

Consistency

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trigger at point guard and he gets ample assistance from partner Trey Baker. Thomas Hudson provides added depth.

"Guard play has been our strength and at the same time, it's been our weakness, too," said Phillis. "There are times when we execute our offense with sharp cuts to the basket and crisp passes and we get high-percentage shots. But on the next possession, we'll make bad passes, which result in turnovers. We have to be strong with the ball and make good decisions."

Although Atkins doesn't have much inside size, there's more than enough firepower on the roster, especially from the 3-point range. Eleven of the 12 players on the varsity roster have proven themselves as capable outside shooters.

Atkins picked up its first conference victory of the season in a 62-26 beat-down of Walkertown last Friday. The Camels turned the game into a rout in the first quarter and built what proved to be an insurmountable 29-3 lead at the half. Hagler led all scorers with 19 points. Saeed Muhammad and Baker contributed 11 points apiece.

"I'm happy to get the win," said Phillis. "Our guys need the confidence boost as we go deeper into conference play."

Phillis understands that his team has to show immediate improvement in two key areas in order to make its presence felt in the conference. The ability to effectively rebound, while reducing turnovers, he explained, will go a long way in helping the Camels contend.

"Rebounds and turnovers, those are the key items for us," he said. "It's mandatory that we box-out and do a good job of getting on the boards. We've got to be more physical down low and minimize our turnovers."



Photos by Craig T. Greenlee

Amari Quick of Atkins soars to the basket for a score.



Atkins forward Reese Sicut looks to pass to a teammate.



Photo by Craig T. Greenlee

Parkland's Chris Brown drives the baseline against Reagan's Tyler Carmer (34) as Tanner Nelson (50) closes in.

Victory

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in spite of minimal production from Ryan Ayers, who led the team in scoring over the past three weeks. Ayers, who averaged 17 points a game during that span, was held to one point for the game.

"I could tell right away that they had scouted us," said Noe. "They ran a box-and-one on Ryan in the first half and for most of the third quarter. By doing so,

they took him out of the game. With that being the case, everybody had to step up and they did. Knowing that 12 of the 13 players on our roster scored is pretty cool."

Although the Mustangs struggled, they managed to stay in contention for most of the first half. Micah Williams hit a jumper to pull Parkland to within six points of the lead (22-16) with four minutes left in the second quarter. But from that point on, Reagan gradually pulled away to build a comfortable cushion.

The one plus for Parkland was Damien Thacker's defense on Ayers. With Thacker shadowing Ayers on every possession, it took away from what he normally contributes at the offensive end. Thacker, an on-target outside shooter, finished with eight points.

It also didn't help the cause that Daniel Leal, the Mustangs other scoring threat, played limited minutes. This was Leal's first game back after being sidelined for three weeks with a back injury. Micah Williams and Leal scored 10

points apiece to lead Parkland.

"We just couldn't get our rhythm going," said coach James Williams of Parkland. "For some reason, we couldn't finish opportunities on offense. And on defense, we gave up a lot of easy baskets.

"Reagan's leading scorer only had one point, so that just goes to show that we weren't ready to play defense on the other four guys. We definitely weren't at our best, but there will be other days to play. Once we get our normal rotation back, I think we'll be fine."

Bobcats

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28 at intermission.

To its credit, Glenn refused to buckle under pressure. Paul Carlton, Elijah Scales, Miguel Morton and Bryson Bell-St. John took turns providing offense to keep the Bobcats in contention.

Over the final minutes of the third quarter, Glenn closed the gap for four points on a put-back by Christian Herbin (40-36) and again on Bell-St. John's 3-pointer (47-43 with 1:02 remaining). But every time Glenn would make a push, the Mavericks held steady and closed the quarter with 51-43 lead.

The Bobcats put together one final surge late in the fourth quarter. Micah Bennett, Morton and Scales led the way to trim the deficit to 63-56 with 2:34 left to play. Even in defeat, it wasn't a bad performance against a skilled Mallard Creek squad that was 12-1 for the season.

Leading the way for Glenn was Carlton and Scales, who finished with 14 points apiece. Mallard Creek got superb play from its backcourt tandem of Demitrios Dixon and Elliot Glenn, who scored 19 and 18 points respectively.

At this juncture, there's no doubt that the Bobcats have much work to do in order to become a factor in the Piedmont Triad 4-A Conference. There were too many instances in the fourth quarter against Mallard Creek when botched defensive assignments led to uncontested baskets from point-blank range.

"Defensively, everybody has to do a

better job of knowing where their man is [on the floor]," said Daniels. "We can't afford to have those mental lapses like we



did at the start of the fourth quarter. That's when they got it going and that's what determined the outcome of the game."

"On the other hand, I saw some good things. We're more patient running our offense. Once we get a better understanding of how to break the press and be more consistent in sharing the ball, I believe we're going to be all right."



Photo by Craig T. Greenlee

Glenn point guard Miguel Morton drives past Mallard Creek's Elliot Glenn (left) and Demitrios Dixon (right). Photo by Craig T. Greenlee