In this section:

Bowling Page C8

BuckEyes Page C10 January 17,

2015

Section

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HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL

Smooth change

Elyria Catholic promotes Stupka to head coach, keeps veteran Riesen as offensive coordinator

> **Shaun Bennett** The Chronicle-Telegram

Elyria Catholic named Dave Stupka its new head football coach — appropriately on a Friday night and the Panthers should see the easiest transition into the role in program history.

Stupka served as a Panthers assistant last year, so he's already familiar with the returning players, and



Jeff Riesen as the offensive coordinator. He also knows how to move from assistant to head coach after having been promoted at Bedford Chanel and Midpark High. "He's ran a very solid, quality pro-

he's keeping longtime area coach

gram at each stop (in his career)," Elyria Catholic athletic director Bob Thayer said. "In talking to Dave and

interviewing Dave, we just thought it was an outstanding fit. We just think he'll be a very, very good leader for our young men and the football pro-

Stupka moved to Elyria Catholic two years ago from Lutheran West after a teaching job became available. He agreed to coach the wide receivers last season for Mike Polevacik, who resigned as the Panthers head coach two weeks ago.

"The opportunity to be a teacher here was the No. 1 priority," Stupka said. "My family has a great belief in Catholic education and to have the opportunity to be a teacher here as well as a coach was at the forefront

See STUPKA, C3

CAVALIERS 126, CLIPPERS 121

Cavs sweep L.A. behind Kyrie, LeBron

Beth Harris The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Kyrie Irving scored 37 points, LeBron James added 32 and the Cleveland Cavaliers held off the Los Angeles Clippers 126-121 on Friday night.

NEXT UP WHO: Cleveland vs. Chicago WHEN: Monday, 7;30 p.m. WHERE: The Q TV/RADIO: TNT; WEOL

930-AM,

1100-AM,

100.7-FM

WTAM

WMMS

Tristan Thompson had a season-high 24 points and grabbed 12 rebounds starting in place of Kevin Love, who sat out after hurting his back in Thursday's win over the Lakers.

Blake Griffin had 34 points and 19 rebounds to lead six players in double figures for the Clippers, who had won six of their previous eight. DeAndre Jordan had 19 points and 12 rebounds, Matt Barnes added 17 points and Chris Paul had 15 points and 14 assists.

James tied the game at 97 early in the fourth on a 3-pointer over Austin Rivers, who became the

first player in NBA history to play for his father after being signed by the Clippers.

Jamal Crawford's three-point play gave the Clip-

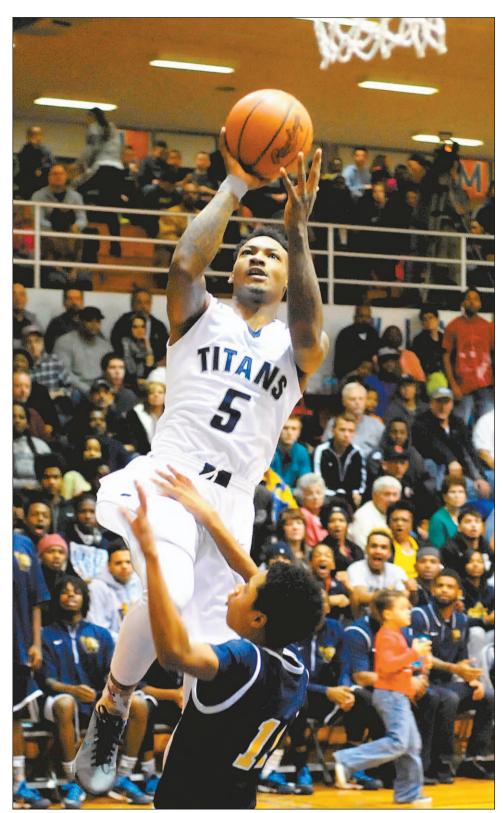
pers their last lead of the game, 100-97. James and Irving teamed to power the Cavs on a 20-7 run that put them back in front, 117-107.

See CAVS, C2

BOYS BASKETBALL

Still going strong

Lorain's Devon **Andrews** soars to the basket over Warrensville Heights' Joseph Vallery during Friday night's game in Lorain. Andrews scored 27 points and handed out seven assists as the Titans improved to 12-0.



STEVE MANHEIM / CHRONICLE

Lorain tops tough Tigers, stays perfect

Mike Perry The Chronicle-Telegram

LORAIN — Lorain coach John Rositano finally got what he's been looking for.

After the Titans reeled off 11 straight wins to open the season, with its only real test coming in its season opener against Newark, Rositano was hoping his team would face a challenge.

LORAIN 77. **WARRENSVILLE HTS. 71**

Defending Lake Erie League

champion Warrensville Heights was just what the doctor ordered.

Lorain jumped out to a big early lead, but the Tigers made things tight at the end before falling 77-71 at Lorain High School.

"They were very athletic and very aggressive," Rositano said of the Tigers. "The speed of the game was very up-tempo, and when both teams play at that speed there are going to be some turnovers because of the athleticism and the length of both teams.

"But that was a good win for us. We needed to be tested and they gave us a really good test. We got Round One, now we've got to go over there at the end of the year for Round Two. It should be another great game."

At first it looked like the test Warrensville Heights would provide the Titans would be more like an open-book pop quiz. Lorain (12-0, 5-0) jumped out to a 21-14 lead after the first, led 42-26 at halftime and by as many as 19 early in the third quarter.

See TITANS, C6

EC 66, ROCKY RIVER 55

EC relies on basics, late run to win

Bob Daniels The Chronicle-Telegram

ELYRIA — There's a widely recognized idiom that says all high school basketball teams consist of good shooters. Therefore, the saying goes, high school games are won on defense, the backboards and at the foul line.

Elyria Catholic gave it a shot of credibility Friday night.

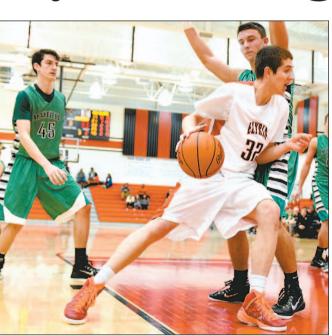
The Panthers trailed Rocky River after each of the first two quarters and managed a tie after the third.

Then in the fourth quarter, they went to work in the three areas some consider most important to their sport. The result was a tough 66-55 West Shore Conference victory made possible with a 13-2 run to open the fourth quarter.

See **EC**, C5

ELYRIA 80. MAYFIELD 52

Elyria hitting stride



Elyria's Josh Lotko looks to pass the ball Friday night as Mayfield's Gage Bican tries to block his progress.

Tim Gebhardt The Chronicle Telegram

ELYRIA — Midway through the first quarter Friday night, Elvria already had a 20-point lead over Mayfield.

That's what happens when a team starts to jell, and the Pioneers, who rolled to an easy 80-52 win, are doing just that.

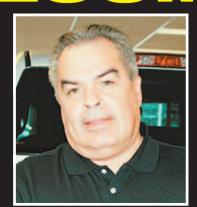
Elyria (8-2, 3-1 Northeast Ohio Conference Lake Division) won its fourth in a row since losing at Lorain in the Holiday Classic. Mayfield fell to 4-4 and 2-1. The Pioneers will be at Elyria Catholic tonight to renew their rivalry with the Panthers for the 20th time.

"This is a big game for us because we fell to Parma," said Blake Furcron, who led Elyria with 22 points, of the Pioneers' early league loss.

See ELYRIA, C6



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AVON 61, VERMILION 34

Tough Avon defense vexes Vermilion

Fred Steiner The Chronicle-Telegram

AVON — One of the fundamental actions of modern warfare is the no-fly zone. Friday night the Avon Eagles turned the lane and the baseline into a "no sail zone" for the visiting Vermilion Sailors en route to a dominating 61-34 victory in West

Vermilion struggled from the outset, falling behind 20-8 after one quarter in a first half in which it shot an anemic 29 percent from the field.

Shore Conference play.

Then the Eagles (8-4, 4-3) opened the second quarter with an 11-0 run and that was essentially that.

weeks," Vermilion coach Kurt Haber-

mehl said. "We just are not playing with a lot of confidence right now and you can see it on the basketball floor. A couple of shots go in-and-out and we just kind of hang our heads a little bit and can't respond."

If Vermilion (6-7, 1-6) was in a funk Friday, then the Funkmaster was Avon forward Will Ybarra, who led the Eagles with 14 points and dominated the inside with eight blocked shots and eight rebounds.

Together, Ybarra and D'amonte Thornton enforced the "no sail zone" on the Sailors, forcing turnovers, altering shots and kick-starting the Avon transition game.

"We just really focused on defense "We've been in a funk now for two tonight," Ybarra said. "We made some

transitions and getting some easy buckets.'

'Top to bottom all our kids played well, executed our game plan," Avon coach Kevin Sapara said. "They had two good days of practice after the Bay game and they got to see what hard work in practice does translated into a game. I'm proud of all of our guys. Everyone of them played hard and we didn't let up."

Falling behind early only made a tough night snowball on the Sailors as the Eagles were able to go all-in on their bench and hit Vermilion with fresh legs and continuous up-tempo play.

"Our bench did a great job," Sapara

good runs and we were running the 6-foot-3 senior Kyle Nader, who

personally take up all the slack in a hard-charging second half.

Nader also had five rebounds and a pair of steals.

"He was just being aggressive and that's what he does," Habermehl said. "He's a heck of a good basketball player. I can't fault his effort. We just need to fundamentally do things a heck of a lot better."

The win moves Avon further into the fray in the wild and unpredictable West Shore Conference's final season, while Vermilion continues to search for consistency.

"We told the kids it's not time to over-Vermilion got strong play from react, it's time to get better and do things the right way," Habermehl said. "They'll

scored a game-high 17 points, or half come back and we'll be ready to play of Vermilion's total, while trying to next Friday. We'll have a good week of practice and get them ready to go."

> Contact Fred Steiner at 329-7135 or ctsports@chroniclet.com

Avon 61, Vermilion 34

VERMILION (34): Kyle Nader 4-8-17, Ryan Barnes 0-0-

VERMILION (34): Kyle Nader 4-8-17, Ryan Barnes 0-0-0, Caleb Waller 2-0-4, Andrew Dawson 3-1-7, Nick Prenatt 1-0-2, Patrick Sexton 0-0-0, Jordan Murray 1-0-2, David Lewis 0-0-0, Joby Pfeil 0-0-0, Bear Myers 0-0-0, Nick Barkdull 0-2-2, Nick Bray 0-0-0, Scott Gillespie-0-0. Totals 11-11-34.

AVON (61): Michael Smigel 3-0-8, Zach Torbert 4-2-11, D'amonte Thornton 3-0-6, Will Ybarra 7-0-14, Jeffrey Laraway 3-1-8, Michael Nose 1-0-2, DelShawn Orr 3-0-6, Mario Ferguson 1-1-3, Chris Maxwell 0-0-0, Johnny Peganoff 0-0-0, Nick Toth 1-0-2, Matt Roney 0-0-0, Brett Fassett 0-1-1. Totals 26-5-61.

Vermilion 8 9 6 11 - 34

Avon 20 17 15 9 - 61

Three-point goals: Vermilion 1-18 (Nader), Avon 4-15 (Smigel-2, Torbert, Laraway). Field goals: Vermilion 11-49 (22 percent), Avon 26-50 (52 percent). Free throws: Vermilion 11-20 (55 percent), Avon 5-13 (38 percent). Rebounds: Vermilion 22 (Nader 5), Avon 36 percent). **Rebounds:** Vermillion 22 (Nader 5), Avon 36 (Ybarra 8). **Total fouls:** Vermillion 15, Avon 16.

BAY 56, NORTH RIDGEVILLE 54 (OT)

Rangers can't finish off Bay

Chris Sweeney The Chronicle-Telegram

NORTH RIDGEVILLE — Just seconds after Demario McCall put North Ridgeville in a position to win, he gave Bay a chance to tie the game.

The Rockets took advantage. McCall scored the last five points in regulation — a 3-pointer and a coast-to-coast layup — but then committed a costly turnover that led to a John Koz 3-pointer that forced overtime.

Koz came up big again with a jumper off the wing with 1.5 seconds left in overtime to clinch a 56-54 victory between two teams that entered Friday night tied for first in the West Shore Conference.

"It was a dumb mistake by my and I'm still kicking myself in the butt for doing it," McCall said. "I saw one of my teammates wide open and at the last minute it was a great play by the defender. It was my fault for throwing the pass. I should have just held it, got fouled and knocked down the free throws. The game would have been over, but instead I made a dumb mistake and mistakes happen."

Even with the turnover, McCall was huge down the stretch for North Ridgeville (8-5, 4-3). In addition to the final five points in regulation, he scored all four of the Rangers' points in overtime. He also snagged six of his eight rebounds in the second half and finished with a team-high 15 points — 11 in the second half.

But Bay's Danny Heideloff pounced on McCall's ill-advised pass down the court when the Rangers were looking to run off the final 10.5 seconds while nursing a 50-47 lead. Heideloff took the ball across half-court, drove and kicked back to Koz, who had been cold from the field all night.

larly well tonight so I kind of got a little lucky."

Both teams struggled from the field in the first half. Bay's 6-foot-6 center Rex Sunahara, who had 15 points and 12 rebounds, was a big reason for the Rangers' low field-goal percentage, blocking numerous shots and altering others.

The Rangers came out firing in the third, scoring 24 points with Jordan Montgomery and Collin Sullinger combining for 20. Sullinger almost had a double-double in the second half alone, grabbing eight of his nine rebounds after halftime. He finished with 12 points while Montgomery finished with 14.

"Collin comes off the bench but he could very well be considered one of the MVPs of our team," North Ridgeville coach Bryan Morgan said. "We talked about it at halftime, we have two first-place teams going here and someone needed to step up to give us the lead. I thought both of them did a great job."

Despite the impressive third quarter for the Rangers, Bay never trailed in the period. In fact, the Rockets led all the way until the 3:01 mark of the fourth, when North Ridgeville took a short-lived 45-44 lead.

"This is something that we've been looking for from this team for the last two years," Bay coach Jared Shetzer said. "Our coaches knew and believed that our kids could do this when put in this situation, where our backs are against the wall. We just haven't had many situations where we could do that this year."

Contact Chris Sweeney at 329-7135 or ctsports@chroniclet.com.

North Ridgeville 54 (OT)

BAY (56): John Koz 7-2-17, Alec White 1-3-5, Rex Sunahara 6-3-15, Danny Heideloff 2-6-10, Jonathon Brajdic 1-0-2, Matt Orr 1-0-2, Scott Durham 0-2-2, Jack Jelen 0-0-0, Jack Kyle 0-0-0, Cole Gergye 1-0-3. Totals 19-16-56.

field all night.

The junior delivered when it counted for Bay (8-3, 5-2), draining the shot from about three feet off the 3-point line. It was just one of two Bay 3-pointers for the night.

"We were rushing and I was open with a couple seconds left," said Koz, who led the Rockets with 17 points. "I wasn't really shooting particu-





KRISTIN BAUER / CHRONICLE

Senior scoring leader Ceeven Shelton, who was held to five points on foul shots for three quarters, broke loose for nine points in the fourth. EC, outrebounded 18-11 in the first half, won the second-half battle 9-8 and forced eight Pirates turnovers, while committing only three.

Then there was the foul shooting. The Panthers sealed the deal making 15 of 21 secondhalf foul shots — 12 of 17 in the fourth quarter — to River's 2 of 10.

And that's how Elyria Catholic improved to 7-4, 4-3 in the WSC.

"Rocky River plays a very deliberate style and we did everything we could to speed them up," EC coach Phil Kuchta said. "I like how my guys responded. We knew it might be that way.

"What I look at is some seniors like James Tirbaso had some key blocks and rebounds and D.J. Graham, as a senior, played well down the stretch, took care of the ball, moved it and got us into stuff. And Ceeven came up with some key rebounds and got to the foul line a few times. I thought our seniors made plays down the stretch and I think that's what it's all about."

EC raced to an 11-4 lead in the first five minutes, then surrendered nine unanswered points to end the first quarter and trailed 19-15. With senior wing Kevin Kelley nailing two 3-point baskets and senior guard D.J. Graham making another, the Panthers cut the deficit to 31-30 at the break.

EC opened the second half with a 9-2 run, including four points each from Graham and junior guard Jacob Kuchta, and managed a 41-41 tie going into the fourth quarter. "At halftime, coach told us we had to man

up and start playing defense," Graham said. We wanted to stick together as a team and play great defense."

The Pirates' ultimate demise began with a 13-2 run EC engineered in the first four minutes of the fourth quarter, which the Panthers won, 25-14. Shelton scored nine of his 14 points in the fourth quarter, including three of four foul shots in the final minute.

Panthers junior forward Cole Virgin, who scored a game-high 17 points, said the action became physical under the baskets.

'The kids were trying to get in front of me (defensively) and I was trying to get in front of them," he said. "But River has some good bigs. The first half we weren't playing too well and we had to start moving the ball and playing some defense.'

Contact Bob Daniels at 329-7135 or basketball@bobdaniels.info.

Elyria Catholic 66, Rocky River 55

PACKY RIVER (55): Sutton Klodnick 1-0-2, Eric Jones 7-1-15, Patrick Connors 3-2-8, Corey Zucker 0-0-0, Jack Corrigan 4-0-10, Evan Nugent 1-0-2, Zach Waite 4-0-8, Jimmy Kinsley 3-2-8, Nate Seffernick 1-0-2. Totals 24-5-55.

ELYRIA CATHOLIC (66): D.J. Graham 3-4-10, Kevin Kelley 2-1-7, Ceeven Shelton 3-8-14, Darin Guice 1-2-4, Golden Schemmel 0-0-0, Cole Virgin 6-4-17; Jacob Kuchta 3-1-7, James Tirbaso 2-0-4, Sean Szabo 0-2-2, Brian Duffield 0-0-0. Totals 20-22-66.

Rocky River

17
12
10
14
55
Elyria Catholic
15
15
11
12
10
14
55
Elyria Catholic
15
15
11
12
15
66
Three-point goals: Rocky River 2-11 (Corrigan): Elyria Catholic 4-13
(Kelley 2, Graham, Virgin). Field goals: Rocky River 24-51 (47.1 percent). Elyria Catholic 20-52 (38.5 percent). Free throws: Rocky River 5-13, Elyria Catholic 20-32 (38.5 percent). Free throws: Rocky River 5-13, Elyria Catholic 20-52 (38.5 percent). Free throws: Rocky River 26, Elyria Catholic 20. Turnovers: Rocky River 16, Elyria Catholic 7.

JV: Elyria Catholic, 72-49

OLMSTED FALLS 78, AMHERST 46

'Dogs shoot down Comets with 14 threes

Amherst honors pro baseball standout Ryan Rua at halftime

Paul Williams

The Chronicle-Telegram AMHERST — There was a buzz in the jam-packed Amherst high school gymnasium Friday night as the Comets honored one of their own during halftime of their Southwestern Conference showdown against Olmsted Falls.

Unfortunately for Amherst, the Bulldogs shot down all the fun with an impressive display of 3-point shooting

en route to a 78-46 blowout victory. "Right now, I'm pretty shell-shocked to be completely honest," Amherst coach John Srnis said. "We tried everything we could, they just couldn't miss. We knew

they were a decent shooting team but the quarter. tonight they were in another realm."

The Bulldogs made 14 3-pointers while shooting at a 61 percent clip. After three quarters, they were shooting a torrid 12-of-16 for 75 percent.

"We're definitely a 3-point shooting team and our guys were really able to get into a good rhythm tonight," said Olmsted Falls coach Chris DeLisio, whose Bulldogs won their fourth straight game. "They did a good job of setting the tone early and not letting up."

Despite Olmsted Falls (6-6, 3-2) opening the game with three consecutive 3-pointers, the Comets were able to hang around early on thanks to protecting the ball and a big dose of Reese Rua.

Rua carried Amherst (4-7, 2-4) during the first quarter, scoring six of his team's first eight points and eight for

Rua's efforts weren't enough to stop the Bulldogs' relentless offensive attack for long, however, as Olmsted Falls used a 12-2 run in the second quarter to end the half with a 36-21 lead.

The Rua Show continued at halftime as Reese's older brother, Ryan, a mem-

ber of the Texas Rangers, was honored. Ryan, who graduated in 2008, was in attendance to have his jersey retired.

"This really is an awesome experience to come home and be honored in front of all my friends and family," Rua said. "The community really supports me and I love being able to come home and give back."

Rua, who made his major league debut in August, still lives in Amherst and helps

out with the youth as much as he can. The fun ended for Amherst at halftime and picked back up for the Bulldogs as Troy Hurrell knocked down three consecutive threes in the third quarter and teammate Justin Maxwell chipped in two.

Hurrell finished with a game-high 18 points, Maxwell added 17 and Kevin Meehan had 13 points and 11 rebounds. Rua had a team-high 16 points for

the Comets, while Adam Srnis had 14. Olmsted Falls 78, Amherst 46

OLMSTED FALLS (78): Anthony Trujillo 2-0-4, Ryan Strodtbeck 1-0-2, Ryan Hanna 2-0-5, Justin Maxwell 6-0-17, Kevin Meehan 6-1-13, Troy Hurrell 6-0-18, Victor Hitterman 3-1-8, Ryan Sosic 3-2-8, Nick Fritz 1-0-3. Totals 30-4-78.

AMHERST (46): Ryan Rua 8-0-16, Adam Srnis 4-3-14, Casey McConine 3-1-8, Matt Kneisel 2-1-5, Marshall Busey 1-0-3. Totals 18-5-46.

Olmsted Falls 20 16 26 16 78

Amherst 11 10 15 12 48

Dimsted Falls 20 16 26 16 — 78
Amherst 11 10 15 12 — 48
Three-point goals: Olmsted Falls 14-23 (Hanna, Maxwell
5, Hurrell 6, Hitterman, Fritz), Amherst 5-25 (Srnis 3,
McConihe, Busey). Field goals: Olmsted Falls 30-56
(53 percent), Amherst 18-52 (34 percent). Free throws:
Olmsted Falls 4-8 (50 percent), Amherst 5-7 (71 percent). Rebounds: Olmsted Falls 43 (Meehan 11),
Amherst 20 (Antonio Serano 4). Total fouls: Olmsted
Falls 7, Amherst 9. Turnovers: Olmsted Fals 10,
Amherst 9. JV: Amherst, 51-46

LAKEWOOD 59, **MIDVIEW 44**

Middies' defense struggles

Todd Shapiro The Chronicle-Telegram

LAKEWOOD — In the West Shore Conference, where four teams entered play Friday night tied for first place, there's little margin for error. Any team that doesn't bring its best game will likely spend most of the night hopelessly playing from behind.

Midview found that out the hard way Friday at Lakewood.

The Middies' defense struggled to contain Lakewood senior Wes Gerhardt in the first half and sent the Rangers to the foul line repeatedly down the stretch in a 59-41 loss to the defending WSC champions.

Lakewood (8-3, 5-2) was able to speed up or slow down the pace of the game almost at will and generally frustrated the Middies, all while shooting 56 percent from the field.

"In the second half we just let guys drive right around us," Midview coach Troy DiFranco said. "I was disappointed in the defensive effort. Offensively, we didn't share the basketball. Lakewood played harder then we did, they executed better than we did and they wanted it more than we did. That's why the score was what it was.

"I thought we came in prepared to play tonight but obviously I've got to do a better job of getting us ready to play."

Midview (6-6, 4-3) traded baskets with Gerhardt for most of the first quarter and ended the period tied at 14, with Gerhardt scoring 12 of his gamehigh 19 points. In the Rangers last game, a

103-73 loss to Elvria Catholic. Lakewood fell behind 21 in the first quarter. Gerhardt was determined to make sure that did not happen again against Midview. 'We found out Tuesday what

happens when don't get off to a quick start," Gerhart said of the Rangers' 103-73 loss to Elyria Catholic in which they trailed by 21 in the first quarter. "We put ourselves in a big hole. Tonight we played more in our comfort zone.'

Logan Bolin led Midview with 10 points, while Dustin Crum had a game-high 10 rebounds.

Midview trailed 28-22 at the half then promptly allowed the Rangers to go on an 8-2 run. Lakewood got to the foul line

21 times in the second half, and finished the night making more free throws (20) than field goals (19). Midview was 9-of-12 from the foul line.

'We had more energy to start the game tonight," Lakewood coach Phil Argento said.

Contact Todd Shapiro at 329-7135 or ctsports@chroniclet.com.

Lakewood 59, Midview 41

MIDVIEW (41): Dustin Crum 1-2-4, Jacob Wells 2-1-6, Daimion Mahone 4-0-8, Logan Bolin 3-3-10, Dimitri Redwood 1-2-4, Garret Overy 3-1-7, Zach Bickel 1-0-2. Totals 15-9-41.

LAKEWOOD (59): Joe Malone 1-0-2. Trevon Rogers 0-1-1, Justin McDonald 6-0-13, Wes Gerhardt 6-7-19, Malik Leisinger 1-7-9, Logan Swift 1-4-6, Jacob Sala 4-1-9. Totals 19-20-59. Midview 14 8 10 9 - 41

Microrew 14 8 10 9 – 41
Lakewood 14 14 11 20 – 55
Three-point goals: Lakewood (McDonald),
Midview (Wells, Bolin). Field goals:
Lakewood 19-34 (56 percent), Midview 1545 (33 percent). Free throws: Lakewood

20-26 (77 percent), Midview 9-12 (75 percent). Rebounds: Lakewood 21, Midview 27. Turnovers: Lakewood 8, Midview 10. Total fouls: Lakewood 15, Midview 17. JV: Lakewood, 57-41