

# Falcons end Cubs' run...again

## Foul trouble, slow pace troublesome for Cubs

For the second time this year, the Brownfield Cubs' playoff hopes were dashed in the first round by the Bushland Falcons.

The first time was on the football field at Lubbock Cooper in November.

This time it was on the basketball court at Dimmitt High School on Friday night.

The Cubs headed north for the playoff game and filled the home stands with hundreds of faithful fans, who saw their squad hold a small lead at the end of the first, second and third quarters, but watched the game slip away in the final frame as the Falcons were on top 52-39, at the final buzzer.

Head Coach Dustin Faught blamed the loss on poor shooting caused by playoff jitters.

"One of the most important things a team can have going into the playoffs is experience," he said. "This team had none and I think that showed tonight. We weren't comfortable and we weren't playing the game we needed to in order to win. We're a small team, so we have to play fast and make a lot of shots and we just didn't do either of those things tonight."

Bushland, whose starting five all topped six feet, was able to slow the pace of the game down and frustrate the Cubs by taking them out of their usual "run and gun" style.

Neither team scored in the opening two minutes of play and at the end of the first quarter, the Cubs had only 10 points, to the Falcons' eight, but a foul at the buzzer put a Bushland shooter on the free throw line.

He hit both freebies and tied the score, 10-10, to start the second quarter.

The second frame was almost identical to the first, with the Cubs carrying a 21-18 lead into the locker room at the half.

Bushland hit a three-pointer to open the third quarter and knot the score at 21-21.

The game stayed tight through the third, but the Cubs were still up, 30-29, heading into the fourth.

Brownfield put up a quick unanswered five points to widen the gap to 35-29, but then let Bushland climb back into the game with back-to-

back buckets off an easy offensive rebound and a turnover on a lazy Cub inbound pass.

The quick points shifted the momentum in favor of the Falcons and the Cubs never recovered.

Bushland continued to pull away and the Cubs succumbed to the pressure, throwing the ball away on two possessions late in the game and failing to make shots under the basket on several occasions.

"I'm disappointed in the loss, but I have to give Bushland credit," Coach Faught said. "We knew coming in here tonight that whichever team controlled the pace would walk out of here holding the gold ball and that's exactly what they did to us."

Cubs senior Shaun Paiva, who fouled out with more than five minutes left in the game, led Brownfield with 16 points in the game, including a pair of three-pointers.

Sophomores Jordan Demps and Shacolby Hill both notched seven points for the Cubs.

Seniors Ricky Rodriguez and Ryan Caballero had four points and three points, respectively, in the contest.

Junior Cole Garcia had two points.

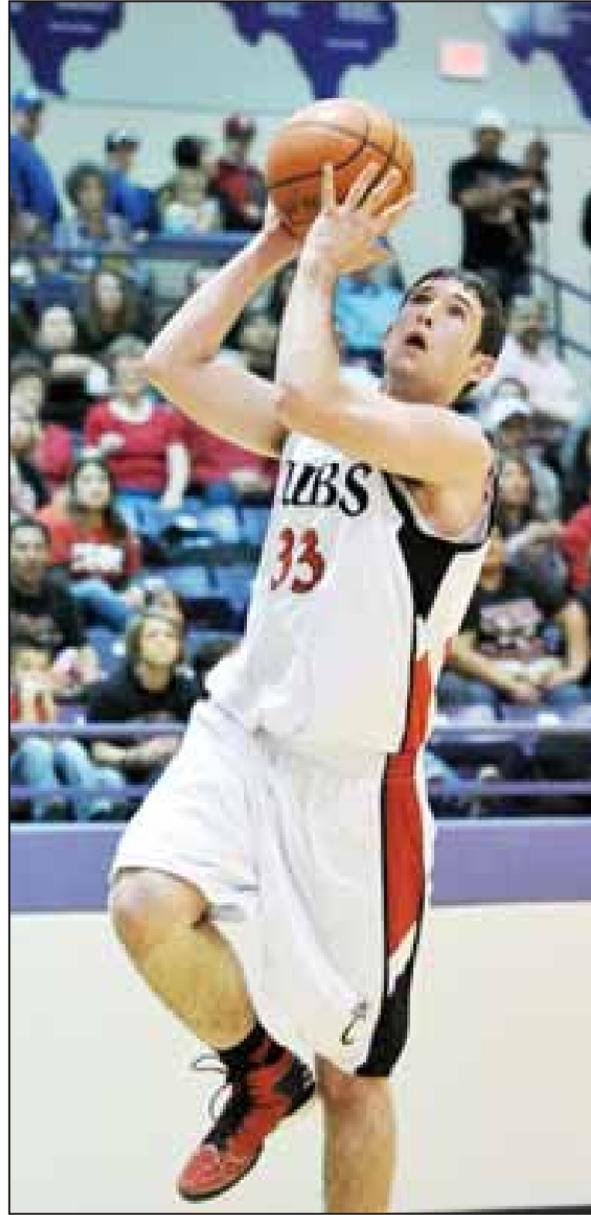
The game was the last for five seniors on the squad, including Paiva, Rodriguez, Caballero, Cade Powell and Johnathan Estorga.

The coach said this year's seniors will be greatly missed.

"What this group of guys gave us was more important than anything else and that was leadership, both on and off the court," Faught said. "I could always count on them, whether in a game, in practice or just any other time to lead this team in the right direction. Tonight's game is not indicative of how these guys played all year. They are winners and they will be missed."

The Runnin Cubs finished the season with a 23-7 record, but were undefeated through District 4-2A, finishing their conference schedule with a 10-0 record.

In the last week of rankings from the Texas Association of Basketball Coaches, the Cubs were ranked 24th in the state.

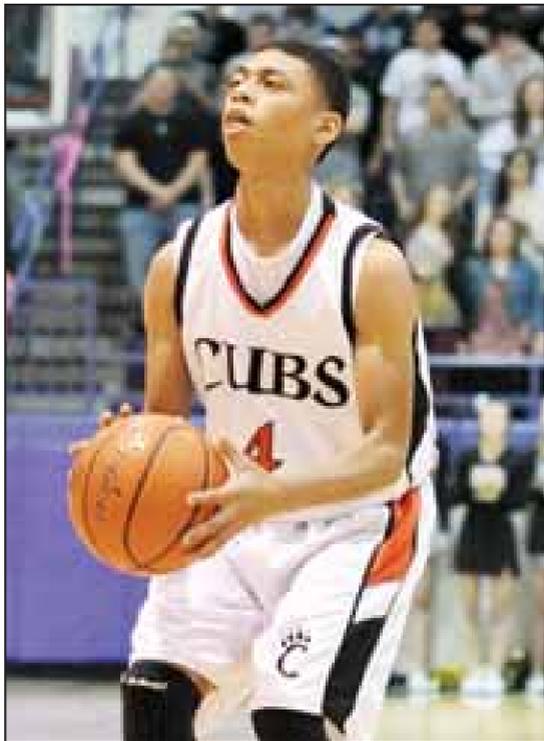


Looking for a bucket...

Cub senior Shaun Paiva completed a lay-up after a fast break in the fourth quarter. Paiva, in his last game in a Cubs jersey, led the team with 16 points in the contest.



Shacolby Hill worked the ball down court in the final frame of Friday night's playoff loss to the Bushland Falcons.



Jordan Demps eyed the basket in the second half Friday night for a three pointer against the Bushland Falcons.



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"Athlete of the Week"

Coach Dustin Faught

This week, we celebrate 'Runnin Cubs Head Coach Dustin Faught for leading his team into their first playoff experience in several years, including a perfect District record. Thanks Coach!



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