

Hooker holds of Tigers in fourth

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By JASON EPP

Leader & Times

HOOKER, Okla. – After the Hooker Bulldogs built their lead up to 20 points early in the second half, the Guymon Tigers mounted a comeback, but ran out of gas in the fourth as Hooker held on for the 53-44 win.

“When you get yourself in a hole like that there’s no room for error,” Tigers coach Troy Cox. “We played really well, but unfortunately it wasn’t good enough to quite finish the comeback. Just like all year long our kids have never given up. They fight until the buzzer.”

After building a 15-point lead in the first half, Hooker added on with a 7-2 run to start the third that put the Bulldogs up 38-18 two minutes in.

Led by Marco Rodriguez, Derrick Portillo, and Angel Vega, Guymon battled back going on a 15-4 run to cut the lead to just eight with 1:52 left in the third. But Guymon ran out of gas and could only muster four more baskets in the fourth as Hooker held on for the nine-point win.

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“They came out and matched our intensity,” Bulldogs coach Chad Hussey said. “They aren’t a team you can go to sleep on. They try to cause a lot of chaos and you have to keep your head. Guymon thrives on second chance points and because of the way we were blocking out we limited them to one shot and that’s when we went on a run. They came out with a lot of push and energy in the second half, but that takes a lot out of you I was proud of our kids for the effort that they gave.”

Hooker had built their impressive lead early in the game. Taylor McBee hit three treys in the first quarter as the Bulldogs built a 19-9 first quarter lead.

Gabe Morales hit his second three of the second quarter with 2:47 left to put the Bulldogs up 28-12. Hooker finished the half up 31-16.

“Our defense did a great job of forcing them into some tough situations,” Hussey said. “We made them shoot with a hand in their face all night. I thought our kids blocked out in the second quarter about as well as we have all year.”

Gabe Morales led the Bulldogs with 17 points; Joe Bean scored 13, Taylor McBee 11, and Chad Kennedy 7. Guymon was led in scoring by Derrick Portillo with 12, including two threes. Marco Rodriguez added 10.

Hooker finishes the regular season 19-3, and will host Mooreland Saturday for the district championship.

Guymon (8-15) will travel to Bishop McGuinness February 22 for the first round of the 5A playoffs.

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