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# Mules Win! Mules Win! Bernie Wins Christmas Tournament!

DECEMBER 31ST 2014 BY DEE LOFLIN

Mules Win! Mules Win! Bernie Wins Christmas Tournament!

**Bloomfield, Missouri** – The Bernie Mules won the 58<sup>th</sup> Annual Bloomfield Christmas Tournament on Tuesday evening in front of a packed crowd of fans!


The Mules jumped on the board first and were able to secure a 6 to 7 point lead throughout the duration of the game with the exception of a few close calls. At the end of the first period they led by only one point. Bernie scored double digits in each of the four periods to secure their win over Kennett 49 – 45.

“We kept getting it up to seven, eight or nine and then they would fight right back,” commented Bernie head basketball coach Brad Botsch. “A good program like Kennett is going to do that. Coach Vaughan is one of the best coaches in the area. His kids are going to play hard. They gave us trouble with their pressure, but you cannot say enough about a kid like Matt Vernon and his ball-handling tonight. He had two guys on him pretty well all night and still found a way to get us into our defense.”

Kennett’s Carlos Turner tallied a team-high 11 points including three 3-pointers. Rantrell Caruthers finished with 9 points before fouling out. He also hit one trey. Andre Oliver and Jad Kenny each scored 8 points.

Matt Vernon, a senior, scored 11 points for the Mules. “We just wanted to execute Coach Botsch’s game plan,” stated Vernon. “If we got the lead we could control the tempo and that’s what we wanted to do.”

Powerhouse Caleb Ellenburg tallied a game-high 23 points including one 3-pointer. “We worked really hard and we thought we could win this tournament coming in,” Bernie athlete Caleb Ellenburg stated. “We knew we were the four seed and had some work to do, but we were really ready to win it. Most of us were here last year on the team and we were really excited to get another chance at Kennett.”

“Caleb had an outstanding tournament,” Botsch  stated. “He does what he does. He hits tough shots. Just when you think you cannot hit that shot he will take it up over two or three guys that are three or four inches taller than him and knock it down. You just cannot say enough about him and the rest of the kids on our team. Everybody on our team contributed in a positive way tonight.”

Bernie (10-1) will take a break for about a week and return to action on Tuesday, January 6, 2015 when they travel to Oran.

“We are not one of those teams that is going to walk in here and show-off our offensive fire power,” Botsch said. “We are going to have to grind things out. These kids have worked hard all summer for this moment. They lift weights and religiously put in the time. That kind of culminates tonight when you get to celebrate a championship!”

“I just cannot say enough about how hard our kids fought and the heart they displayed,” continued Botsch. “They played all out and had an everything you got performance.”

### **Final Score #4 Bernie Mules 49, #3 Kennett Indians 45**

Bernie 11 12 14 12 - 49

Kennett 10 9 13 13 - 45

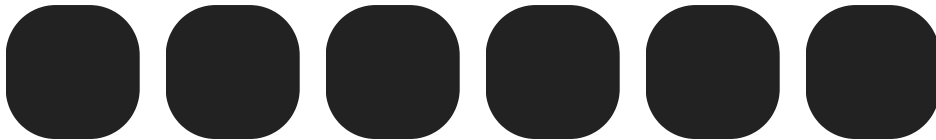
**Bernie (49)** – Caleb Ellenburg 23, Brandon Sparks 6, Matt Vernon 11, Gavin Smith 4, devin Trammell 5. FG 21, FT 5/9, F 16. (3-pointers: Ellenburg 1, Trammell1. Fouled Out: Trammell)

**Kennett (45)** – Carlos Turner 11, Andre Oliver 8, Jaylean Kinnon 2, Jad Kenny 8, Rantrell Caruthers 9, Fred Gooden 5, Jarvis Stewart 2. FG 14, FT 12/16, F 16. (3-pointers: Caruthers 2, Turner 3. Fouled Out: Caruthers.)

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## Bernie Mules Earn a Trip to the Bloomfield Christmas Tournament Championship Game!

DECEMBER 30TH 2014 BY DEE LOFLIN

[Bernie Mules Earn a Trip to the Bloomfield Christmas Tournament Championship Game!](#)

**Bloomfield, Missouri** - The 58<sup>th</sup> Annual Bloomfield Christmas Tournament will be a rematch between the Bernie Mules and the Kennett Indians. The Indians came out on top last year and have won four of the last five Bloomfield Christmas Tournaments. Holcomb defeated Kennett in 2012.

The #4 seeded Mules defeated the #1 seed Hayti in semifinal action on Monday 45-38 in overtime. Bernie and Hayti entered overtime tied at 36 all.

"I am really proud of our kids tonight," Stated Bernie head basketball coach Brad Botsch. "We didn't play real clean tonight though. Hayti probably didn't feel like they did either, but I am real proud of our kids for getting another gutsy win. We knew at the beginning of the year we were going to have a lot of games like this and they would come down to the wire. I am just proud of them for finding a way to get it done!"

Brandon Burden tallied a team-high 12 points for the Kennett Indians. Idaqual Presberry scored 10 points and Devan Riddick hit three 3-pointers adding 11 points to the board. Will Smith hit one trey.

Caleb Ellenburg scored a game-high 25 points for the Mules including one trey. Matt Vernon finished with 8 points and one trey. Brandon Sparks recorded 7 points including a 3-pointer and Devin Trammell scored 5 points including a trey.

Bernie finished the first period with a one point lead over Hayti and only increased the gap by four at the half.

Hayti's defense all but shut down the Mules' scoring in the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter holding them to just 3 points. It was really in overtime that the Mules came alive and prevented the Indians from scoring.

"We have got to have better third quarters," continued Botsch. "We played timid out of halftime and I don't know why. It was like we were scared to miss a shot."

"They had run a couple of sets that they had gotten some looks out of," Botsch said of Hayti's inability to score in the last two minutes of overtime. "We kind of told the kids what we thought they were going to do and took it away."

### **Final score #4 Bernie 45, #1 Hayti 38 (OVERTIME)**

Bernie 12 11 3 10 (9) - 45

Hayti 11 8 11 6 (2) - 38

**Bernie (45)** – Matt Vernon 8, Brandon Sparks 7, Caleb Ellenburg 25, Devin Trammell 5. FG 16, FT 9/11, F 7. (3-pointers: Vernon 1, Sparks 1, Ellenburg 1, Trammell 1. Fouled Out: None).

**Hayti (38)** – Devan Riddick 11, Will Smith 5, Indaqual Presberry 10, Brandon Burden 12. FG 16, FT 2/5, F 12. (3-pointers: Riddick 3, Smith 1. Fouled Out: Farr).

Bernie last won the title at the Bloomfield Christmas Tournament in 2008.

“Anytime you get a chance to play for the championship it is special, especially up here,” stated Botsch. “This is the fourth one we have played in since Coach Long and I have been here. We have won one and lost two and I told the guys ‘we would sure like to be .500 after this next one.’ We are going to come out and give it all we have. We are going to face a good team and hopefully we will be ready to go Tuesday night.”

***Tonight's championship game begins at 8:30 p.m. in Bloomfield!***

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# Mules Beat Twin Rivers in Game 14 of the Bloomfield Christmas Tournament

DECEMBER 29TH 2014 BY DEE LOFLIN

## Mules Beat Twin Rivers in Game 14 of the Bloomfield Christmas Tournament

**Bloomfield, Missouri** – The #4 seeded Bernie Mules took control and secured their win over Twin Rivers Saturday at the 58<sup>th</sup> Annual Bloomfield Christmas Tournament by a score of 51 – 36.

Seth Snider tallied a team-high 12 points for Twin Rivers. Chance Wilkerson hit one 3-pointer.

Caleb Ellenburg paced the Mules with 21 points including one trey. Brandon Sparks tallied 13 points and Gavin Smith finished with 10 points.

Bernie is scheduled to go against top-seeded Hayti on Monday in the championship semifinal at 7:00 p.m.

Hayti is undefeated and seeded in first defeated #8 South Pemiscot 64-51 in a quarterfinal match-up on Saturday.

Twin Rivers will play South Pemiscot at 4:00 p.m. on Monday.

### Final Score #4 Bernie 51, #5 Twin Rivers 36

Twin Rivers 12 5 6 13 - 36

Bernie 12 7 12 20 - 51

**Twin Rivers (36)** – Jase Worley 4, Chance Wilkerson 5, Andrew Mittelstadt 6, Josh Suiter 9, Seth Snider 12. FG 17, FT ½, F 17. (3-pointers: Wilkerson 1. Fouled Out: None)

**Bernie (51)** – Matt Vernon 7, Brandon Sparks 13, Caleb Ellenburg 21, Gavin Smith 10. FG 16, FT 18/22, F 5. (3-pointers: Ellenburg 1. Fouled Out: None)

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## Bernie Puts Away the Eagles in Game 4 of the Bloomfield Christmas Tournament

DECEMBER 27TH 2014 BY DEE LOFLIN

[Bernie Puts Away the Eagles in Game 4 of the Bloomfield Christmas Tournament](#)

**Bloomfield, Missouri** – It was definitely one of the most exciting games of the Bloomfield Christmas Tournament thus far. The #4 Bernie Mules utilized Matt Vernon’s scoring ability to secure their win over East Prairie 76 – 67.

East Prairie led at the end of the first quarter 16 – 15.

Seth Bays recorded 5 treys tallying 15 points for the East Prairie Eagles. Brandon Evans scored a team-high 20 points and Deverance Jones added 11 points. Dylan Lingle and Dustin Bryars each added a trey.

Matt Vernon recorded a game-high 23 points for the Bernie Mules including three 3-pointers. Brandon Sparks tallied 18 points including 2 treys and Caleb Ellenburg finished with 14 points. Gavin Smith tallied 12 points and Devin Trammell recorded 7 points.

### **Final Score #4 Bernie 76, #13 East Prairie 67**

East Prairie 16 8 29 24 - 67

Bernie 15 20 20 21 - 76

**East Prairie (67)** – Set Bays 15, Dustin Bryars 3, Dylan Lingle 3, Mack Marcum 2, Brett Ellis 4, Cade Douglas 5, Deverance Jones 11, Nick Grubbs 2, Brandon Evans 20, Nate Owens 2. FG 28, FT 4/6, F 26. (3-pointers: Bays 5, Bryars 1, Lingle 1. Fouled Out: None).

**Bernie (76)** – Matt Vernon 23, Login Wood 2, Brandon Sparks 18, Caleb Ellenburg 14, Devin Trammell 7, Gavin Smith 12. FG 23, FT 25/35, F 11. (3-pointers: Vernon 3, Sparks 2. Fouled Out: None).

**East Prairie played Holcomb at 10:00 a.m. on Saturday defeating them 70 – 41.**

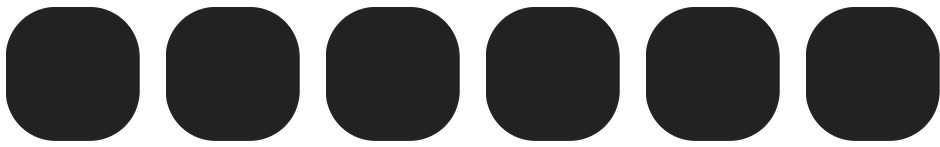
*East Prairie is slated to play at 1:00 p.m. in the Consolation Semi-final on Monday against either Richland or Saxony Lutheran. That game is scheduled for Saturday at 2:30 p.m.*

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## Bernie Mules Hold On For the Win at Bell City

DECEMBER 23RD 2014 BY DEE LOFLIN

Bernie Mules Hold On For the Win at Bell City

**Bell City, Missouri** – The Bernie Mules are having a great start to the 2014 season winning six games thus far and only dropping one game. They traveled to Bell City Friday evening and defeated the Cubs 65 – 62.

“We really didn’t deserve to win tonight,” stated Bernie boys basketball coach Brad Botsch. “Bell City vastly outplayed and out hustled us. They lit up us time after time from outside and we continually failed to get out and guard them.”

Caleb Ellenburg tallied a game-high 40 points for the Mules. Brandon Sparks recorded 10 points. Matt Vernon added 8 points.

Cole Nichols recorded a game-high six 3-pointers for Bell City and finished with 27 points. Bobby Wright tallied 12 points all treys. Kolten Siebert added 10 points including two 3-pointers and Nate Finney finished with 9 points including one trey.

Bernie jumped out to a 17-7 lead over Bell City in the first period and scored double digits in all four periods. Bell City outscored Bernie in the second period, but it was not enough to take the lead. They matched each other in the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> periods with 15 and 18 points respectively.

“I really saw this coming and tried to convey that to our kids, but we didn’t get up for this game like we should have and narrowly escaped with a win. We have to earn every victory and not feel entitled to get it,” continued Botsch. “Bell City really brought it tonight and you have to give the a lot of credit for pushing us to the brink of a loss. We have a lot of improvements to make and it all starts with our attitudes and being 100% coachable.”

Fourth seeded Bernie will travel to Bloomfield to participate in the 58<sup>th</sup> Annual Bloomfield Christmas Tournament on Friday. They take on the East Prairie Eagles at 2:00 p.m.

In JV action the Mules earned a forfeit win playing only two quarters due to not enough athletes for Bell City. The JV Mules have a record of 5-1.

### **Final Score Bernie 65, Bell City 62**

Bernie 17 15 15 18 - 65

Bell City 7 22 15 18 - 62

**Bernie (65)** – Matt Vernon 8, Blake Gilmore 1, Brandon Sparks 10, Caleb Ellenburg 40, Devin Trammell 2, Gavin Smith 4. FG 21, FT 22/38, F 20. (3pointers: Sparks 1. Fouled Out: None).

**Bell City (62)** – Nate Finney 9, Brandon Abner 2, Kolten Siebert 10, Cole Nichols 27, Jesse Smith 2, Bobby Wright 12. FG 23, FT 3/7, F 27. (3-pointers: Nichols 6, Wright 4, Siebert 2, Finney 1. Fouled Out: Finney, Smith.)

*Caleb Ellenburg is shown in the photo taken by Sierra Noel Waller.*

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