



By Russ Pankonin

The Imperial Republican

The Chase County Longhorns added a pair of wins to their record against just one loss during the Cabela's Holiday Basketball Shootout in Sidney last week.

The wins improve their season mark to 4-5 as they get ready for the second half of the season. In their opener last week, the Longhorns fell in overtime to the eventual runner-up, Douglas, Wyo., 62-64.

Bouncing back from the loss, the Longhorns took wins over Hershey, 65-57, in the second round and Gothenburg, 52-48, in the final round to finish fifth.

Coach Carl Zuege said the tournament proved to be a real confidence booster for his kids. Even though they fell in overtime to Douglas in the opener, Zuege said he could see the difference in confidence going forward.

What excited Zuege most was to see the Longhorns' improvement on the offensive end of the court.

"We're starting to see offensive production," he said.

Against Douglas, the Longhorns finished with three players in double figures. Against Hershey, that number climbed to four. They were just a point shy of having three against Gothenburg.

Zuege knew his team had that potential but his shooters just hadn't caught on fire yet.

They'll need to keep that hot hand going forward as the Longhorns face their toughest stretch in the second half of the season.

They will play five games in eight days, starting at Holyoke Friday. On Saturday, they play host to Dundy County in a game that was postponed before the break due to weather.

Then, on Tuesday, Jan. 8, they travel to Southern Valley and come back to face Perkins County here Thursday, Jan. 10.

The stretch wraps up with a re-match against Gothenburg in regular season play Friday, Jan. 11.

The following week, the SPVA conference tournament opens up in North Platte.



Douglas

The first half see-sawed back and forth as the two teams traded leads of no larger than three points.

Trailing 27-29 just before half, Justus Wallin hit a free throw and Jeff Dickey hit a deuce to give the Longhorns a 30-29 halftime lead.

The Longhorns opened the second half with a 6-2 run to go up 37-31 and held a 44-40 lead going into the fourth quarter.

Douglas opened the fourth with a 6-0 run of their own to go up 44-46 before Kale Gockley got a three-point play the old-fashioned way. He hit a basket, drew the foul and dropped the free throw for a 47-46 lead.

On the next trip down, Kelton Fisher did the same thing to give the Longhorns a 50-46 lead.

Douglas answered, scoring six unanswered points to pull ahead 52-50.

Down by two, the Longhorns patiently ran their offense until Dickey found a seam to the basket and put one in off the glass to tie the score, 52-52.

In the final 30 seconds, both teams had a shot to take the lead.

Douglas missed a drive to the hoop and the Longhorns got the rebound, went down court and called time-out with 12.3 seconds left.

They worked the ball around but Douglas tightened up inside, forcing the Longhorns into a trey that fell short as time in regulation expired.

Douglas rattled off a 7-1 run with four on free throws to open the overtime but the Longhorns remained patient. Fisher hit a shot before Dickey grabbed a steal and went coast to coast to pull the Longhorns within two, 57-59.

Douglas made one of two at the line for a three-point lead. The Longhorns worked the ball before taking a trey. The ball came off the board deep with Wallin grabbing the rebound and dishing it out to Gockley.

He drained a 22-foot trey to tie the game 60-60. After an offensive foul by Douglas, the Longhorns had a shot at the lead but missed a drive down the lane.

Douglas drew another Longhorn foul and drained a pair of free throws for a 62-60 lead.

With 9 seconds left, Dickey got his own rebound and a put-back to tie the score 62-62.

Douglas drove the length of the court and drew a blocking foul with just seconds left.

They dropped both free throws, capping an 8 for 9 effort at the line in overtime. A last-ditch 3/4-court toss by Dickey bounced off the glass, giving Douglas the 64-62 win.

Fisher and Dickey led the team with 20 each. Gockley followed with 14. They each finished with eight rebounds.

The Longhorns shot 39 percent from the field compared to 42 percent for Douglas. The real difference came at the line with Imperial shooting just nine and making six while Douglas shot 28 free throws, making 15.

Imperial 62

	2 PT.	3 PT.	FT/											
	FG	FG	FTA	F	TP									
Travis Luhrs	0	0	0-0	1	0									
Ryan Moline	0	0	0-0	0	0									
Freddie Kasselmann			0	0	0-0	0	0							
Kevin German	0	0	0-0	0	0	Dan Sullivan	0	0	0-0	3	0	Jeffrey Dickey	7	2
	0-0	0	20											
Kale Gockley	3	2	2-3	3	14									

Longhorns go 2-1 at Cabela's Shootout

Kelton Fisher	9	0	2-3	5	20	Justus Wallin	0	0	1-2	2	1
Hunter Spady	0	0	0-0	0	0						
Trey Milner	1	0	0-0	0	2						
Isaac Sorensen	2	0	1-1	4	5						
Holden Dreiling	0	0	0-0	0	0						
Darin Knobbe	0	0	0-0	0	0						
Brian Bell	0	0	0-0	1	0						
TOTALS	22	4	6-9	19	62						

Douglas, WY 64

D. Davidson 13, R. Ricks 6, J. Richards 17, G. Vanderverter 15, S. Shuler 4, L. Barker 9.

Douglas' team totals: 2 pt. FG—17; 3 pt. FG—5; FT/FTA—15-28; Fouls—14; TP—64.

Points by quarters:

Imperial 16 14 14 8 10—62

Douglas, WY 14 15 11 12 12—64

Hershey

Fisher and Dickey got the offense going early against Hershey in the second round of the tournament.

Fisher had 9 and Dickey 5 of the Longhorns' 19 first quarter points en route to a 19-10 lead.

Hershey cut into that lead in the second, pulling to within 6, 30-24 at half.

Hershey continued to eat into the Longhorn lead in the third, narrowing it to just two, 37-35.

The Longhorns answered with a bucket from Fisher, a free throw by Wallin and a deuce and trey from Dickey for an 8-1 run to go up 45-36.

Hershey hit a shot at the end of the third to bring them within seven, 45-38.

The Longhorns opened up a 51-40 lead early in the fourth quarter off buckets by Gockley and Wallin and a pair of free throws from Dickey.

Hershey got the lead down to seven, 51-44 before Travis Luhrs hit the first of two treys to reopen the lead to 10, 54-44.

Hershey wouldn't go away, converting both from the field and the line on a 9-2 run to whittle the Longhorns' lead to just three, 56-53. Luhrs' second trey gave the Longhorns some breathing room.

He and Gockley each added two free throws to reopen a nine-point lead, 64-55.

Hershey could pull no closer than five with Wallin adding the final margin of victory with a free throw.

Offensively, the Longhorns finished with four players in double figures, led by Fisher with 19. Dickey added 12, Luhrs 11 and Gockley 10.

Fisher also led the rebounding with 5.

From the field, the Longhorns were just 35 percent and only 56 percent from the line.

Hershey was 43 percent from the field and 68 percent from the line.

Imperial 65

	2 PT.	3 PT.	FT/								
FG	FG	FTA	F	TP							
Travis Luhrs	1	2	3-4	1	11						
Ryan Moline	0	0	0-0	0	0						
Freddie Kasselmann	0	0	0-0	0	0						
Kevin German	0	0	0-0	0	0	Dan Sullivan	0	0	0-0	2	0
	2-7	3	12			Jeffrey Dickey	2	2			

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Kale Gockley	2	1	3-3	1	10									
Kelton Fisher	7	0	5-7	4	19	Justus Wallin	1	0	6-8	2	8			
Hunter Spady	0	0	0-0	0	0									
Trey Milner	0	0	0-0	2	0									
Isaac Sorensen	1	1	0-2	1	5									
Holden Dreiling	0	0	0-0	0	0									
Darin Knobbe	0	0	0-0	0	0									
Brian Bell	0	0	0-0	2	0									
TOTALS	14	6	19-31	18	65									

Hershey 57

C. Marshall 3, J. Connell 5, L. Maassen 20, D. Johnson 9, J. Margritz 5, K. Czernick 9, D. Stretcher 6.

Hershey's team totals: 2 pt. FG—15; 3 pt. FG—4; FT/FTA—15-22; Fouls—23; TP—57.

Points by quarters:

Imperial 19 11 15 20—65

Hershey 10 14 14 19—57

Gothenburg

Zuege knew this game would be a good test for his team.

Gothenburg controls the inside with a pair of 6-7 and 6-5 posts.

Defensively, he put 6-0 Wallin on the 6-7 man and 6-1 Sorensen on the 6-5 man.

Zuege couldn't have been prouder of their defensive effort, holding 6-5 Tanner Borchardt to 14 and 6-7 Logan Koehler to just 10.

The game was close all the way. While the Longhorns led by one at half, 25-24, Gothenburg rallied back in the third to take a 39-37 lead.

Zuege said the mental and physical fatigue of playing three straight days was beginning to show as the Longhorns trailed 44-40.

Zuege said they took a time-out and challenged the kids to take the game to Gothenburg.

They did just that, going from four points down to four points up.

After getting Gothenburg's big men in foul trouble, the Longhorns held Gothenburg to just nine in the fourth.

The Longhorns went to the line 12 times in the fourth, making nine for the 52-48 win.

Fisher and Dickey paced the team with 14 and 12 respectively.

Imperial 52

	2 PT.	3 PT.	FT/											
	FG	FG	FTA	F	TP									
Travis Luhrs	0	0	0-0	1	0									
Ryan Moline	0	0	0-0	0	0									
Dan Sullivan	1	0	1-1	3	3									
Kevin German	0	0	0-0	0	0	Kelton Fisher	5	0	4-10	2	14	Jeffrey Dickey	2	
	1	2-2	0	9										
Kale Gockley	2	1	5-7	2	12									
Justus Wallin	1	0	2-2	3	4									
Hunter Spady	0	0	0-0	0	0									
Trey Milner	2	0	0-1	3	4									
Isaac Sorensen	3	0	0-1	2	6									
Holden Dreiling	0	0	0-0	0	0									

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Darin Knobbe 0 0 0-0 0 0

Brian Bell 0 0 0-0 0 0

TOTALS 16 2 14-24 16 52

Gothenburg 48

A. Collins 9, L. Sheets 2, B. Ristine 11, R. Slack 2, T. Borchardt 14, L. Koehler 10.

Gothenburg's team totals: 2 pt. FG—19; 3 pt. FG—0; FT/FTA—10-18; Fouls—21; TP—48.

Points by quarters:

Imperial 10 15 12 15—52

Gothenburg 10 14 15 9—48