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Wildcats Hold Off Late Surge From Indians

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The Bloomfield Wildcats and Puxico Indians met in the nightcap of Day Two. The matchup between the No. 4 Wildcats and No. 5 Indians looked to be a blowout early in the game, but a second half resurgence by Puxico nearly sent the Wildcats packing. The 'Cats utilized clutch free throw shooting down the stretch to ice a 73-65 victory.

Austin Cooper's 12 point effort in the first quarter helped the Wildcats open with a 17-2 run. The Indians were able to knock down three late free throws to end the first quarter down 20-5.

Cory Messer knocked down a three for the Indians at the 5:10 mark in the second, but the Wildcats' defense stepped up and held the Tribe to just nine points in the frame. Bloomfield carried a 33-14 lead into the locker room at halftime.

Tim Hancock dropped in a layup to open the second half for the Indians. Both teams traded baskets until Hancock knocked down a pair of free throws to pull the Tribe within 20 at the 5:15 mark. Matt Camden and Messer knocked down a three late in the third, and Messer's 11 point effort helped the Indians within 11 at the end of the frame.

The Indians pulled within eight points after a pair of Hancock free throws at the 5:30 mark. Camden and Nathan Martin unleashed a barrage of three pointers; the Wildcats were able to maintain their lead by knocking down 17 of 24 free throws in the fourth quarter. The Indians pulled within seven with just over a minute left, but Bloomfield weathered the storm to take home a 73-65 victory.

Messer paced the Tribe with 19 points. Martin added 14, and Camden put in 11 points.

Adam Vandiver led the Wildcats with 21 points and nine boards; Cooper added 18, while Logan Cowart netted 14 points.

Bloomfield will face the host Dexter Bearcats in Thursday's nightcap; tipoff for the Varsity semifinal contest is set for 8:30 p.m.

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