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# Young 'Cats, DPR Host Tournament

FEBRUARY 27TH 2012 BY UNKNOWN

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*By Andrew Cato, ShowMe Times Sports Editor*

The third and fourth grade Dexter Bearcats hit the courts on Saturday afternoon when they competed in the Stoddard County Mayhem tournament. The 'Cats took on fourth grade teams from Kennett and New Madrid in the all-day event.

"We tried to get five teams, but just couldn't get that fifth team," third grade coach Dave Ellinghouse said. "We got Kennett and New Madrid to come up, tried to get Jackson and Charleston, but just couldn't get a fifth team."

"We wanted the third grade boys to play some better teams," he continued. "We thought we might get Jackson's third grade team down here; we saw them play at the Farmington tournament the week before, and knew they were pretty good."

Ellinghouse noted the tournament wouldn't have been possible without the support of Jamie Rowe and the Dexter Parks and Recreation department.

"I talked to Jamie about putting it together, and she said they would be glad to host it," he said. DPR opened up it's newest facility, located next to the Dexter Aquatic Center, for the tournament.

Due to the small field, the tournament was set up with a three-game round robin

tournament to determine seeding, followed by a single elimination bracket later in the day. The third grade squad struggled against their older opponents early in the day, but Ellinghouse said it was good for his team to face the tougher competition.

"Kennett had a big kid inside, had a couple quick guards," he said. "Had them within four with about a minute left; went with a small lineup to try to press them and get steals, 'speed' them to death. Wound up with two or three unforced turnovers, and lost by nine."

"We lost to New Madrid by six," Ellinghouse continued. "They had a big kid that scored 10 or 12 points, and we missed 12 free throws, so there's the difference right there. A third grader scoring 10 points is a lot."

The fourth grade 'Cats, coached by Darren Hillis and Steve Wyman, made quick work of both the Kennett and New Madrid teams during round-robin play. The coaches elected to skip the round robin matchup between the two Dexter teams, as the two would immediately rematch in the first round of bracket play.

The fourth grade 'Cats were able to pick up a win over the younger 'Cats and move into the Championship Game. Kennett dispatched New Madrid in the other bracket contest to seal the Championship matchup.

The fourth grade Bearcats cruised to a big win over Kennett in the tournament finals to take home first place.

The Stoddard County Mayhem tournament was the final tournament of the year for the third grade squad, who ended the season with a 14-5-1 record; the 'Cats also averaged a 16 point margin of victory in their wins.

The fourth grade squad finished the year with a 22-2 record; their two losses came against a fifth grade team out of Bernie and a team out of Park Hills, Mo., with only total points deciding the two losses.

***Thanks SMT Reader and Bearcat Mom Amy Ellinghouse for the photos!***

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