DUNNING—Heading into the semi-final of the Sandhills Conference basketball tournament against Mullen, Brady coach David Jacobs thought for sure a neutral court at Dunning would help the Eagles avenge a loss to the Broncos a week before.

Mullen senior Riley Rice proved him wrong.

Rice scored 24 of his game-high 26 points in the first half to give the Broncos a comfortable 37-15 lead at halftime and ultimately a 62-37 tournament victory.

“He shot us out of the gym in that first half,” Jacobs said. “After that, we were pretty much dead in the water. That’s a pretty deep hole.”

The Broncos out-scored the Eagles in the second half 25-22, never allowing Brady to get back in the game.

The loss sent Brady to the SHC tournament consolation against Stapleton-McPherson County, a team the Eagles had split with in the previous two meetings.

“I think if we played them 10 times, we’d each win five games,” Jacobs said. “We’re just that evenly matched.”

In the pattern of wins and losses, it was SMC’s turn for a victory and the Cyclones managed to defeat the Eagles 47-43 to finish third in the tournament.

“We didn’t shoot real well,” Jacobs said, “and we got down by as many as 10 points in the third quarter.”

The Eagles pulled close in the fourth period, tying the score about midway through, but they weren't able to get an edge.

Jacobs said with time running out, the Eagles trailed by three points as senior Bryley Roper put up a three-point shot that went in and he attempted to draw a foul for a free throw attempt but was called for an offensive foul instead.

"He was trying to make something happen and I give him credit for that," the coach said. "We just couldn't pull it out."

Senior Michael Neiman led the Eagles with 13 points and classmate Zach Mann added 12 points with 10 rebounds.

Brady moves to 11-6 on the season with four games remaining before D2-9 sub-district action next month.

On Friday, the Eagles host Hyannis (2-9), the team they defeated in the first round of the SHC tournament.

Saturday brings Maxwell (1-15) to town with Medicine Valley (8-7) and Sandhills/Thedford (13-4) the following week.

"We've still got some good games coming up," Jacobs said. "We've just got to stay focused and play our style of ball game."

Both matchups this weekend at home are set to begin at 7:30 p.m.