

By JASON EPP

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This was not how it was supposed to end.

Not after a state tournament appearance last year with a group of freshman and sophomores leading way. Not after a spectacular regular season and run through district and regionals. But as they say that is why they play the games, as the No.2 Forgan Bulldogs were upset for the second night in a row losing to the Vici Indians 50-39 in the area consolation championship in Woodward.

“No one gets a free pass,” said Bulldogs coach Todd Kerr. “You have to earn it on the floor.”



Just how out of character were these loses? Timberlake and Vici went 7-6 averaging a four-point win versus common opponents with Forgan. Forgan was 14-0 against those same opponents, averaging a 28-point win in those games.

For Forgan it had to feel like there was a lid on the basket. Forgan took 51 shots from the field compared to 25 for Vici, yet Forgan only made one more basket than the Indians. The Bulldogs made only 3 of 22 from three-point range, and faired only slightly better inside the arc (10 of 29).

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Even with all of this, Forgan battled to a 22-21 lead at the half.

Vici took a 27-22 lead early in the third, but a 7-0 run helped the Bulldogs reclaim the lead at 29-27 late in the third. Tanner Jones and Tyler McReynolds were both hit with their fourth fouls in the third and Ryan Radcliff picked up his third.

Vici regained the lead from Forgan at 37-36 with 4:20 left in the game. Vici was able to get to the free throw line even before Forgan was forced to put them there making 21 of 27 in the game.

For the second night in a row, the Bulldogs struggled to score late. Rhett Radcliff scored the only Bulldog field goal over the final 6:40 of the game with 2:37 left to cut the Vici lead to three.

But from there Vici sunk free throws and limited Forgan's opportunities to earn their way to the state tournament.

Brandon Gregory had a monster night and Forgan's defense could not find the answer to stop him as he finished with 27 points.

"He (Gregory) is a really; really good player and he had a great night," said Kerr. "He had a great night shooting free throws, we weren't able to contain him well enough to get the job done."

The Bulldogs were led in scoring by Ryan Radcliff with 19, and Rhett Radcliff with 8.

Coach Kerr was obviously disappointed with the outcome, but still looks back on the complete season as a success.

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“There are a ton of things I’m proud about with this team,” said Kerr. “They worked hard for me; they did everything that I asked. The season did not end the way we wanted it to end, but only one team gets to end it that way. When you go win 25 games and play the way we played all season, you don’t discount that just because you don’t reach your final goal. Super bunch of kids, and I count it a blessing to coach them.”