

# MLK Basketball Classic ends with OT thriller

by **Richard Obert** - Jan. 18, 2010 09:17 PM - The Arizona Republic

A day of blowouts ended with an overtime thriller between a couple of old rivals.

Blondy Baruti's block of Jaron Sweeney in the final second of overtime preserved No.1-ranked Mesa's 54-52 victory over Mesa [Mountain View](#) on Monday night in the final game of the Martin Luther King Basketball Classic at Arizona State's Wells Fargo Arena.

The first four games were double-digit margins.

Mountain View (13-3) had the final shot in regulation and in OT. But Mesa (15-3) refused to give the Toros any open space.

The ending was especially pleasing for Tulsa-bound Baruti, whose season ended last year before Mesa's game against Mountain View in January. His eligibility was restored Jan.8.

"It felt very, very good," said Baruti, who had nine rebounds and four blocked shots.

Mesa trailed 52-48 with less than two minutes to play in OT, before Jaymen Green and Jahii Carson combined for three steals.

Carson's floating jumper with 30 seconds left gave Mesa a 53-52 lead. Carson, a junior point guard who had 33 points, made 1 of 2 free throws with 14 seconds left.

Mountain View didn't score in the final 1:53 of OT.

## Other games

Junior guard Cameron Forte's 34 points and 12 rebounds helped McClintock end No.1-ranked [Phoenix Sunnyslope's](#) 14-game winning streak with a 70-52 boys basketball victory.

McClintock (13-6) didn't forget last year's performance by Sunnyslope guard Royce Woolridge when he scorched the Chargers for 44 points. That's why coach Jase Coburn kept 6-foot guard Jeremie Gooden on Woolridge.

"I regretted not having him on him more last year," Coburn said. "I challenged him."

Woolridge had 26 points, but he was held scoreless in the third quarter when McClintock opened the half with a 15-2 run and led 44-29 with 3:51 left in the period. Forte, a 6-foot-5 junior guard who didn't play last season after transferring from Tempe [Marcos de Niza](#), had nine points in the final five minutes of the third quarter.

Coburn also had Forte bring the ball up and play the high point to bring out center Jesse Milleson to cover him. It created matchup problems for Sunnyslope (16-3), the defending Class 4A Division I champion.

[Scottsdale Chaparral's](#) smothering defense limited Mesa Red Mountain to 24.6 percent shooting and the Firebirds rolled to a 60-48 victory. It led 47-24 after three quarters. Junior guard Jarrett Upchurch led Chaparral (10-6) with 17 points and two steals..

[Red Mountain](#) senior guard Paul Newendyke made 1 of 9 shots in his first game back since suffering an injury in the first game of the [VisitMesa.com](#) Basketball Challenge the final week of December.

In the two girls games, Phoenix St. Mary's, which features six freshmen and two sophomores, beat [Phoenix Xavier Prep](#) 70-50; and Tolleson, behind Nebraska-bound Rebecca Woodberry's 25 points, beat Phoenix Pinnacle 80-50.

Sophomore guard Shilpa Tummala had 17 points, 6-foot-3 sophomore Courtnee Walton had 14 points and six rebounds, and freshman Danielle Williams had five steals to lead St. Mary's.

Xavier shot 34 percent from the field and made only 12 of 24 free throws. St. Mary's outrebounded its rival 41-31 and forced 21 turnovers.

Tolleson ran out to a 26-7 first-quarter lead, nailing six 3-pointers. It made 11 of 22 from behind the arc in the game. Woodberry, a senior guard/forward, made four of five 3-pointers.

Tolleson needed last-second free throws to beat Pinnacle in last year's 5A-II championship game.

"I told the kids in the locker room, 'They're going to want to make a statement in the first three minutes,' " Tolleson coach Todd Nelson said. "We played well early on."

Woodberry said it was important to have a good game after feeling she had an "off game" in last year's final.

"My goal was to come out and play my best game," she said.



Nick Oza/The Arizona Republic

Mesa's Blondy Baruti shows emotion as the clock runs out in his team's overtime win over Mountain View during the MLK Basketball Showcase Wells Fargo Arena.