By Russ Pankonin
The Imperial Republican

Despite falling to the Wray, Colo., Eagles in basketball action Saturday night, girls' Longhorn Coach Marc Mrozcek said they came away with some positives.

Saturday marked the first game for the Longhorns since the Alliance holiday tournament Dec. 29-30.

He said the girls played well from coming off the long layoff and a tough week of practice to get ready for the second half of the season.

What Mrozcek liked was that despite being down, his girls never gave up and kept executing.

The girls opened strong against the Eagles and were tied 8-8 in the first quarter before Wray went on a 12-point run.

"They run the court very well," Mrozcek said of the Eagles, who are the defending state champion in their class and runners-up two years ago.

Wray returned the core of their state championship team, including 10 seniors, and have only lost one game this season.

Depth proved to be a factor as the game went on, Mrozcek said. "They were 10 to 12 to 14 girls deep compared to our 7 or 8 girls," he noted.

Initially the Longhorns struggled with the Eagles' press. However, when they started attacking it, they did much better, the coach said. However, the Longhorns still turned the ball over 33 times compared to Wray's 16.

Seeing Wray's press will be key this week when the girls play host to Perkins County, defending state champs in Class C2.

He said Grant runs the same press and will play tough defense. "We're going to give them our best shot," he added.

Then, on Friday, the Longhorns travel to Gothenburg, who have won their last four games and stand at 7-3.

Earlier in the season, they handed Perkins County their only loss, winning by 20.

Mrozcek said rebounding will be one of the focuses in practice this week. He said the girls aren't protecting the defensive boards well enough and are giving up too many offensive rebounds that result in points by the opponent.

He said they need to do some work on the boards at the offensive end of the court as well.

A bright spot in the game came from Nichole Dickey, who knocked down five of 13 trey attempts for a 38 percent night. Her 13 attempts ties the individual record for 3-point attempts.

She led the Longhorns with 19 points, followed by Morgan Strand with 12. Strand led the

rebounding with 10.

For the game, Imperial went 5-21 (.240) from the three-point line while Wray was 5-19 (.260).

Inside the arc, Imperial hit 11-34 (.320) compared to 23-57 (.400) for Wray.

While the Longhorns shot 50 percent from the line, they only got to the free throw line 10 times. Wray shot 26 free throws, hitting 17 (.650).

Girls' action here against Perkins County will begin with the jayvee game at 4:30 p.m. MT.

Jayvee action at Gothenburg begins at 3:30 p.m. MT.

Imperial 42

	2 PT. FG	3 PT. FG	FT/ FTA	F	TP
Chantal Heathers	0	0	0-0	1	0
Jilanne German	1	0	0-0	0	2
Nichole Dickey	1	5	2-2	2	19
Karlee Palmer	0	0	0-0	3	0
Karlee Kunnemann	0	0	0-0	0	0
Kim Brophy	0	0	0-0	4	0
Shannon Liewer	0	0	0-0	1	0
Molly Strand	1	0	2-2	3	4
Morgan Strand	6	0	0-4	3	12
Lexee Reichert	2	0	1-2	2	5
TOTALS	11	5	5-10	19	42

Wray, Colo. 79

Oestman 2, C. Loyd 15, B. Bard 11, E. Post 3, S. Post 17, K. Newman 5, T. Odell 2, J. Cure 4, C. J. Twiss 5, S. Odell 14.

Wray's totals: 2 pt. FG—23; 3 pt. FG—5; FT/FTA—17-26; Fouls—10; TP—79.

Points by quarters:

Imperial 8□□10□16□□8—42

Wray 20□□19□24□16—79