

East JV hands Page first loss

BY ANTHONY HILL
THE CHRONICLE

Nothing has come easy for the East Forsyth JV boys squad (4-5) this season.

Each Eagle victory has seemingly come down to the wire. So has most of their defeats. Tuesday night's game was no different. The Eagles refused to let a win slip away, though. East handed Page (12-1) its first defeat of the season with a 37-28 win in the JV Game of the Week.

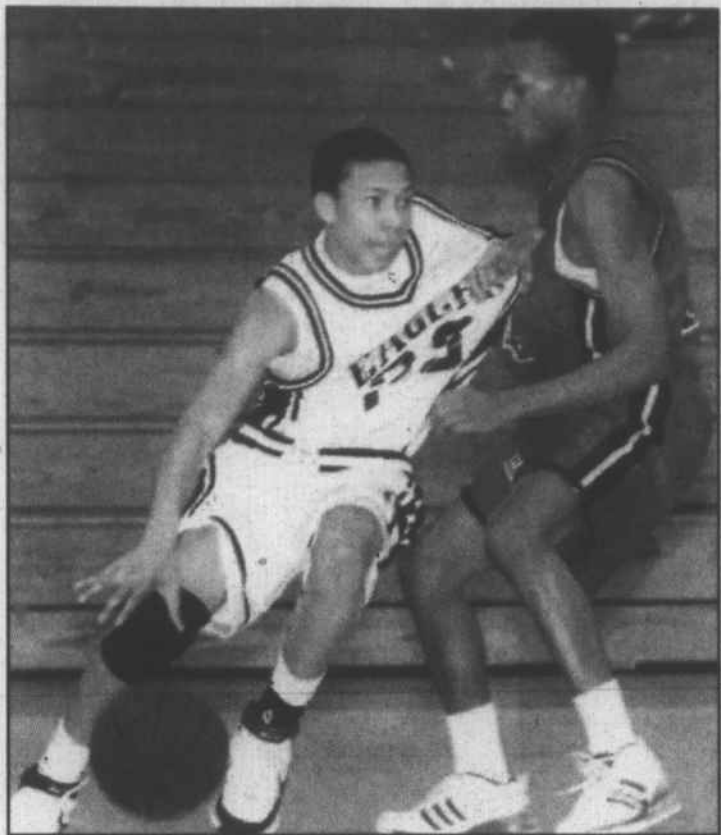
"I didn't know that was their first loss," said East head JV coach Eric Jones. "They're a well coached team. They came out kind of sluggish at first, just like us. But I'm extremely proud of the way my kids worked through this game. I'm proud of everyone on the team."

Both squads displayed solid defense throughout the opening half. East only allowed 5 points from Page in the first quarter, and 2 points in the second quarter. Page actually kept East without a single point in the second quarter, though.

"We definitely had a tough time adjusting tonight," said Page head JV coach Cleaver Rennie. "But we played good defense. We simply couldn't score. We lost our best player to the varsity, and we're a little erratic without him. No one stepped up for us tonight."

East took a slim 7-3 lead in the first quarter behind the play of Dominique Harris, Jamal McNeil and Jeremy Bethea. But Chris Perkinson and Antwan Cornwell tried to lead a charge for Page in the second quarter, helping their squad tie the score at 7 at halftime.

"I was very confident that my guys would get things going in the second half," Jones said. "We had to sit some guys out in the first half for disciplinary reasons. But the guys that did play took care of business and kept us in the game. They stepped up for us. That's what a team is all



East's Chris Gwyn drives past Page player on Tuesday night.

about. We're a team in every aspect. Like I said, I am proud of everyone."

Chris Gwyn gave the Eagles a well-needed offensive spark to start the second half with a 3-pointer to make the score 10-7. He scored four more quick points to make the score 14-11. DeQuan McKinney also played huge for East in the second half, breaking through the dangerous Page press to get the offense started. Players like Harris, Shane Hickerson, McNeil, Ty Cooper, Jon Brown II and Gwyn led a stifling defensive effort to keep Page off balance. East took leads of 20-15, 23-16, 29-20, 31-20 — before winning the contest by a score of 37-28.

"I thought we were going to turn things around in the second half," said Rennie. "But their little point guard. That number 20 (DeQuan McKinney) did a good job against our press in the second half. And, I was very

shocked they were able to step us with a zone defense. We've beaten every other zone team, handedly. That really surprised me. But hats off to them. They did what they had to do. We'll see them again."

Jones added: "We can't take anything for granted. We do have to play them again. But I'm confident in my guys. They work extremely hard in practice, so I feel like they can adjust to anything that goes on in a game, or any situation. I expect us to continue to improve through the season. So, we should be all right."

McNeil led East with 12 points, 11 rebounds and two blocks. Gwyn finished with 10 points, two steals — all coming in the second half. Harris finished with 8 points, five assists for the Eagles. East also received good play from Chad Fielder, Hickerson, Jon Brown II and Dylan Swaim.



East Forsyth's Dominique Harris goes up for a score during a win over Page on Tuesday night.

D-II all-star game to take place on Friday

CHRONICLE STAFF REPORT

The 2008 Valero Cactus Bowl, which tabbed as the 2008 Division II All-Star game, will be played at Javelina Stadium in Kingsville, Texas on Friday, at 7 p.m.

The Valero Cactus Bowl will be regionally televised in up to 8 million homes on Fox Sports Southwest.

The selection committee picked from among the best seniors in NCAA Division II football.

Headlining the East team is Harlon Hill Trophy finalist Michael Eubanks. Eubanks is a linebacker from Delta State (Miss.) and is one of only two players in the history of the award, given annually to the best player in NCAA Division II, to make the three finalists as a defensive player. Other standouts on the East team include Shepherd (W.va.) running back Devon Wallace who finished second in the nation in rushing with 2138 yards and 24 touchdowns.

The two quarterbacks for the East team were the Players of the Year in their respective conferences. Mark Nicolet of Hillsdale (Mich.) was the Player of the Year in the Great Lakes Intercollegiate Athletic Conference after throwing for 3,335 yards and 31 touchdowns. Brad Roach of Catawba (N.C.) was the Offensive Player of the Year in the South Atlantic Conference after compiling 3,332 yards and 32 scores.

The West team includes wide receiver Nick Smart of Southwest Baptist (Mo.) who set the NCAA All-Division record for most pass catches in a season with 143.



Catawba's Brad Roach will be one of many DII players trying to get a look from NFL scouts during game.

West quarterbacks include Daniel Polk of Midwestern State (Texas), who was the only player in college football to pass for at least 2,000 yards and rush for at least 1,000 yards, and Ben King of Minnesota State-Mankato who led NCAA Division II with 4,096 yards passing.

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