Defenders give up lead late in loss to Tigers

By Barb Krohn

Southern Columbia 63

Warrior Run 50

TURBOTVILLE—Tuesday night first-year Warrior Run boys basketball coach Jeff Peeler was hoping his team could accomplish something that it was unable to do last year—win a league game.

Warrior Run's Zack Miller, left, goes up under pressure for a basket. Miller had 10 points and 18 rebounds in Tuesday's loss to Southern Columbia.

And for most of the first three quarters in the Heartland Athletic Conference Division II game against Southern Columbia it looked like Warrior Run would get the elusive HAC-II win.

But a Tigers 16-2 run at the end of the third quarter and extended into the fourth snuffed the Defenders chances and Southern went on to win 63-50.

Southern improved to 2-1 while the Defenders dropped to 1-3.

After the game Peeler couldn't believe what happened.

"I thought we had them," said the Warrior Run coach. "We were up eight with two (minutes) to play in the third quarter."

Southern coach Joe Beitto said it was his second string that helped turn the game around.

"The second string gave us good energy and tied it up at the end of the third. That was huge."

Walker Palucz and Mike Klebon took it from there in the fourth when the two reeled off three consecutive 3-pointers.

"Palucz caught fire and Klebon caught fire," said Beitto. "It really helped push us in the fourth quarter."

Klebon led all scorers with 25 points, Palucz had 20.

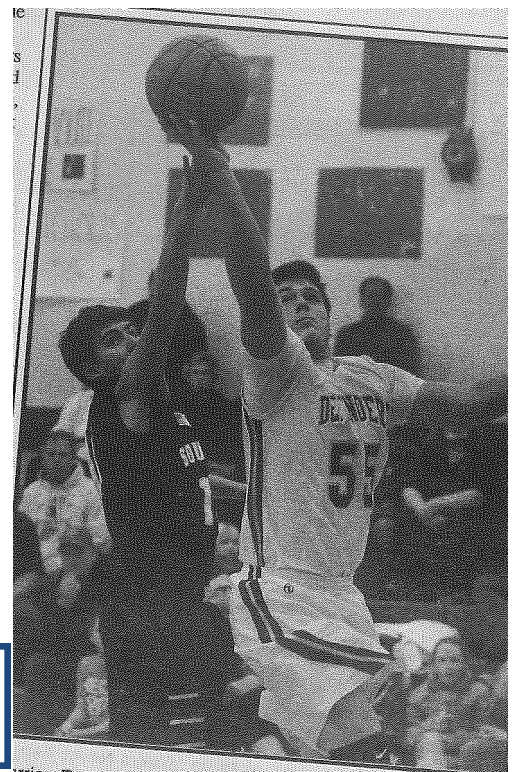Still, the Defenders showed that they have plenty to build on.

After a slow start in the first quarter the Defenders righted the ship and led 23-20 at the half.

Three Warrior Run players finished in double figures. Jared Bender led his team with 13, Lance Peeler had 11 and Zack Miller had 10. Miller's 18 rebounds gave him a double double.

"I think down the stretch we got a little nervous," said the Defenders coach.

Warrior Run entertains Mon-

Warrior Run's Zack Burrows drives to the basket Tuesday against Southern Columbia..

Warrior Run's Lance Peeler drives past Southern Columbia's Walker Palucz (12). Peeler was one of three Defenders in double figures Tuesday.