

FAYETTE, Mo. - Dennis McKinney poured in 31 points Wednesday night as the Mount Mercy Mustangs trimmed Central Methodist, 73-70, in a key Heart of America Conference game in Missouri.

The victory lifted the Mustangs into a tie for ninth place in the conference with Central Methodist with 8-11 records, just one game out of eighth place with five games left. The top eight teams will make the league playoffs.

McKinney popped in five 3-pointers and also snared nine rebounds. Bailey Basala contributed 22 points, seven rebounds and five assists.

Basala made two free throws with seven seconds remaining to give Mount Mercy a 73-70 advantage. Central Methodist missed a 3-pointer in the final seconds that could have tied the game and forced overtime.

RoyShawn Webb finished with six points, seven assists and eight rebounds. DJ Johnson pitched in with 10 points. The Mustangs trailed by 10 points at halftime, but rallied for the clutch victory.

The Mustangs raised their overall record to 13-12. Central Methodist fell to 9-16. James Byrd II scored 21 points for the home team.

MOUNT MERCY (73): Dennis McKinney 12-21 2-2 31, Davion Watson 0-2 0-0 0, Bailey Basala 8-14 3-3 22, RoyShawn Webb 3-8 0-1 6, Streeter McIlravy 0-5 2-2 2, Tyler Kelley 0-2 0-0 0, Davarea Loggins 0-3 0-0 0, Brady Stoeffler 0-1 0-0 0, Julian Hehmann 1-1 0-0 2, Christian Reischauer 0-0 0-0 0, DJ Johnson 4-5 0-0 10.

CENTRAL METHODIST (70): Isaiah Burton 2-8 0-0 5, James Byrd II 7-12 4-4 21, Josh

Robinson 5-17 2-2 12, Kyle McDermed 3-13 0-0 9, Rijnard Hartman 5-8 1-3 11, Trae Meny 0-2 0-0 0, Seth Stegeman 4-4 0-0 10, Noah Patrick 1-2 0-0 2, Jacob Moore 0-1 0-0 0. Totals 27-67 7-9 70.

Halftime - Central Methodist 34, Mount Mercy 24. 3-point goals - Mount Mercy 10-30 (McKinney 5-10, Basala 3-7, Webb 0-1, McIlravy 0-5, Kelley 0-1, Loggins 0-3, Stoeffler 0-1, Johnson 2-2), Central Methodist 9-26 (Burton 1-2, Byrd II 3-6, Robinson 0-6, McDermed 3-7, Meny 0-2, Stegeman 2-2, Patrick 0-1).