



**By Jan Schultz**

***The Imperial Republican***

Despite a strong effort in both games, Chase County's girls' team came away from the Alliance Holiday Tournament without a win.

But, Coach Marc Mroczek said his team worked hard in both games Dec. 29-30, edged by a point in the opener with Bridgeport, then dropping the consolation game to Gordon/Rushville.

Bridgeport came back to win by one, after Charlee Walleson hit three free throws with less than a second left in the game.

Against Gordon/Rushville, the Lady Longhorns cut a 19-point deficit to six with just five minutes remaining, but couldn't get over the hump.

"We played pretty well coming off the five-day moratorium and I was pleased with their effort," Mroczek said of his team's tournament play.

The moratorium imposed by the Nebraska School Activities Association (NSAA) mandates all schools refrain from any activity or athletic practices for five days during the holiday break.

This year's moratorium was Dec. 24-28, running right up to the first day of the holiday tourney.

### **Bridgeport game**

It was a bit of a controversial end to the Lady Longhorns' 41-40 loss to Bridgeport in the first game Monday, Dec. 29.

With Chase County holding onto a 40-38 lead, as the final seconds ticked away, Kim Brophy was whistled for a foul as Bridgeport's Walleson took what referees ruled a three-point shot.

However, Mroczek said there was some question on whether she was outside the arc when she took the shot.

Unfortunately, Chase County's filmer didn't catch the missed shot, but Mroczek has requested Bridgeport's film to review the play, and it's on the way, he said.

There was also a question whether Walleson was fouled as she took the shot, or after.

The buzzer sounded as the ball was in the air.

Walleson stepped to the line after being awarded three free throws, and dropped in all of them, giving Bridgeport the 41-40 win. Less than a second showed on the clock.

Mroczek wasn't happy with the officiating in that game, and said there were a couple of other instances where the wrong girls were whistled for fouls, both on Chase County's and Bridgeport's side.

"It's disappointing when the officials decide the game," he said.

Chase County led most of the game against previously undefeated Bridgeport.

Chase County led by five with about 50 seconds left in the game, when Bridgeport hit a trey as 0:40 showed on the clock.

Still leading 38-36, Walleson was fouled and hit the front end of two free throws, pulling Bridgeport within one, 38-37.

On Chase County's next effort to bring the ball in, they were called for a five-second violation and turned over the ball.

With 16 seconds left, Morgan fouled Bridgeport's Jacobsen, who tied the game, 38-38, making the first of two shots, missing the second one.

After a Chase County timeout, Nichole Dickey was fouled with five seconds left. She hit both free throws, putting her team up 40-38 before the fateful three-pointer at the game's end.

Morgan Strand had another double/double in the game, leading Chase County in scoring with 14 points and 12 rebounds. She also had two blocked shots.

Karlee Palmer hit two treys in the game, scoring eight overall. Kim Brophy also dropped in a trey and led the team in assists with seven.

Dickey led the team with five steals.

Both teams hit 12 field goals, Chase County at 12 of 35 (34%) and Bridgeport 12 of 53 (23%). Chase County had three treys to Bridgeport's two, but the margin of difference was at the charity stripe, where the Lady Bulldogs hit 11 of 25 to Chase County's seven of 13.



### Imperial 40

	2 PT.	3 PT.	FT/		
	FG	FG	FTA	F	TP
Chantal Heathers	0	0	0-0	0	0
Michaela Ketter	0	0	0-0	0	0
Jilanne German	0	0	0-0	0	0
Nichole Dickey	2	0	3-5	3	7
Karlee Palmer	1	2	0-0	1	8
Karlee Kunnemann	0	0	0-0	0	0
Kim Brophy	1	1	2-2	2	7
Shannon Liewer	0	0	0-0	2	0
Molly Strand	1	0	0-0	4	2
Morgan Strand	6	0	2-6	5	14
Lexee Reichert	1	0	0-0	2	2
TOTALS	12	3	7-13	19	40

### Bridgeport 41

R. Jacobsen 8, S. Spurgeon 3, M. Steer 2, C. Laux 7, M. Steer 5, C. Walleson 10, M. Steer 2, Stevens 4.

Bridgeport's totals: 2 pt. FG—12; 3 pt. FG—2; FT/FTA—11-25; Fouls—16; TP—41.

Points by quarters:

Imperial 13 11 8 8—40

Bridgeport 9 12 9 11—41

### Gordon/Rushville game

Coach Mroczek said they knew Gordon/Rushville would have a height advantage in the consolation game with five players at 5'10" or taller.

The Lady Mustangs got on the board quickly, as their leading scorer, Ostrander, hit a bucket just seconds into the game.

Gordon/Rushville took a 21-6 first quarter lead, but the Lady Longhorns didn't give up.

Chase County outscored the Lady Mustangs in both the second and third quarters, cutting their lead to eight after three quarters, and pulling within six with five minutes left in the game.

But, Mroczek said his team couldn't get over the hump, and eventually lost 60-47, as Ostrander dropped in 12 more points that quarter, ending with a game high of 33.

"We fought until the end," Mroczek said. "The girls never gave up."

He was encouraged, too, to see three of his players in double figures, led by Nichole Dickey with 19 points, 12 of them coming from treys.

Dickey set a new individual record for most three-point attempts in the game at 13. Amanda Poppe had the old record of 10 attempts during the 2004-05 season.

With three other treys in the game from Palmer, the team also tied the record for most three-pointers made in a game at seven, and set a new team record for most attempts at 23. The old records were set last season.

Also in double figures were Morgan Strand with 13 and Palmer with 11.

Mroczek said he's glad to see his team getting more confident when shooting the ball.

Both teams were even at the free throw line with eight each, but the big difference was shooting from two-point range.

Chase County was 9 of 33 (27%) while Gordon/Rushville hit 23 of 62 (37%).

Morgan Strand led the team in rebounds with 15 and had two blocked shots. Kim Brophy led the team in steals with four and assists with eight.

### Imperial 47

	2 PT.	3 PT.	FT/		
	FG	FG	FTA	F	TP
Chantal Heathers	0	0	0-0	0	0
Michaela Ketter	0	0	0-0	0	0
Nichole Dickey	2	4	3-3	4	19
Karlee Palmer	1	3	0-0	0	11
Karlee Kunnemann	0	0	0-0	0	0
Kim Brophy	1	0	0-0	1	2
Shannon Liewer	0	0	0-0	0	0
Molly Strand	0	0	2-6	4	2
Morgan Strand	5	0	3-6	4	13
Lexee Reichert	0	0	0-0	0	0

TOTALS 9 7 8-15 13 47

Gordon-Rushville 60

Fowler 10, Norton 8, Sones 2, Johnson 4, Fairhead 3, Ostrander 33.

Gordon-Rushville's totals: 2 pt. FG—23; 3 pt. FG—2; FT/FTA—8-18; Fouls—16; TP—60.

Points by quarters:

Imperial 6 12 15 14—47

Gordon-Rushville 21 10 10 19—60

Games don't get easier

Chase County returns to action this Saturday, Jan. 10, when they travel to Wray, Colo. Action starts at 3 p.m. (MT) with the JV games.

Wray's varsity girls' team won the state championship last year, and have all but two players back who saw varsity action, Mroczek said.

Next Thursday, Jan. 15, the Lady Longhorns will be back home against Perkins County, who is 7-1 this week after winning their own Holiday Tournament.

This year, both CCS and Perkins County's boys' and girls' teams will play on the same Jan. 15 date. They played on separate dates in previous seasons. JV games start at 4:30 p.m.

Those games will be followed the next day by Jan. 16 contests at Gothenburg. The Swedes, 5-3, are the only team to beat the Perkins County girls so far this season, and will bring a tall team to the game, Mroczek said.