

# CAGE COMMENTS

West Montgomery's basketball aspirations have descended from that position so lofty they once held, mainly before the season started. Bad breads, the holiday layoff, the wrong game on the wrong night--all these reasons and perhaps others contributed to a season which borders the underside of mediocrity.

Four straight defeats, one by a two-point margin in three overtime periods, paved the way to West's first victory. The receiving team was Seagrove, the same group which bound West earlier by 65-63, and the score was 46-42 with West in front.

Immediately following this, a controversial loss to East Montgomery on their home court, 51-50, ran West's record to 1-5. Things were somewhat evened, at least conference-wise, when West gained victory number two--after the East upset --over Rohanen, 50-42.

This gave the Indian chargers a 1-1 conference record and a 2-5 overall slate after seven contests. Consecutive defeats by Siler City (37-27) and Randleman (42-28) ran the Warriors conference figures to 1-3. By the end of January and prior to West's second meeting with arch-rival East Montgomery; Ellerbe, Western Alamance, and Pinehurst, sent West tumbling to a 2-11 overall score.

Although the 11 in the lost column is not good, it isn't entirely indicative of the caliber ball played by the Warriors. For example, after holding a 24-22 halftime edge, West lost to Ellerbe's 1-A whiz kids in the final quarter 41-36; but not without reason. Charles Bruton was forced from the game early in the first half after a collision with the wall, and Gene Pridgen followed not long thereafter with an accumulation of fouls.

Against conference-leader Siler City, two cold offenses hammered at the basket unmercifully with J-M finally emerging victorious by 10 points. At Randleman, the offense had, apparently, not yet thawed. Results: 42-28.

A long trip to Western Alamance preceded a Warrior defeat. West, extremely accurate and well-rounded the first half, saw only a three point half-time disad-

vantage. A slump followed, and West, unable to continue at the blazing pace, fell behind 48-40 at the end of three quarters and the game finally ended 69-49. Only three days later, this same tribe challenged West at home, and a run for their money they were given. After falling behind 29-22 at the half, a brilliant final-period attack saw the lead chipped to nothing with West going ahead. Only by a stroke of misfortune were the Warriors forced to bow in the final seconds by two small points, 53-51.

A special added attraction came at this time, matching the forces of West against the tall stars-of-old called the Jaycees. West gained a victory here, edging the allstars of an age past, 35-32.

The final month of basketball action was begun with the final East-West clash of the season, at West this time. Again East emerged victorious, this time, 49-39. As one Eagle fan put it, "It wasn't that our boys were hot; it's that yours were cold."

A victory over Rohanen last week brings this sheet up to date with two games remaining (both conference) before the beginning of the Central Tarheel Tournament Competition, to be staged at the West Montgomery gymnasium on February 26 and 28 and March 1 and 2.

While the Warriors have been busily playing basketball, their female counterparts have not exactly been loafing. Although their record of two wins against thirteen losses is not as good as the boys, opportunities for redemption still remain.

Some slightly embarrassing scores have been posted; but, at the same time, there have been close games with unfortunate breaks also. For instance, take the season's opener against Ellerbe, lost by one point, 24-23. Later on the female fighters avenged this mishap by a decided 33-29 upheaval of this same squad. This victory immediately followed one against the Dixie Bells of Rohanen, 32-28, and gave the girls a 2 game winning streak, snapping a 26 game losing string run up during two years of play. Still yet, the Rohanen victory came on the same night as the boys' win over this

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