

Holidays pose a choice

By Larry Pritchett

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There are times when you want to be in two places at the same time, but you have to make a choice. This year the Perkins County Holiday Tournament and the Malcolm Holiday Tournament were held on the same dates.

At one time I thought I would be here on Friday and then go to Malcolm on Saturday, but due to some changes in our family Christmas plans the trip to Malcolm and Lincoln was a whole weekend outing.

You have to remember also if the situations are very similar, the deciding factor is family plus a chance to see a couple of guys named Calen and Kyler. Even if it wasn't Christmas, Calen and Kyler carry the most weight in decision making. They were a delight along with their parents and Uncle Troy.

This was the first time that I had been able to see the Clippers play. They have gotten off to a pretty good start, but are probably just now getting into a really tough part of their schedule. They had four really good quarters of basketball over the weekend.

The problem was that two of them were on Friday night when they defeated Park View Christian and two of them were the first two quarters of the finals against Sterling, but they couldn't hang on and lost the final game to the Jets.

Sterling has a great basketball tradition and had a bunch of 6-4 and 6-5 players. I have a bias but the two teams were pretty equal and on Friday night Sterling had the best finish. The Clippers are 7-2 going into January and that isn't too bad a start.

Malcolm has a very Perkins County flavor to it. Starting at the top, Ryan Terwilliger is the superintendent of schools at Malcolm. He started there right out of college and was the football coach, moved into the elementary principal position and then stepped into the superintendent office when the position opened.

Our son Troy has been there for 15 years as the boys basketball coach and tech person and a couple years ago Trudy Samuelson (Vlasin) was hired to teach math and this year she is coaching the girls basketball team.

Doug Mahoney who taught at the junior high here a few years ago is also on staff, so even if he isn't a native, he certainly knows Troy and Ryan since he taught them in junior high school.

Trudy has done a great job in a short period of time. I watched the Clipper girls play a number of times the last few years and they have struggled. Although they lost to Sterling in the finals Saturday night, they were so much better than in years past and if they keep improving should be a force in their conference very quickly.

The Vlasin family was also having Christmas this weekend so Perkins County was pretty well represented for the games.

Here at home, the Perkins County girls are to be complimented on their tournament

championship. It is always nice to win your own tournament, but right now it is just nice to win games.

I always thought our schedule was really a three-part situation. December was a time when you hoped you could work out any little problems that you might have and you finish off with a tournament.

January starts the second season and you get into more games with the conference members and finish towards the end of the month with the SPVA tournament.

February was the final prep part and of course you finished it up by playing in the sub-districts and tried to get into the state tournament.

I liked the idea of having a tournament at the end of each month. You practice to play in each of those tournaments and winning the tournaments prepared you for the way you would make it to state and that was by playing in a tournament like situation.

Tournament play is different because you don't always have a lot of time to prepare for your opponent or even know who it will be. But playing with little preparation time and recovery time is the routine that you must follow. When you did all that and made it to state, that was just topping on the dessert. State tournament time was a time to have some fun and just play and if you had prepared through the season, you were ready for that week in March.

We lost another old coach and a good friend this past week. Daryl Broberg who was the Sutherland football coach for a number of years passed away. Daryl was a great football coach. He was good for kids and he was a great friend. His health started failing him a couple of years ago and his quality of life wasn't good, but you hate to see your friends pass.

In addition to being a coaching friend for a number of years Daryl and I worked together in the insurance business for the past 25 years. He has touched many lives through his years in education and in the insurance business. We will miss "Bro," his humor, his work ethic but mostly his friendship. He was one of a kind.