

Badgers lose focus and game

Poor decisions cost Lampasas as Dripping Springs uses 15-0 fourth-quarter run to clinch victory



By CLAY WHITTINGTON
Staff Writer

A momentary lapse in concentration can change everything.

It is a lesson the Badgers are learning the hard way.

After taking a two-point lead into the fourth quarter and bumping it up to three moments later, Lampasas lost focus, committing costly turnovers and allowing Dripping Springs to go on a 15-0 run en route to a 56-48 victory inside Bozarth-Fowler Gymnasium Friday night.

It is a problem head coach Scott Harrelson is seeing far too often of late.

"We gave up three quick baskets off turnovers and then, all of a sudden, we're down eight and fighting to get back," Harrelson said. "It's happened over and over again where we'll lead the whole way and then do that."

"But I have to give [Dripping Springs] credit. I thought they played very well; they played better than us."

The Badgers took a 44-41 advantage following a Jordy Carnes layup early in the final period, but did not tack another point onto the scoreboard until Heath Hopson hit a pair of free throws with 28.6 seconds remaining in the contest.

An offensive rebound and a successful putback at the buzzer gave Hopson game-high scoring



Jordy Carnes (5) dishes the ball off to Heath Hopson (4).

honor with 29 points to go with eight rebounds.

Carnes complemented Hopson by going four-of-four from the floor to finish with nine points, but the remainder of the squad connected on just four-of-17 attempts.

"They are all playing hard," Harrelson said. "I cannot fault them for the intensity they play at, but there comes that little span [when they lose focus]."

"Jordy made a couple of really nice plays and hit a couple of crucial baskets, but we need more guys doing that. We need more guys stepping up if we are going to be successful."

In the fourth quarter, Carnes and Hopson combined to score all eight of the Badgers' points.

Lampasas (7-14) is rapidly running out of time to correct its problems with just a single game separating it from a district-opening date against state powerhouse Lake Travis, currently ranked No. 2 among 4A schools.

"We've got one more at Brownwood, and we're just trying to have a good [showing] going in [to district play]," Carnes said. "Lake Travis is just going to do the same thing Dripping Springs did, so we've got to keep our heads up and be strong."

The Badgers travel to Brownwood tonight for a 7 p.m. tip.

After playing to a 44-44 tie at the end of regulation, the Badgers'

junior varsity squad overcame a four-point deficit in overtime to win 51-48 against Dripping Springs.

The Tigers rushed out to a 48-44 lead in the extra period before freshman Brandon Scott triggered a 7-0 run with a pair of successful free-throw attempts.

Leading by three points with under a minute remaining, the Tigers had several opportunities to tie the contest with a 3-pointer but could not connect. Their final chance came at the buzzer, but Scott blocked the straight-on attempt to preserve the three-point victory.

The Badgers' freshman squad gave Dripping Springs a fight but fell by three points, 38-35.



Guard Colton Perkins goes all out, diving on the floor for a loose ball.

PHOTOS BY RICHARD AKRIDGE
Senior Heath Hopson handles the ball during Friday's loss to Dripping Springs.

LHS earns win, loss and a draw

By CLAY WHITTINGTON
Staff Writer

With the regular season just around the corner, the Lampasas boys' soccer team headed to Copperas Cove over the weekend for a tripleheader tuneup.

After playing to a 0-0 tie in their opening scrimmage against district rival Marble Falls, the Badgers bounced back to earn a 4-2 win over Killeen Ellison.

Down by a goal, Jan Ludewig knotted things up by scoring an unassisted goal in the first half. Ludewig repeated the feat in the second half to tie the score at two goals apiece before Jedediah Arms gave the Badgers a 3-2 lead with an unassisted direct free kick from approximately 40 yards out.

Josh Akers tallied Lampasas' final goal on a similar kick set up with a

pass from Enrique Barrientos. The Badgers' third and final scrimmage of the day was against the home team, Copperas Cove, who knocked off Lampasas 3-1.

Michael Fisher tied the match at 1-1 with an unassisted crossing shot that found the back of the net in the first half, but the Badgers were shut out for the remainder of the match.

Despite the loss, Lampasas had a good showing in Saturday's unusually warm conditions, outscoring its opponents in the three scrimmages by a total of 5-4.

Instrumental to the team's overall success was the play of goalie Alex Rininger.

"Rininger's dedication to the sport is paying off as he had several fundamentally sound saves in the match," head coach Greg Porter said.

The Badgers have another scrim-



PHOTO BY RICHARD AKRIDGE
Jan Ludewig delivers a sliding kick during Saturday's scrimmage. The Badgers host a scrimmage against Killeen Shoemaker today with the varsity squad playing at 7:30 p.m.

mage set for today at 7:30 p.m. when they host Killeen Shoemaker inside Badger Stadium.

Prior to the varsity's kickoff, the junior varsity team will play with the start set for 5:30 p.m.

Concerns about deer hunting

Deer season is over -- except for those ranches that have Managed Land Deer Permits -- and the late youth-only season is Jan. 17-18. It's too early to get any official reports on the season.

In a recent column, I mentioned the arrest of six Central Texas men for allegedly trapping and transporting deer. I noted that many so-called hunters are willing to pay huge sums to kill a trophy whitetail buck. I also expressed my opinion that the growing number of deer-breeding facilities in the state degrades the hunting tradition.

Let me clarify, however, that it is legal in Texas to establish a deer-breeding facility with the proper permits and supervision of Texas Parks and Wildlife. Also, any deer kept in a facility must have come from another licensed facility, and no wild deer may be trapped and confined in a deer pen.

I am a strong believer in private property rights, and a landowner should be able to use his property any way he wants as long as it is legal and does not hurt the natural resources of the land.

A lot of money can be made from selling trophy whitetail bucks from breeding pens. Although I would not do it, I really can't fault the owner of a facility for selling these deer to the highest bidder, and as long as people are willing to pay large sums, the practice will continue.

I recently heard from a second-

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hand source about a Texas landowner who had a 200-acre pasture with a high fence. The deer inside the fence were fed a high-protein ration year round. The owner had a buck that would score almost 200 Boone and Crockett points.

According to the story, a wealthy person from another state flew to the nearest airport, rented a car and drove to the ranch.

The owner had set up a blind near the feeder where the buck would come to eat. The hunter was placed in the blind and in a short time the buck appeared and was shot. The rich man then got in his car, drove back to the airport and returned home the same day -- after giving instructions to have the buck mounted and shipped to his home. Reportedly, the buck sold for more than \$20,000.

How many hunters can pay money like that to shoot a deer? That is a concern as the price to lease a ranch or a guided hunt increases every year. Would you like to kill a trophy buck that would score more than 150 Boone and

Crockett points? All you have to do is spend \$10,000-\$20,000 for it.

Many ranchers even guarantee you will kill a trophy buck and go to the point of raising the buck in a small pen.

Of course, probably 95 percent of hunters cannot pay these high prices. Hunters are being priced out of the market now. A normal South Texas deer lease is out of the reach of most hunters, and Hill Country leases also are increasing every year. Even ranches in Texas not known for good deer hunting are charging a hefty fee for hunting rights.

I don't blame a rancher for charging whatever someone is willing to pay. Deer and other hunting leases can make up a large percentage of a rancher's income and have enabled more families to stay on their land.

On the downside, as lease prices increase, fewer and fewer hunters participate in the sport. Fewer hunters mean a reduction in hunting license sales, with fewer funds for wildlife management through TPWD.

Also, as hunter numbers decrease, they will lose political clout

and at some point, non-hunters may be able to restrict through legislation many types of hunting.

I do not want to paint a gloom-and-doom picture on the future of hunting, however I do have concerns. One way to overcome this is to get young people involved in the sport. I recently let my 10-year-old grand-nephew hunt from my deer blind, and he shot a doe.

His father gave him a new single-shot .243 deer rifle for Christmas, and it was a great experience for him. Even though he is only 10, he already has said that when he is grown, he wants to get a ranch so he can manage the deer herd.

One of my former deer lease members recently passed away. George Byars Jr. was a teacher, school administrator, Blanco County commissioner and county judge. We hunted together on the Shannon Ranch in Crockett County for six years.

Of the five original members of the lease, only two of us are left. George's younger brother also was on the lease, and he passed away several months ago. They were both dedicated hunters, and I miss the times we spent together hunting and visiting.

Former Soil Conservation Service employee and longtime writer Mat Taylor offers his outdoors column for Dispatch Record readers. He can be contacted at (254) 518-2262 or via e-mail at mtaylor@agri-star.net.

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