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By EARL WATT

• Leader & Times

Liberal responded to a first-round loss to Palmer Ridge with a 60-47 win over Hugoton Friday at the Orange and Black Classic in Colby.

The two teams, only 40 miles apart in Southwest Kansas, traveled the three-and-a-half hours to Colby for the tournament, and both lost in the first round.



But in the consolation match-up, Liberal coach Scott Hinkle shuffled his line-up, and he liked what he saw.

“Our effort was a lot better,” he said. “We started a young line-up. Deladrius (Green), Hayden (Coker), Kylan Thomas, Jared Hasik and (Tim) Fitzgerald. We went with youth, trying to get a breath of fresh air, and give some kids a chance who deserved it. Hasik had 14 — that sparked us.”

The Redskins jumped out early against the Eagles with six different Redskins scoring in the first eight minutes. Hasik and Cade Hinkle each hit a three-pointer, and Elmer Quintana, Thomas, Green and Coker each made a basket to push the Redskins out to a 15-6 lead.

Liberal’s defense continued to disrupt Hugoton in the second quarter. The Eagles made two

Redskins go young, defeat Hugoton

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baskets in the period, but were fouled on both and were able to convert both free throws, but Liberal built a 25-12 lead at half.

Hugoton surged in the second half, but the Redskins were able to match the Eagles point for point, and by the end of the third quarter Liberal led 42-30.

Hugoton forced the Redskins to make free throws in the fourth quarter, and the Redskins shot 20 and made 12 of them to secure the 60-47 win.

“We pressured them full court man on makes, and dropped back in man,” Hinkle said. “It was the first time we did that all year long. It sped things up, put pressure on them. They tried the same thing. We executed the offense.”

Hinkle said executing the offense was a requirement for the younger players.

“They play without any fear,” he said. “They know if they want to play, they have to execute the offense. That is what is saving them right now.”

Hinkle also said it was the work of his assistants that had the younger players ready.

“A lot of credit had to go to (Ryan) Petty and (Eric) Olmstead,” he said. “They have these kids ready on the JV for this. It has been a huge help. It was a good game for them to play in and even better to win.”

Hasik led the Redskins with 14 points. Coker scored eight, and Hinkle added eight.

Liberal faced Colby Saturday in a fourth-place contest.

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