



Parkland's class of 1997 celebrated senior night by defeating Trinity 51-22 two weeks ago. The Mustangs, two-time State 3-A champions, advanced to the finals again before being denied a third state crown.

Shawn Sweet (above right) of Parkland goes after his opponent in the Mustangs win over Trinity to win up the North Piedmont 3-A Conference championship. Jay Bennett (left) sets his opponent up for a pin.

Photo by Tim S. Smith

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Cook bounces back from loss with big win,

Cook Middle School's 8th grade boys team bounced back from its first loss in two seasons by defeating Wiley, 56-30, on Feb. 5.

Cook used a balanced scoring attack to take the victory. The Cougars had 16 players to take the court for action and 12 of them scored.

Nathan Ernst's 16 points and seven assists led the Cougars' offensive effort. Michael Brinkley added 14 points and 10 rebounds.

Coach DeValden Penn of Cook said it took a total team effort to get the win.

Penn said he was proud of the way his defense played.

"Our team played very well on defense," he said. "That made our offense go. I've said since the start of the season that we have to play good defense in order to have a chance to win games."

The Cougars played well despite the fact that point guard Turner Battle is still nursing a foot injury.

But they got good games from several players to offset that loss. Derrelle Mitchell, Thomas Berrier, Matthew Brannon and Larken Egeton all stepped up with big games for Cook.

Penn said he was pleasantly surprised by the play of Egeton, who had not seen much playing action.

Cook kept its momentum going in their next game, on Feb. 5, by defeating Paisley by a 45-32 score. Derrelle Mitchell exploded for 17 points to pace the Cougars' scoring attack and also added seven rebounds and five steals. Michael Brinkley turned in another strong showing by scoring 14 points and grabbing 11 rebounds.

Chris Williams of Paisley scored 11 points and Calvin Truesdale added eight points, but it wasn't enough to get Paisley over the hump.

Battle returned to action after missing three games with his foot injury.

"He played well on defense and showed his leadership at the point guard position," Penn said. "I was able to also get some good play from players that have been less-used than others. Bobby Teachey played his best game of the season."

Cook extended its winning streak to three games when the Cougars took a 55-44 victory over Philo on Feb. 10.

Mitchell and Brinkley again led the Cougars' scoring attack. Mitchell tossed in 13 points and Brinkley backed him with 10 points. Turner Battle played well also, scoring 11 points.

Cook's defense again set the tone. The Cougars limited Philo to only 15 first-half points. Jay McCabe, Matthew Brannon and Nathan Ernst all came through with clutch performances for the Cougars.

"I am very proud of the way our team has come to play, since our first loss," Penn said. "I knew that we would all have to play good team defense to win games this season and we are coming with this task in mind. Our teams plays very unselfishly on offense. They don't mind giving up the ball to their teammates so they can score. The team from Philo was very scrappy and would not go away, but we played very hard and kept constant pressure on them."

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