



TOP

'Cats Crash Bluff Homecoming

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By Andrew Cato, ShowMe Times Sports

POPLAR BLUFF, Mo. - After a disappointing conclusion to regular season action at home, the Bearcats found themselves on the road at Poplar Bluff. It was Bluff's Senior Night and Homecoming, and the 'Cats were out for revenge after having their own Senior Night crashed Friday (Feb 11). It was a defensive struggle throughout the game, with 20-plus points being scored only in one quarter, but the Bearcats came out on top with a 41-26 final score.

Dexter came out making sloppy passes in the opening frame, throwing at least three passes out of bounds, and Poplar Bluff capitalized on every missed opportunity. Rhys Griffith drained a three at the 6:30 mark, but was quickly answered by Dexter's Alan Flannigan. The two teams took turns missing from beyond the arc for the next two minutes. Tyler Miller hit one of two free throws to put the 'Cats in the lead with three minutes remaining in the opening frame. Bryn Hester picked off an errant pass from Ike Anders and dropped in two points with a minute left on the clock. D'Markus Patterson stripped the ball from Logan Robey with eight seconds left in the first, but couldn't connect on the half-court shot at the buzzer. The 'Cats held a slim 8-7 lead after one quarter of play.

Jake Cox opened the second quarter with a three for the Bearcats, pushing their lead to four points. Dexter's defense really came alive in the second quarter, with Cox and Taylor

Jarrell making steals and Flannigan blocking a shot. Poplar Bluff took their only lead of the game at the 2:00 mark, thanks to a three from Michael Griggs. Jarrell dropped in an easy layup for the 'Cats to retake the lead, and two free throws from Miller pushed the 'Cats ahead by three going into halftime.

Cox was again good from three-point land in the beginning of the third quarter, but was quickly answered by Anders. Miller and Flannigan each contributed one and two blocks, respectively. The Bearcats were able to put up 10 unanswered points, but Anders completed a three-point play for the Mules to stop the scoring spree. Flannigan hit a shot from the free throw line at the buzzer to give Dexter a 12 point lead after three quarters.

Dexter's defense continued with its superb play in the fourth quarter, with Flannigan and Hester each making steals and holding the Mules to only three points. Hester was good for two free-throws at the 6:45 mark to increase the 'Cats' lead to 15 points. Anders completed a three-point play, with just under two minutes left in the game, for the Mules' only points of the quarter. The 'Cats burned the last minute of the clock, and ended with a 15 point victory.

"I knew this game wasn't going to get out of the 40's," said Dexter head coach Rob Nichols after the game. "That's just the style they [Poplar Bluff] play; they play great defense and control the tempo on offense."

"Lamont [Frazier, PBHS head basketball coach] just does such a good job of taking away your stuff," Nichols continued. "They scout you so well that you have to bury what you're trying to do offensively."

"Jake [Lee], Alan [Flannigan], and [Taylor] Jarrell all rebounded really well tonight, and that's a big key for us. We need to limit people to one shot, and we did a good job of that tonight."

The 'Cats will have a tough road test Friday (Feb. 18) night at Cape Central.

"They [Cape Central] are state-ranked in Class 5, and they've got great size," Nichols said. "They've also got a Division I prospect in one of their point guards. We'll have to go over there and play our best game of the season."

Tipoff Friday night is scheduled at 6:00 p.m. for JV, with Varsity action following.

Photos above *Top Photo: Tyler Miller defends an Ike Anders layup attempt.*
Bottom photo: Jake Lee advances the ball against defensive pressure from Poplar Bluff's Nick Shrum.

	1st Q	2nd Q	3rd Q	4th Q	FINAL
DEXTER	8	11	16	6	41
POPLAR BLUFF	7	9	7	3	26

DEXTER	FG	3s	FT	TOTAL
Cox	--	2	--	6
Hester	2	--	2-3	6
Flannigan	6	1	3-4	18
Lee	2	--	0--	4
Miller	1	--	3-4	5
Jarrell	1	--	--	2

POPLAR BLUFF	FG	3s	FT	TOTAL
Griffith	--	1	--	3
Griggs	1	1	--	5
McCain	1	--	1-2	3
Anders	2	1	2-2	9
Shrum	3	--	--	6

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