer the rest of the way.

"The thing that was great for us is we had five girls score and we've had trouble with that," Funk said. "We worked really hard on our man offense, and I thought it paid off tonight. Were not as talented so we have to be really good at what we do."

Ashley Funk led the Lady Cardinals with 13 points, and Alyssa Kinser added 12, including a pair of threes.

Turpin (1-7) will return to action after the Christmas break when they take on Shattuck at the Oil Center Classic Tournament in Woodward, Okla., Jan. 9th at 3 p.m.

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