

The Bandera PROPHEET

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Varsity Bulldogs headed to playoffs after big win against Fred Rare back to back game nights provide excitement

By Chris Darus
The Bandera Prophet

Canyon Lake

The Bandera boys basketball teams went 2-1 against Canyon Lake on Thursday night with the varsity taking a big 53-44 win to stay in the playoff hunt.

Varsity

Bandera trailed by three points at the half and were down by seven after three, before a 20-4 run in the fourth to get the win over the Hawks. Kayden Brown led Bulldog scoring with a 19 point performance with over half (10) coming when Bandera needed them most, in the fourth quarter and Alex Dirck recorded a double double (10 points and 11 boards) as the Bulldogs stayed knotted for the third seed with Davenport in district.

“We have played in a lot of close games this season and that experience is paying off for us in district play. Our guys did a great job of handling the pressure of facing a seven-point deficit entering the fourth quarter, and they never wavered. This is a group that is extremely close on and off the court, and they were able to come together and get a big win on the road last night. We’re excited about the opportunity to honor our seniors in their final home game Friday night and look forward to competing again against a really good Fredericksburg team,” coach Brady Keane said.

Bandera moves to 18-13 (6-3) as they look to make the post season this year after an appearance last season faced Fredericksburg on Friday night at home.

Scoring: Brown, 19, Dirck, 10, Noah Barnett, 9, Eli Salas, 9, Gavin Ortiz, 6 Rebounds: Dirck, 11, Brown, 5, Barnett, 3, Salas, 2

Assists: Barnett, 4, Ortiz, 2, Salas, 2

Steals: Salas, 4, Brown, 3, Barnett, 2

In other Thursday night action, the Bulldog JV bested the Hawks by five, 47-42 to go to 4-5 in district and the freshmen fell by a 44-35 tally to also move to 4-5 in district.

Fredericksburg

Varsity

After an early season 62-53 road win over Fredericksburg, Bandera was needing another win over the Billies to secure a spot in the playoffs and they delivered.

Trailing after the first few seconds in the first, Bandera opened a 35-24 lead at the half on the strength of a 22 point second quarter.

Bandera extended their lead in the third to 46-32 and Fred tried to rally in the fourth, outscoring Bandera 17-12, but the Bulldog lead was too much.

The Bulldogs scored 39 points from beyond the arc with Kayden Brown accounting for 18 of those long range points on 6-12 shooting on his way to a team high 24 points on the night.

“Friday was a special night. I love this senior class, and their commitment to being in the gym together over the last three years is what has pushed us to the next level as a program. I can't thank them enough. They've done everything we've asked of them as a coaching staff, and we really challenged them three years ago to take it upon themselves to put in the extra work necessary to be successful. They did that and more, and I'm so thankful for and proud of them. It was fitting for us to be able to celebrate Gavin, Noah, Kayden, Salvador, Logan and Scott on a night when we beat Fredericksburg for the third straight time

while also locking up a playoff spot. Our entire team came together and left it all on the floor to get the win. It was a lot of fun to be a part of. But one thing we've talked about all year is not being satisfied with getting into the playoffs. We lost at the buzzer in the first round last year, and these guys are ready to reset their focus and lock in on doing what it takes to win a playoff game this time around, " Keane said.

It was the Bulldogs' third straight win over Fred after losing the prior 16 meetings between the two teams.

Keane pointed out that Alex Dirck and Isaac Segura stepped up in a big way defensively for the Bulldogs, holding Fredericksburg's 6' 9" Daniel Schultz to just nine points and that improved consistency at the stripe helped the Bulldogs get the win and move to 7-3 in district.

Bandera will face Davenport, the team they are currently tied with in district Tuesday evening and with a win over the Wolves, Bandera will be the third seed in District 27-4A.

Bandera surprised Davenport in their first meeting in district with an exciting 49-46 overtime win.

The Bulldogs will get a well deserved rest Friday before closing out district play against the sixth ranked Boerne Grayhounds next Tuesday there.

Bandera will play in the first round of the playoffs on either Monday Feb. 20 or Tuesday Feb. 21 with the opponent still to be determined, but it will be either La Vernia, S.A. YMLA or Cuero.

Bandera stats:

Scoring: Brown 24, Bryson Holden 10, Eli Salas 8, Noah Barnett 6, Gavin Ortiz, 6, Dirck 4. **Rebounds:** Brown, 4, Barnett, 3, Dirck, 3, Holden, 3, Salas, 3, Ortiz, 2,
Assists: Salas, 3, Barnett, 3, Brown, 2, Ortiz, 1
Steals: Brown, 2

JV

After losing to Fred by 22 points in the first round, Bandera was looking to redeem themselves but came up just short, losing by a 50-48 score on a buzzer beater by the Billies.

The game started with a slow first quarter and the score was 25-16 at the half with Bandera leading thanks to some timely threes from Layne Bourgeois, Hank Pate and Randon Wheeler. Bandera's lead was cut to three, 38-35 to start the fourth and the momentum stayed with the Billies until the end of the contest.

With the loss, Bandera falls to 4-6 in district and 12-9 on the season.

Bandera scoring: Wheeler, 17, Julian De La Paz, 6, Brayden Franklin 6, Hank Pate, 6, Jeffry Thomas 5, Layne Bourgeois 3, Blake Sauers 3, Jackson Satterfield 2

Freshmen

The freshmen Bulldogs won their contest, 41-39 to get their second win over Fred this season. Bandera opened fast, taking a 14-9 lead in the first, but Fred bounced back to take a 20-19 lead at the half.

Each squad tightened up on the defense in the third with both scoring single digits making for an exciting fourth quarter.

Both teams swapped points in the final stanza and Bandera outlasted the Billies to get the win. Logan Pierce led Bulldog scoring with 15 points on the night with seven of those in the fourth.

The win evened the freshmen's record at 5-5 in district and 10-11 on the year.

Bandera scoring: Pierce, 15, Gavin Garcia, 7, Jason Lippy, 4, Riley Moran, 4, Josh Hartman, 3, James Bower, 2, Damien Cadena, 2, Shawn Lewis, 2, Brady Trussell, 2