



Union's Garritt Ritter attempts to block a shot by Crane's Chase Joyce during the title game of the Bobcat Christmas Classic Saturday in Union. The Bobcats won the contest, 56-46.

Bobcats claim title at Classic

By Ronald Bond
The Observer

The defense was on point in the first half.

The offense found a rhythm early in the second half.

And when the opposition rallied in the final minutes, the Union Bobcats boys basketball team withstood the barrage to claim the title of its home tournament.

Keegan Glenn scored 14 points, Cole McLean added 13 points, and the Bobcats topped the Crane Mustangs, 56-46, in the championship game of the Bobcat Christmas Classic Saturday night in Union to get what Head Coach Dan Daggett said was an important win.

"This is a pivotal game for us," he said. "We're just starting to find our comfort zone. It's the first whole game we've put together."

The Bobcats' defense helped set the tone much of the first half, when they held the Mustangs to 21 percent shooting en route to a 27-19 lead at the break.

Daggett said the key was slowing Crane down.

"Crane wants to run the ball. We were trying to make them play half court," he said.

Union came out on fire to start the third, hitting its first four shots, including two quick 3-pointers by Glenn, to push the lead to 14.

But Crane lingered, getting as close as 42-37 late in the third after a 3-pointer by Peyton Krueger and a layup by Chase Joyce, who later hit two free throws to keep it at five early in the fourth.

Union pushed the lead back to nine before Crane's full-court press forced a series of turnovers — Union had eight in the fourth —

but the Mustangs got no closer than 52-46 in the final minutes. The Bobcats aided their cause by shooting 8-for-9 from the free-throw line in the fourth.

"Basketball is a game of ups and downs. They rode the wave," Daggett said.

The coach added he wasn't worried about the outcome, even when Crane made its move.

"I never felt like the game was in jeopardy," he said.

Tate Lantis, who added nine points, 10 rebounds and two blocked shots, said the key for the Bobcats was maintaining a level head.

"Keeping our confidence up (and) not getting down when we missed shots," he said of what was vital for the team.

Gannon Carreiro had a solid all-around game for Union, finishing with nine points, nine rebounds and three steals.

The Bobcats (7-2 overall) host Imbler Friday.

Also at the Bobcat Christmas Classic Saturday

LAST-SECOND BASKET LIFTS BADGERS TO THIRD

Roper Bingham and Omar Benites not only paced the Powder Valley Badgers boys basketball team in scoring Saturday — they connected for the winning basket.

The duo combined for 23 points, and Benites fed Bingham for the game-winner with three seconds left as the Badgers edged the Jordan Valley Mustangs, 44-42, in the third-place game of the Bobcat Christmas Classic.

On the winning play, Benites — who had nine points — drove to the lane, and when the defenders crashed on him, it left Bingham — who had 14 points — all alone on the low block for an easy put-in and the lead. A final desperation play by the Mustangs came up empty.

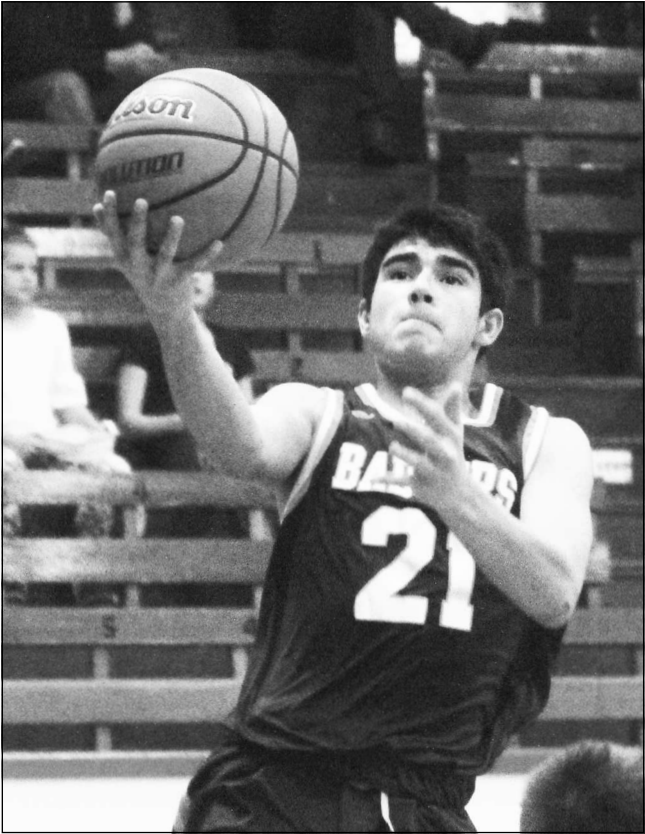
"He went and attacked the rim and Roper was right there," Badgers Head Coach Warren Wilson said.

Powder Valley trailed late in the back-and-forth matchup before Moziss Nesser had a rebound and putback — the Badgers' first points of the fourth quarter — that cut their deficit to 42-40 with 1:38 to play. Reece Dixon tied the game with a steal and layup with 47 seconds to play to help set up the winner.

Nesser finished with 19 rebounds in the contest.

Zeke Quintero led the Mustangs with 18 points.

Powder Valley (5-3 overall) faces Enterprise Thursday in Pendleton.



Powder Valley's Dominick Grende drives to the basket during the third-place game Saturday.

WITTEN, LEOPARDS COME IN FOURTH

Blake Witten scored 20 points and made several key plays down the stretch to lift the Cove Leopards boys basketball team to a 55-49 win over the Council Lumberjacks in the fourth-place game of the Bobcat Christmas Classic Saturday in Union.

Witten scored 13 of his points in the second half, including eight in the fourth quarter. His rebound and putback gave Cove a 49-41 lead in the final quarter. After the Lumberjacks pulled to within 49-48 on a steal and layup by Wyatt Walker, Witten responded with a layup to push the lead back to three points with less than a minute to go, then went 4-for-4 from the free-throw line in the final 30

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Two big runs lift Badger girls to third in Union

Observer staff

The Powder Valley Badgers girls basketball team took a big lead early and never let up en route to a 57-27 win over the Council Lumberjacks in the third-place game of the Bobcat Christmas Classic Saturday in Union.

The Badgers scored the game's first six points, then followed with a 15-0 run that put them up 21-2 early in the second quarter on a jumper by Josi Krieger. The lead twice reached 21 points in the half, which ended with Powder Valley ahead 30-12.

Council tried to make it interesting in the third, getting within 33-19 on a Chelsie Testa layup, but the Badgers responded with another big run — this one a 16-0 burst — that ended with a Keanna Bingham layup for a 49-19 lead.

Megan Bingham and Belle Blair both finished with 14 points to lead the Badgers. Shelby Sieckman added seven and Autumn Davis had six. Blair also had 16 rebounds as the Badgers collected 25 offensive boards on the afternoon.

Powder Valley (6-2 overall) faces Enterprise Thursday in Pendleton.

Also at the Bobcat Christmas Classic Saturday

UNION PULLS AWAY FOR WIN OVER TIGERS

The Union Bobcats girls basketball team turned in its best offensive performance of the season, netting a season high 49 points in a

49-32 win over the Dayville/Monument Tigers Saturday in the fourth-place game of the Bobcat Christmas Classic in Union.

A 14-0 run in the third quarter broke open a close contest. Kaylin Nowak, who led Union with 16 points and had six points in the surge, bookended the run with a pair of putbacks on the offensive end, the second of which made the score 37-22 late in the third. Audrey Wells added six of her nine points in the third, which ended with the Bobcats holding a commanding 37-24 lead.

Dayville/Monument briefly pulled within 11 in the fourth, but Union pulled away, extending the lead to as much as 20, at 49-29, on a layup and two free throws by Callie Glenn.

Kylie Marriott added 11 points and Glenn scored eight for Union, which forced 31 turnovers and held the Tigers to 26 percent shooting.

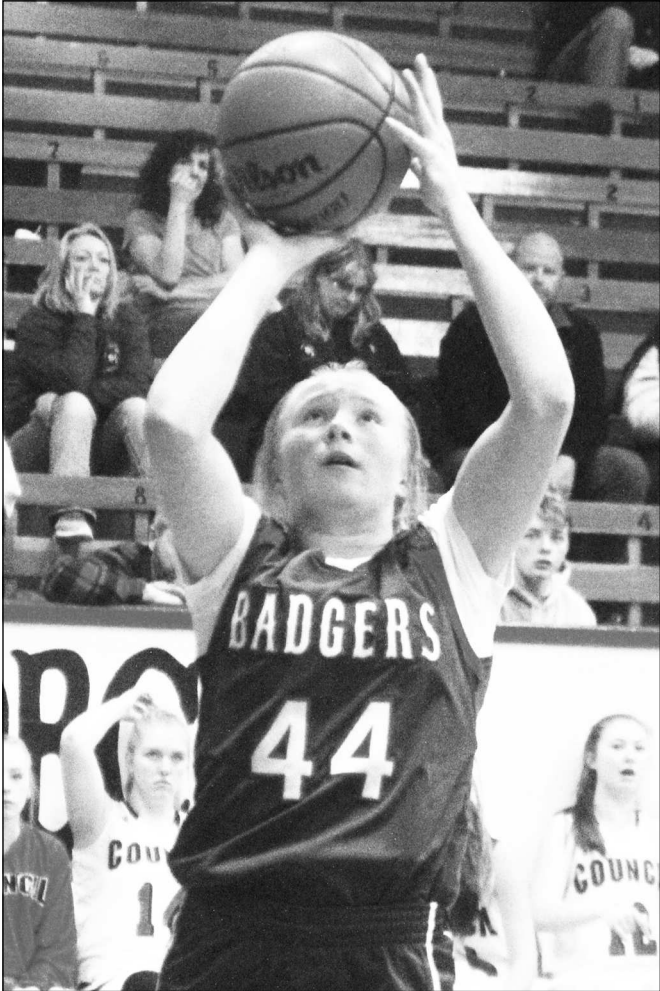
Faythe Schafer scored 20 points for Dayville/Monument.

Union (5-4 overall) hosts Imbler Friday.

PALMERS BOOST HUSKIES PAST LEOPARDS

Jayden Palmer and Jocelyn Palmer combined for 30 points to lead the Elgin Huskies girls basketball team to a 48-37 win over the Cove Leopards Saturday morning in the seventh-place game of the Bobcat Christmas Classic in Union, ending a five-game losing streak.

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Belle Blair had 14 points and 16 rebounds to lead the Badgers to a win over Council Saturday.

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