

Falcons fumbles continue in their nest
Winchester now 3-4 at home with sectionals looming
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WINCHESTER — The Golden Falcons had one play that captured their performance. With the scoreboard displaying a 51-48 deficit and 7.6 seconds left, Carter Frazee inbounded to fellow senior Lucas Tarter. He didn't see the ball coming his way and it fell into the lap of Centerville's Landyn Keiser, who was fouled and sank two free throws to ice the game.

Winchester Community High School's boys basketball team missed its chance to tie the game to potentially force overtime Thursday in a 53-48 Tri-Eastern Conference loss to the Centerville Bulldogs.

"We have to accept that we were right there and couldn't get over the hump," Caleb Hummel said. "We need to clean up the little things, like silly turnovers. We had less today than our last few games, but we have to clean up those small ones that cost us the game."

Hummel did all he could to get his team in the win column, but to no avail. His 14 points put him alongside teammate Cam Baldwin as Winchester's leading scorers. The loss puts the team at 10-8 on the year with a 5-2 conference record, dropping it from third place to fifth. It moved the Bulldogs into third.

"The main thing to take away from today is that we're a good team, but we've got to continue to improve," Winchester coach Jake Turner said. "There's a lot of little things we've got to clean up if we want to play our best basketball once the sectionals roll around."

As close as the contest was at the end, there were points when Centerville couldn't put the game away. Its largest margin was 15 points in the third quarter after surprising the Golden Falcons with a full-court trap that resulted in a Jace Hollendonner steal and three from the left wing.

The home team fought back. With a full Winchester crowd hollering and a comeback mounting, it was difficult at times for the Bulldogs to remain composed when their momentum was rapidly declining.

"It's been a little bit of an issue recently for us to stay composed in those big moments," Centerville coach Brian Keiser said. "Winchester was knocking shots down and we weren't executing correctly. Credit to them for turning the pressure up but we need to take things one play at a time and keep fighting through those intense moments."

On the Bulldog side, the team had extra motivation coming into Winchester; Shea Hollendonner returned to the starting lineup after a seven-month recovery from an ACL injury. He led the Bulldogs in scoring with 14 points in his comeback.

"It's one of the hardest things I've ever done, watching my team play and not being able to compete," Hollendonner said. "I learned a lot, and got mentally stronger in the process; I'm so much better from it now."

The Golden Falcons will attempt to bounce back at home by welcoming in Hamilton Heights and Cambridge City Lincoln.