After losing in the first round of First Harrison Bank Holiday Tournament, the Eastern boys' basketball team seemed flat to start the consolation game Saturday.

The Musketeers fell behind 8-0 early to Salem, but got a spark by their second five to comeback for a 56-38 win.

"Our bench did a nice job for us," said Head Coach Scott Newcomb. "I don't know if we were tired from playing two games, or we were disappointed because it was the consolation game or what, but we didn' t have any energy."

Salem noticed and jumped in front thanks to a quick five points by Jordan Baker and a three from Caleb Couch.

Baker's three-point show at the 5:14 mark forced Newcomb to burn a timeout and send a fresh five to the floor.

The second group quickly responded.

Grant Newcomb hit two free throws after being fouled and then drained a three, which cut the Lion lead to three, 8-5.

The younger Newcomb cut the deficit to one with two more free throws.

Eastern completed the comeback and took the first lead of the game when Shane Williams got two on a putback with 1:23 remaining in the first quarter.

A steal and a basket by the Musketeers Alex Doebler increased his team's lead to three 11-8.

"I told the kids over the past several years every time we play Eastern it's a close game," said SHS Head Coach Hank Weedin. "I told them someone was going to jump out in front, but the other team was going to make a run and that's what happened. We jumped out and they came back."

Eastern continued to build on its lead early in the second quarter.

Austin Church scored in the paint off an assist by Jude Olesh, Newcomb hit another three, which was followed by a three from RJ Jackson that stretched the EHS lead to eight, 21-13.

Eastern went up by 10, 23-13, when Olesh delivered another assist to Tevin Wolf.

The second half continued to be unkind for the young Lions, which featured a starting lineup of a freshman and two sophomores.

Two three-point baskets late in the third quarter by Jackson and a two by Jack Hayes gave the Musketeers their biggest lead at 14, 33-19.

Baker hit a three for Salem that cut the deficit to 11, 33-22 at intermission.

Baker scored three more of his career-high 21 points in the opening moments of the third quarter and Austin Jerrell scored two getting the Lions to within six to start the second half, 33-27.

Jackson, however, had an answer, scoring eight of his 17 points over the next several minutes to help Eastern settle the ship.

The Musketeers maintained their lead and Salem wasn't able to get any closer.

Weedin said in a normal year he would have been very upset by his team's performance.

"When you look at our stats, I normally would be livid, but with so much youth and inexperience I am just looking for improvement," he said. "We had our best scoring output of the season and did some good things in this tournament."

Weedin also noted that two freshmen played significant roles for their teams.

"Early in the game Baker and Newcomb had 14 points combined," he said. "It's going to be fun to watch those guys grow and get better."

Newcomb said for his team, the goal heading in was to win the tournament, but once you lose in the opener, you start focusing on a split.

“The most important game of the season is the next one,” he said. “We got a split and will go to work and try to continue to improve.

Salem has a couple of weeks to build off the successes they enjoyed in the tournament. They won’t return to the court until Dec. 28 when they take on Madison.

Eastern has one more game, Friday at home against Austin.