

Most three game losing streaks have coaches panicking, but Eastern girls' basketball coach Mike McBride never did. His team lost to Salem in the First Harrison Bank Holiday Tournament and then followed that with back-to-back losses to Brownstown and Corydon.

"Salem was a tough loss to take and Brownstown is the best team we've played," McBride said. "We had chances and then against Corydon we are right there in the third quarter when things fell apart.

"Our biggest thing is we have to be able to put points on the board. We don't turn it over a lot, we're getting good looks, but somehow we have to figure out a way to get to 50 points."

EHS ended the slide with a 36-32 win over visiting Crawford County Saturday afternoon thanks to a timely free throw from sophomore Morgan Martin and a blocked shot by Brooke Rodewig.

Clinging to a six-point, 35-29 lead McBride went to a time consuming spread offense trying to keep his team from taking unnecessary risks.

The strategy almost proved costly.

Crawford's Brooke Sauer hit one of two free throws to get the Lady Pack to within five, 35-30.

Back-to-back turnovers by the Lady Musketeers led to Tylynn Allen getting an opportunity to convert an and-one opportunity.

She missed the free throw and Eastern clung to a three-point lead.

On the Lady Musketeers next possession Martin was fouled and hit one of two free throws.

Crawford tried to get off a quick two, but Rodewig blocked and recovered the ball and Eastern escaped.

"They went to the 1-3-1 in the second quarter and we didn't make a fieldgoal against it and then they went to it there in the fourth," he said. "Against that defense we got two good looks on threes, but at that point, with the lead we had I didn't want us squandering possessions with the quick hots.

"Crawford is not used to having to get out and guard man-to-man and we have some quickness up top."

McBride admitted the turnovers and the foul almost proved costly

"We can't have that, we have to finish games strong," he said.

Eastern grabbed the lead early and led throughout, but their biggest advantage came early in the third quarter.

A 21-18 advantage quickly grew to double digits for the Lady Musketeers.

During the spurt Bailey England drained a three, and Rodewig scored five of her 13 points, two of which came on an offensive rebound.

Katie Erntsberger hit two free throws and EHS was on top 31-18.

Crawford tried to answer with a run of their own, but Eastern maintained the advantage when Erntsberger delivered an assist to Rachel Hamilton.

The Lady Musketeers never hit a fieldgoal in the final eight minutes but held on by hitting five of eight free throws.

In addition to to her 13 points, Rodewig grabbed 11 rebounds.

“Brooke has really stepped up her game here recently,” McBride said.

Hamilton added six six points and grabbed six rebounds.

“Rachel has really blossomed into a good player from the standpoint of what she gives us,” McBride said. “She is playing with confidence and she hates it when I take her out, which I love, and she does a great job running the floor. She might make a mistake defensively, but she doesn’t worry about it. She is going to get back down the floor and do what she needs to. She has really come on as a senior and she is excited about the opportunities we have in front of us the rest of the year.”

Another player that drew praise from the coach was Kaitlyn Stewart.

Stewart only had four points, but pulled down a couple of rebounds and collected a couple of steals.

“She came off the bench and gave us a lift by doing some good things,” McBride said. “She is a girl who has waited for her opportunity. We are trying to get her more minutes and she really took advantage of them tonight. I am really pleased with how she played.”