

NCHS to battle Bath in Montgomery event; Cruse concerned about long snow layoff

SPORTS EXTRA

The Montgomery County Holiday Boys' Basketball Tournament promises to be a unique challenge for the Nicholas County Bluejackets, predicts NCHS Head Coach Lee Cruse.

Nicholas will face Bath County in the tournament opener and Cruse said, though the team sports the same athletes Nicholas faced in football, they have suffered from being unable to play since the winter snows have settled in.

"We haven't been able to play since the Clark County game. With two weeks out of action we have spent too much time practicing and not enough time playing," Cruse said.

Though the team has not suffered physically, Cruse said the jackets may be tired mentally. However, he said Bath County has faced the same situation and that may be an advantage to the jackets.

But Bath is good inside and has substitutes that work well together, Cruse said.

Bath County has this court pressure by losing only one player from last year and being predominantly a much more court experienced team.

Bath has a good three point shooter and the early indications show Bath County may turn out to be one of the better teams in the region.

Bath has an East Carter defeat on their record and East Carter came very close to defeating Clark County early in the season.

But though Bath has been on hiatus because of the snow, they have been able to log more games on their schedule than Nicholas.

Though, according to Cruse, this does not necessarily mean they have an advantage.

If they do defeat Bath, it is probable Nicholas will face Bourbon County next in the tournament, Cruse said.

Bourbon's game revolves primarily around the squad's two

main shooters, he said, Corey Williams and David Abrams.

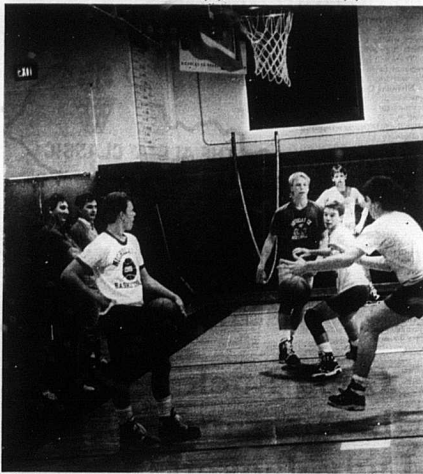
The other members of Bourbon County's team work primarily as role players.

The key, Cruse said, is containing Williams, Cruse said.

because he is far and away the most experienced player on the Bourbon County squad.

"What you have to understand is even Nicholas' old kids are young," Cruse said.

Experience will be a factor in tournament play.



SPORTS EXTRA/John Shepherd Photo

Lee Cruse, Nicholas County's boys coach is concerned the long layoff caused by winter conditions, which has kept the Bluejackets out of game play for nearly two weeks. The jackets battle Bath County in the Montgomery tourney.

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