



**By Russ Pankonin**

***The Imperial Republican***

The Chase County Longhorns picked up a much-needed win Saturday at Haxtun, defeating the 8-3 Bulldogs 52-45.

The win got the Longhorns back on the victory track after winning just one of their previous five games.

The Longhorns added to that momentum Tuesday night with a 67-30 shellacking of the Wray, Colo., Eagles.

“We really needed that win,” he said. “That was a good basketball team we beat.”

The Longhorns found themselves at a height disadvantage, again.

Despite that, the Longhorns stepped up their defensive effort and never trailed in the game after taking a 11-0 lead to start the game. Seven of the 11 came from Jeff Dickey.

Coach Carl Zuege praised his players for their effort against Haxtun.

He credited Justus Wallin and Trey Milner for shutting down Haxtun’s inside game. “Wallin did yeoman’s work down low,” he said.

Milner got into spots to keep Haxtun’s big men from getting inside to the boards, as well.

Defensively, the Longhorns dominated the Bulldogs in the first half with aggressive, in-your-face, man defense.

The Longhorns have struggled with the man defense recently, So, Zuege said they practiced a number of zone defenses before coming back to the man defense.

“It comes down to just playing better man defense,” the coach said.



### **Defense sparks the offense**

That defense helped spark on 11-0 run to open the game and resulted in the Haxtun coach benching his starters midway in the first.

While the Longhorns held a 13-5 lead after the first quarter, Zuege said he should have done a better job of exploiting Haxtun’s jayvees while they were on the floor.

The Longhorns kept their offensive and defensive momentum going.

Up by four with about two minutes left in the half, Travis Luhrs came in to knock down a trey followed by another deuce to open up a nine-point, 23-14 lead. At half, the Longhorns remained up by six, 25-19.

## Longhorns get much-needed win at Haxtun

---

For some reason, the third quarter hasn't been good to the Longhorns this season. But they started off strong Saturday.

Kelton Fisher grabbed an early steal and then dropped a pair of free throws to put the Longhorns up by 12, 35-23.

Haxtun converted some steals into baskets and started going hard inside to the bucket.

With :36 left in the third they pulled to within four 35-31 before Isaac Sorensen broke a five-minute scoring drought to put the Longhorns ups 37-31 going into the final quarter.

Baskets by Wallin, Fisher, Sorensen and Dickey, against one try by Haxtun, opened another nine-point lead, 45-34. Haxtun then cut it to eight with three free throws.

With 3:23 left, Haxtun turned a Longhorn turnover into points to pull within six, 45-39.

Dickey got a bucket inside, and the foul for the and-one to reopen a 48-39 lead.

Haxtun hit a pair of free throws which was matched by a hoop from Kale Gockley. Brian Bell added the final bucket in the 52-45 win.

Dickey led the Longhorns with 16, followed by Fisher with 13.

Fisher led the rebounding with 6, followed by Dickey with 5.

From the field, the Longhorns had one of their better shooting nights. They went 20-40 inside the arc for 50 percent, and 2-11 from outside the arc to finish 43 percent for the game.

Imperial 54

	2 PT.	3 PT.	FT/		
	FG	FG	FTA	F	TP
Travis Luhrs	1	1	0-0	1	5
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	1	0	0-2	1	2
Jeffrey Dickey	6	1	1-1	1	16
Kale Gockley	2	0	0-0	2	4
Kelton Fisher	5	0	3-3	4	13
Justus Wallin	2	0	2-2	3	6
Hunter Spady	0	0	0-0	1	0
Trey Milner	0	0	0-0	2	0
Isaac Sorensen	3	0	0-0	3	6
Calin Griffin	0	0	0-0	0	0
Darin Knobbe	0	0	0-0	0	0
Brian Bell	1	0	0-0	0	2
TOTALS	20	2	6-6	18	54

Haxtun 45

J. Gerk 2, W. Salyards 2, K. Pierce 16, B. Heinz 2, T. Wilson, 6, K. Anderson 2, B. Hinde 8, I. Brown 2, G. Chapdelaine 2, B. Bivins 5. Haxtun's team totals: 2 pt. FG—11; 3 pt. FG—4; FT/FTA—11-19; Fouls—10; TP—45.

Points by quarters:

Imperial 13 12 12 15—52

Haxtun 5 14 12 14—45

### Rematch Friday

The Longhorns will get a rematch of the SPVA final Friday when they play host to North Platte St. Pat's. Jayvee boys and girls action begins at 4 p.m. MT.

On Tuesday, Feb. 5, the boys and girls travel to Wauneta-Palisade with jayvee girls action beginning at 3 p.m. MT.

Coverage of Tuesday's win at Wray will appear in next week's issue.