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By JASON EPP

High Plains Daily Leader

It was a matchup of two top-ranked teams as Class B No.2 Forgan outdueled Class A No.8 Texhoma 47-32 to win the Panhandle 6 Conference championship.



It was a study in contrasting offensive styles as Texhoma looked to try to control the game in the half-court, and Forgan looked to run. For most of the first half and well in to the second the Red Devils style prevailed, and kept the game close.

“Our game plan was to come in and be patient, and get them in a half-court set,” said Texhoma coach Greg Higgins.

Six times during the first 21 minutes Texhoma made shots to tie the game, but could never wrestle the lead away from Forgan.

Forgan led 10-9 after one, and 17-15 at the half. J.D. Pugh put back his own miss with 3:21 left in the third to tie the game at 21.

But over the final three minutes of the third, Forgan finished with a crucial 8-0 run that was fueled by their transition offense, and gave them a 29-21 lead heading to the final period.

“The second half I thought we were really good,” said Bulldogs coach Todd Kerr. “We moved the basketball, we finally got some transition baskets, and got the game sped up a little bit.”

Texhoma battled back with baskets by Pugh and Matt Freeman that cut the lead to six, and caused Kerr to call a timeout.

Out of the timeout, Forgan scored on five straight possessions, with all five coming on second-chance baskets. Tanner Jones came up big for the Bulldogs during that stretch with 6 of his 10 total points, and put Forgan up 41-28 with three minutes to play.

“The bigs got to work in there,” said Kerr. “We finally got in a rhythm.”

A poor shooting night (28 percent from the field, 2 of 21 from three-point range, and four of 12 at the line) did not help, but in part was a product of Forgan’s stout defense.

““We didn’t shoot the ball very well, but you have to give Forgan credit they played great defense,” said Higgins.

Texhoma’s defense was no slouch either, holding Forgan under 50 points for the first time this season, and only their fifth game under 60.

We played really good defense,” said Higgins “I thought we defended Rhett Radcliff really well, but we didn’t do a very good job on Ryan (Radcliff)”.

Kerr was happy with his team's performance: "They're going to shoot it better than they did tonight, but defensively we were really good tonight. We were where we need to be heading into the playoffs."

Ryan Radcliff led all scorers with 16. Tanner Jones and Rhett Radcliff each added 10.

For Texhoma, J.D. Pugh put up 14, but was 0 for 6 from three-point range. Matt Freeman scored 9.

Forgan finishes the regular season 21-1 and will host Buffalo next Friday at 8 p.m. in the first round of districts

Texhoma is 18-3 and will face Boise City Saturday to finish their regular season.

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