

# 62-45 tournament victory over East Forsyth boosts Parkland's confidence

BY SAM DAVIS  
THE CHRONICLE

With only one win and two losses to show for its participation in the Lash/Chronicle Tournament, Parkland's junior varsity team could have its head hung down.

But instead, the Mustangs are optimistic about their chances in the Piedmont Triad 3-A season. The Mustangs dropped their opening round game to Reynolds, then dropped another loss to Mount Tabor. However, both games were close and the Mustangs concluded their play in the tournament with a decisive victory over East Forsyth. Coach Dwain Aikens said his team finally began to work together during that game and understands what he's been trying to instill in them about teamwork.

Jeff Middleton scored 22 points, Brian Lloyd added 10 and

Jeremy Ray added eight as the Mustangs took a 62-45 win over the Eagles.

"I was very pleased that we got a win," Aikens said. "I thought we played a pretty good tournament based on where we were coming from at the start of the tournament. We started off fresh and I think the guys understand my concept now and what we're trying to do."

Although the team is composed of players with outstanding athletic talent, Aikens said the Mustangs didn't mesh as a unit until their battle with East.

"That was the key," Aikens said. "All season long he had been playing in spurts. We have some guys who are very talented, but when they play with other players it doesn't show. Sometimes a kid with a lot of talent can do you more harm than good if he's not working with his teammates. I



Photo by Bruce Chapman  
Parkland had moments in its loss to Mount Tabor. The Mustangs conclude tournament play with a victory over East Forsyth.

think we finally found the combinations that I think will work - especially against East. We started a different five every game. Now I think I have the guys who I think will do a lot of playing."

For one thing Aikens said he's found the player who will play in the post in Middleton. The Mustangs had moved Middleton around at the small forward and power forward. But he did the most damage while in the middle.

"That's his natural position," Aikens said. "He really doesn't have the height, but when we put him there he responded; he was our leading scorer throughout the tournament."

Middleton scored 17, 16 and 22 points, respectively in the tournament, and was among the tournament's leading scorers.

"He gradually increased his output throughout the tournament," Aikens said.

## Yellow Jackets

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same level. "Other than P.J. Jenkins, the team really isn't playing up to its potential," Scales said. "I really thought we would be playing better than we are right now."

In their opening win against East, Jenkins' inside play made the difference for Carver. Jenkins dominated the backboards on both ends and was surprisingly effective with his scoring. That allowed the Yellowjackets to break open a close game down the stretch.

"Really, I thought that was the best half that we played in the tournament," Scales said. "I thought we would get better and start gaining momentum. But it looked like we regressed from there."

The Yellowjackets got good play in spurts from Kedrick Martin, T.J. Walker and Koryell Williams. Williams did some damage in all three games in the tournament. However, his effort lacked the consistency that the Yellowjackets needed. Walker keyed Carver's second-half effort against East Forsyth with his leadership at point guard. With him running the show, the Yellowjackets' offense began to show continuity.

Martin's outside shooting kept the Yellowjackets close against North Forsyth and helped them cut a big lead in the second half against Glenn. But in both instances it was a case of too little too late.

"We're going back to basics," Scales said.



Photo by Bruce Chapman  
P.J. Jenkins gets two points in close.

"We have to work on the fundamentals. We had a lot of situations where we didn't do the little things. That's all I'm going to emphasize during the rest of the break. When we come back to school after the holidays I think we'll be a much better team. We'll just put this



Photo by Bruce Chapman  
Antonio Byrd scored 20 points in his team's loss to Glenn.

## Eagles grounded in Lash/Chronicle by turnovers, inconsistent play

BY SAM DAVIS  
THE CHRONICLE

It's starting to sound like a broken record for East Forsyth. After three games of participation in the Lash/Chronicle Tournament, the Eagles came away with no wins.

The Eagles started out well, pushing Carver to the limit in their opening-round game. However, the Eagles had trouble in the second half and lost to the Yellowjackets. From there, the Eagles had trouble taking flight again.

"We came out in the first half of that game and we were pumped up and focused," said coach Mike McCulloch. "We were up by one at halftime and probably played as well as we can. In the fourth quarter we started to unravel a little."

That's when McCulloch said the Yellowjackets' ability began to take over.

"They were a little bigger and a little stronger," McCulloch said. "We played hard, but they wore us down."

That game didn't leave as much in his craw as the next two games, when the Eagles lost to West Forsyth and Parkland.

"I was very disappointed in the second and third games," McCulloch said. "In the final game (a 62-45 loss), we played well in first and second quarter. But then we sort of unraveled again. We started out well and kind of went downhill from there."

The good thing, according to McCulloch, is the fact that the Eagles went up against outstanding talent and that should help

East in the Metro 4-A conference season.

"We played against good competition every night," he said. "It should make us better."

The Eagles will take a winless record into 2000.

"After the third game in the tournament I just said, 'Guys, we need to change our focus,'" McCulloch said. "I told them that we're not having fun. The energy is there, but not the focus and purpose."

"When we come back in the new year, we need to come back with focus to go with the energy," he added. "Good things are going to happen."

McCulloch was able to point to some positives.

"T.C. Witherspoon played

well," he said. "And Tyler Thomas did some good things. By the third game both of them started for the first time and were productive."

And there were lots of things the Eagles need to work on as they gear up for conference play.

"Our guards had lots of trouble getting the ball up the court," McCulloch said. "They did well when we did get the ball past half-court."

"We need to reduce our turnovers. We have to work on protecting the ball, being strong and making good passes. We really shot ourselves in the foot by making bad turnovers. Hopefully can do some ball-handling drills in practice to overcome the turnover problems."



Wayne Ford of East Forsyth is surrounded by Carver defenders.



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