

Pendleton Boys Defeat Emerald, 59-49

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The Emerald High School boys basketball team has faced opponents like the one it took on Friday several times this season, but the Vikings still came away empty-handed. Unable to adapt to the pressure defense they were presented with, the Vikings fell 59-49 to Pendleton on Friday at Westview Middle School in both teams' Region 1-AA opener.

Playing in the region for the first time this season, Emerald doesn't have much familiarity with the Bulldogs, but the style of play Pendleton went to after a tight first half is familiar to the Vikings. "They changed their defense into something that we've seen a million times," Emerald coach Robin Scott said. "We had a timeout and we talked about what we wanted to do and we got decent shots off of it, but it was only one. We didn't attack out of it. "It's something that Ninety Six does to us and I mean, we've seen it a lot. We just didn't do too well with it."

Trailing 30-28 at halftime, Pendleton stuck with the 3-2 zone for the duration, but it began putting more pressure on Emerald at midcourt and trapping successfully. The Bulldogs opened the third quarter on a 11-0 run and the Vikings didn't make a field goal until Ontario Curry's layup with 2:34 on the clock, cutting Pendleton's lead to 43-32. "We had to put more pressure on them," Pendleton coach Bobby McGowens said. "The pace the game was going at, it wasn't our pace, so we tried to dictate the pace a little bit in the second half to get my guys going."

Emerald began regrouping midway through the fourth quarter and with 3:11 left in the game, Ryan Tracy hit a 3-pointer to pull the Vikings within eight. Just under a minute later, Lucas Mathis hit a second-chance jumper to make it 55-49. "I felt like we did a good job, they just killed us on the boards," McGowens said. "They've got some beasts on the boards."

The Vikings' comeback went for naught as they were unable to put the necessary defensive pressure on the Bulldogs. "We talked before about fouling at the end and play the game within a strategy and we couldn't get the foul," Scott said. "We played pretty good on the offensive end, but we just let them score at will. You've got to do it all together if you're going to come back from 17 down."

The teams played to a 19-19 tie in the first quarter and Pendleton led by just two at the break before picking up its intensity in the second half. "(Emerald) kept dropping back in the zone and then going man-to-man, depending on dead ball situations, so what we just had to do was play methodical, like they were doing," McGowens said.

PENDLETON (59): Hack Sullivan 15, Drek Turner 14, C.J. Gleaton 8, Anthony Eubanks 7,

Mayshun Whitner 15.

EMERALD (49): Rahmad Strong 2, A.J. Jones 6, Jared Norman 4, Ryan Tracy 10, Austin Baten 2, Lucas Mathis 6, Antonio Gray 6, Ontario Curry 8.

Pendleton 19 11 17 12 -- 59

Emerald 19 9 4 17 -- 49

3-point goals -- Pendleton 4 (Turner 3, Sullivan 1), Emerald 2 (Tracy 2). Fouled out -- None. Technicals -- None.

Records: P (10-4 overall, 1-0 Region 1-AA); E (7-7, 0-1).