Winning at home in a close match-up with Akron on Tuesday, Dec. 16, Holyoke boys' basketball team

earned its fourth straight victory in a row.

The Dragons were off to a great start in the first quarter, hitting three shots from behind the arc and leaping ahead of the Rams by nine points.

"They executed the offense really well in the first quarter," said coach John Baumgartner.

However, he added, in the second quarter they backed off and became "sluggish."

Akron took full advantage of this change in momentum to catch up to Holyoke. Leading the way for the Rams in second quarter action was Alec Vasquez who put up seven of the 15 points scored by Akron during the period.

Right before the end of the half, the game was tied at 27. However, Ryan Baumgartner threw up another shot to give the Dragons a two-point lead at the buzzer.

In a suspenseful third quarter, Holyoke and Akron traded the lead back and forth, and found themselves tied up at several points throughout the eight minutes.

With the scores tied at 41 going into the fourth, Austin Tharp helped push the Dragons into the lead again by shooting a three-point basket. Two more field goals, made by Kyle Carper and Colby Wailes, also contributed.

Finding themselves once again behind the Dragons by a slim margin, the Rams tried fouling in an attempt to regain control of the ball. However, the strategy didn't work as Holyoke was able to make enough free throws to seal the deal.

With the last six baskets coming from the free-throw line, Holyoke was able to beat Akron by five.

“As a coach I can’t complain,” said Baumgartner about his team’s performance on Tuesday. “The effort is there. They play hard and they play well together.”

Offensively, he said, the team had its best output so far. However, he found the defense to be lacking compared to previous games. “We played better defense in the second half,” he said, “but it still wasn’t our best.”

He added Akron deserved a lot of credit, especially in the second quarter, for making so many shots.

Baumgartner said the Holyoke team will continue to work on free throws and executing its offense.

At the top of the list in shooting was Tharp, who scored 18 total points during the game. Following him was Carper with 16 and Baumgartner with 10.

Wailes led the team in rebounds with seven, while Carper grabbed six and Tharp five. Meanwhile, Baumgartner snatched an impressive seven steals.

Statistics

Holyoke 55, Akron 50

	2	3	FT	F	TP
			FG		
Tharp	4	3	1-1	1	18
Baumgartner	2	1	3-6	3	10
Carper	6	0	4-7	3	16
Wailes	2	0	0-1	1	4
DeBoer	0	0	0-0	0	0
Brown	1	0	2-2	1	4
Swanson	0	1	0-0	1	3
TEAM	15	5	10-17	10	55
Akron					
TEAM	17	2	10-13	17	55

Scoring By Quarters

Holyoke	21	8	12	14	--55
Akron	12	15	14	9	--50