By Russ Pankonin
The Imperial Republican

Imperial knocked down a win over Bridgeport in the opening round of the Alliance Holiday tournament but fell to Alliance in the finals last week.

Coach Carl Zuege said the opening win over Bridgeport came in a game that looked like both teams had just come off a five-day layoff.

Despite that, he said the Longhorns played some good defense in the second half. They held Bridgeport scoreless in the third period and allowed only two points in the fourth.

The ’Horns also made a couple of free throws down the stretch to make the difference in the game, surviving by a 35-31 margin.

Against Class B Alliance in the finals, the Longhorns fell behind 17-4 after one period but outscored them 25-13 in the next two quarters to get themselves back in the game.

After taking a 37-36 lead in the fourth, the Longhorns saw their lead disappear and were forced to put Alliance on the line.

Unfortunately for Imperial, Alliance went 10-10 from the free throw lane in the final minutes to close out the Longhorns.

Bridgeport game sloppy

Looking back on the games, Zuege said the Bridgeport game was “sloppy” at best. He said it was easy to see the effects of the layoff over Christmas.

The first round games were played Monday—the first day teams could resume action after the five-day, state-imposed moratorium.

“I was not excited with how we played,” he said this week.

In the sectond quarter, Zuege brought his sophomores and juniors in off the bench to put on a full-court man press.

“That really sparked us,” he said, as the Longhorns pulled within two. However, Bridgeport was able to build a 10-point halftime lead, aided by a pair of threes.

In the third, the Longhorns put up 12 points while holding Bridgeport scoreless to take a 31-29 lead.

In the fourth, neither team had much success offensively. Imperial made one jumper while Bridgeport settled for just two free throws.

Imperial's Matt Hayes made both sides of a one-and-one in the final minute to put the game away.

Josh Schuman led the team with 10 points.

Imperial 35

	2 PT. FG	3 PT. FG	FT/ FTA	F	TP
Josh Schuman	5	0	0-0	2	10
Kyle Bottom	1	0	0-0	2	2
Matt Hayes	0	0	2-2	1	2
Alex Strand	1	0	0-0	2	2
Jakob Burke	1	0	0-0	0	2
Jeff Banks	0	0	0-0	0	0
Casey Francis	2	1	0-0	1	7
Daniel Regier	0	0	0-0	2	0
Colin Larson	2	0	1-4	2	5
Daniel Morales	0	0	1-2	2	1

Bridgeport 31

J. Toscanu 4, P. Faessler 5, J. Galvan 5, S. Torres 10, M. Beyer 4, E. Lopez 3.

Bridgeport's totals: 2 pt. FG—6; 3 pt. FG—3; FT/FTA—10-17; Fouls—8 TP—31.

Points by quarters:

Imperial	10	9	12	4	—35
Bridgeport	12	17	0	2	—31

Best two quarters of the year

Zuege said the Longhorns struggled early against Alliance, putting themselves in a hole early, 17-4.

He said the team's tempo was better than against Bridgeport, but they just couldn't get shots to fall.

Then, Zuege said the Longhorns turned in the best two quarters of basketball they've played all season.

They held Alliance to eight in the second quarter while posting 17 of their own, including seven from Colin Larson and six from Schuman.

In the third, the Longhorns gave up only five to Alliance while adding eight of their own to pull within one, 29-30, going into the final quarter.

With about six minutes left, the Longhorns grabbed a momentary 37-36 lead only to see it slip away.

Despite a 12-point quarter, the Longhorns were forced to foul, going down the stretch.

Unfortunately the Longhorns fell victim to perfect 10-10 free throw shooting by Alliance, accounting for the nine-point loss, 41-50.

Zuege said he was really pleased with the play of Schuman and Larson. They just took the game over inside, he said.

Schuman finished with 16, of which four of those baskets came on put-backs underneath.

Larson added another 11 points from the high post position.

Zuege said the team's performance and outcome in two games was somewhat ironic.

He said they won the first game but he certainly wasn't happy with how they played.

In the finals Tuesday, they lost to Alliance but he noted he was really pleased with how they played.

Despite the loss, Zuege said the Alliance game is one to build on as they begin the second half of the season.

Imperial 41

	2 PT. FG	3 PT. FG	FT/ FTA	F	TP
Josh Schuman	8	0	0-2	3	16
Kyle Bottom	2	0	2-2	1	6
Matt Hayes	0	0	0-0	1	0
Alex Strand	1	0	0-0	5	2
Jakob Burke	0	0	0-0	0	0
Alec Spady	0	0	0-0	0	0
Jeff Banks	0	0	0-0	0	0
Casey Francis	1	0	0-0	1	2
Charlie Haarberg	0	0	0-0	0	0
Daniel Regier	0	0	0-0	1	0
Colin Larson	5	0	1-1	4	11
Daniel Morales	0	0	0-0	1	0
Alex Sharp	1	0	2-2	1	4
Tanner Stromberger	0	0	0-0	1	0
TOTALS	18	0	5-7	19	41

Alliance 50

J. Peltz 8, T. Thompson 8, M. Peltz 11, N. Griess 8, B. Hakmans 4, C. Anthony 2, S.

Langemeier 9.
Alliance's totals: 2 pt. FG—12; 3 pt. FG—5; FT/FTA—11-20; Fouls—11 TP—50.
Points by quarters:
Imperial 4 17 8 12—41
Alliance 17 8 5 20—50

At Wray Saturday

The 2-6 Longhorns travel to Wray Saturday for both boys and girls action.

Action will begin with a C team boys game at 3 p.m. followed by the jayvee games, and varsity girls' and boys' games.

Alex Sharp 1 0 0-2 2 2
Tanner Stromberger 1 0 0-0 2 2
TOTALS 14 1 4-10 18 35