



TOP

'Cats Drop Close Contest At Scott City

DECEMBER 21ST 2011 BY UNKNOWN

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By Andrew Cato, ShowMe Times Sports Editor

SCOTT CITY - Poor free throw shooting has been the deciding factor in basketball games throughout the sport's history. One of the newest addition to the list can be the Bearcats' performance against the Scott City Rams on Tuesday (Dec. 21) night, where the 'Cats were an abysmal 8 for 23 (0 for 6 in the fourth quarter alone) from the charity stripe in a 65-62 loss.

"We got in a free throw shooting contest with them, and we aren't going to win many of those at this point," head coach Rob Nichols said after the game. "Did we play well? No. Were we ready to play? No. Mentally, I don't think we were. We got beat by the better team tonight."

The 'Cats jumped out to a quick 12-6 lead midway through the first quarter before the Rams clawed back within three at the end of the frame. The game was closely officiated, with each team having players in foul trouble and being in double-bonus at the end of the first quarter.

Brad Potts hit a quick jumper to open the second quarter, but Ryan Brock completed an old-fashioned three point play at the 5:30 mark to give the Rams their first lead of the contest.

The Rams went on to score 14 unanswered points until Tyler Miller dropped in a layup at the 1:40 mark. Miller went on to hit a three in the last minute of the quarter to bring the score to 39-30 in favor of the Rams heading into halftime.

The Bearcats' outside shooting picked up during the third quarter, with Chase Young and Cody Neldon knocking down threes to pull Dexter within six at the 2:00 mark. Miller picked up his fourth foul early in the frame, and didn't play for the majority of the third. The Rams were able to hold on to a six point, 52-46 lead after the third quarter.

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3:00 mark. Jake Lee drew a charge to help the Bearcats chip the Rams' lead down to 60-57 with 2:00 left in the game.

Miller hit another trey at the 1:20 mark, followed quickly by a 10-footer from Jordan Fitts to bring the score to 64-62. Nichols called a timeout with :15 left in the contest to draw up the Bearcats' last play.

Lee was fouled on the next play to send him to the line for a pair of free throws. After missing the first, Lee rebounded his own miss on the second shot and was fouled for two more free throws. After missing both shots, the 'Cats quickly had to foul Zach Cotner to stop the clock with two seconds left. Cotner knocked down one of his two free throws to seal the 65-62 win for the Rams.

"At this point, I'm not even worried about [the loss]; I'm more disappointed in our lack of composure, and I want to apologize for some of the things I saw out on the court," Nichols said of his squad. "I don't know if everyone else saw it, but that's not the way we need to act out on the court. Win or lose, that's the biggest thing I'm disappointed in."

The JV squad was able to pick up their first regulation win of the season with a 47-26 victory. Stevie Payne paced the young 'Cats with 19 points, while Jacob Murdock finished with six and Blake Horton with five.

The 'Cats won't be in action again until the 55th annual Bloomfield Christmas Tournament, where they earned the No. 5 seed, when they take on No. 12 South Pemiscot on Monday (Dec. 26).

"Right now I just hope we can go out and be positive people on the floor; play hard, not show negative emotion," Nichols said of the upcoming matchup. "If we can do that,

maybe wins and losses can start to take care of itself, but at this point, I'm more worried about that."

Tip is set for 2:30 p.m. from Bloomfield High School.

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